



Edited by **Samuel Pagán**

The **Hispanic**
Evangelical
Church in the United States

HISTORY, MINISTRY AND CHALLENGES



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*The Hispanic Evangelical Church in the United States
History, Ministry and Challenges*

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INTRODUCTION

Dr. Samuel Pagán

The amazing growth of the evangelical church in Latin America has been nothing short of phenomenal. The pioneer missionary efforts of men and women from many different denominations during the 20th century led to the establishment of denominational organizations, churches and educational institutions. Beginning as small congregations with pastors that had little formal education, many have grown today to memberships in the thousands. Today, most missionary work is in the area of institutional and educational support because the leadership in evangelical churches has proven to be extremely capable.

In many ways, the Hispanic church in the United States has followed a similar pattern. Dedicated men and women from Latin American countries established Latino congregations throughout the United State. Most are still relatively small congregations, but many have become large, influential establishments in their cities and communities.

The National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC) serves over 40,000 Evangelical congregations in the United States by providing leadership, networking, fellowship, strategic partnerships and public policy advocacy platforms to our seven directives: Life, Family, Great Commission, Stewardship, Education, Youth and Justice. But it is still the pastor at the local church level, the pro-

fessor in the classroom of a Bible college or seminary that carries the most influence to individual church members.

This volume presents 13 leaders that have written in the areas of the history, the ministry and the challenges of the Hispanic evangelical church in the United States. Their views are wide and varied. Some chapters are a reflection of the writer's own experiences, and the reader can benefit from that perspective.

The non Hispanic reader will be able to gain a sense of the struggles, the emotions and the challenges facing the typical Hispanic in the United States. The Hispanic reader will be motivated to think in a more proactive and effective manner to minister to his or her congregation and community.

The broad background and experience of these writers all present one shared experience that should motivate Hispanic pastors: they all have advanced degrees in theology, psychology, education or some other area that is relevant to ministry. There are opportunities available to each Hispanic pastor or young person that is considering a life of service and ministry. There is no denying the work of the Holy Spirit in ministry – leading, encouraging, teaching – yet the responsibility of individual preparation and formal training cannot be minimized.

Be informed concerning the issues and challenges facing the Hispanic church in the U.S. Be encouraged by the ministry of the Hispanic church in the U.S. But most of all, be challenged with the future of the Hispanic church in the U.S.

CHAPTER 1

Multigenerational Hispanic Ministry Dr. Daniel A. Rodríguez

Introduction

In these first two decades of the 21st century, the Hispanic¹ community continues to grow numerically and is influencing every facet of society in the United States. There is virtually no geographical area of the U.S. that does not have a significant Hispanic presence, or at least one that is beginning to emerge. A superficial glance at the Hispanic community, however, could overlook an important demographic change taking place, one beginning at the turn of the new century: native Latinos² of the U.S. now comprise the majority of the Hispanic community and will continue to dominate this diverse, developing community in the foreseeable future (Krogstad and López 2014).

Unfortunately, many Latino church leaders who mistakenly equate “Hispanic ministry” with ministries that are nearly

- 1 Latino(a) or Hispano(a). These terms are used interchangeably to refer to all individuals with Latin American ancestry, or with ties to the Spanish-speaking world, legal or illegal, within the boundaries of the United States of America. In general, Latino (a) will be used as a noun (e.g., Native Latin) and Hispanos (as) will be used as an adjective (e.g., Hispanic churches). Any debate as to which term should be used would be self-destructive, because both terms ultimately fail to demonstrate the high complexity level of Hispanic existence in the United States (López 2013).
- 2 *Born in the U.S.A., natives and third generation Latinos*. These terms are used interchangeably to refer to all those individual who were born in the US and have Latin American ancestry.

exclusively in Spanish have ignored this important demographic change. As a result of that perspective and this historical paradigm, the generations of Latino men and women born in the U.S. that primarily speak English are consequently “being ignored in the daily distribution” of spiritual nourishment.

As mentioned above, this chapter addresses a problem analogous to that encountered by the Christian community in Jerusalem during the first century of our era. A modern parallel of this situation presented in Acts 6:1-7 is being experienced in historic neighborhoods in the United States. With the rapid growth of the “evangelical” Hispanic church in the past three decades, the problems have increased. One of the most significant is that the church is forgetting Latinos born in the U.S., whose predominant language is English, unintentionally, in the form of attention and resources. To use Acts 6 as a metaphor, the English-speaking Latinos born in the U.S. are the modern day Greek-speaking Jews, and they are complaining about the Spanish-speaking Latinos that are born in other countries³ that are the modern day version of the Jews that spoke Aramaic. The first group complains that, as a consequence of the linguistic and cultural differences of a generation that was born in other countries, their spiritual needs are all too frequently overlooked. The urgent need, therefore, is for Protestant, evangelical churches that are multi-generational and multi-linguistic to respond in contextually appropriate ways, not only for Latinos and Latinas born in the U.S., but also for those born in other countries.

3 *Born in other countries, first generation and immigrant generation.* These terms are used interchangeably to refer to those individuals with Latin American ancestry that have immigrated legally or illegally to the United States.

In order to understand the relevance of the important subject of this chapter, the reader should understand the socioeconomic and cultural context of Latinos in the United States during this second decade of the 21st century. A careful analysis of available demographic data will help the church and denominational leaders to better understand the important similarities as well as differences between Latinos born outside the U.S. and their children and grandchildren born in the U.S.

I will then describe the challenges faced in the development of multigenerational Hispanic churches, that is, churches attempting to “be all things to all Latinos” in which place of birth, language use, race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status do not become barriers to evangelism, church growth or spiritual formation. The observations and interviews carried out in evangelical Hispanic churches throughout the United States will serve to illustrate the findings quoted in the pertinent demographic studies and those by the social sciences as well as the relevance of the recommendations included in this study.

Demographic profile of the Hispanic population

It would be virtually impossible to present an exhaustive portrait of the U.S. Hispanic population within this chapter. Consequently, the data presented here underscores the important demographic tendencies that will have direct implications for Hispanic ministries in the United States. Just as many public and private agencies use demographic information to validate their policies and programs, the church also needs to familiarize itself with the socioeconomic context in which more than 153 million Latinos live. With a clear understanding of the Latino socioeconomic reality, messengers

of Christ will be better able to improve their efforts to contextualize the gospel, incorporate in a significant manner greater numbers of Latinos in the body of Christ and prepare greater numbers of Latinos for active and effective participation in God's mission.

Population growth among Latinos

During the past four decades, the Hispanic population has experienced extraordinary growth. In 1970, the Hispanic population was 9.6 million and represented 4.7% of the total U. S. population. In 2000, the population had grown to 35.3 million, representing 12.4% of the total American population. By 2010, the Hispanic population had reached 50.5 million, representing 16% of the U. S. population, becoming the largest minority group (U.S. Census Bureau 2011). In 2012, the Hispanic population reached 53.3 million, representing one sixth of all residents, and it is estimated that by 2060 the number will reach 128.8 million, which would be one third of all residents in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau 2014).

Latinos are a heterogeneous group, encompassing all persons that trace their heritage to the Spanish-speaking world, the Caribbean and Latin America. Consequently, some distinct subgroups of a particular national origin are included under the pan-ethnic terms Hispano and Latino. The five largest groups are Mexicans (64.2%), Puerto Ricans (9.3%), Cubans (3.7%), Salvadorans (3.7%) and Dominicans (2.9%) and account for 84.2% of all Latinos (Brown and Patton 2012, Table 6). The categories "All the Central Americans" and "All the South Americans" comprise 8.7% y 5.9%, respectively, Hispanic population. The category "Other Hispanics or Latinos" (4.7%) include those that describe themselves as Span-

iards or Hispanic-Americans (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). Of course, there are important differences between the subgroups of national origin with regard to nationality, median age, language usages, education and income levels, marital patterns and religious affiliation. Each Hispanic subgroup has received attention from researchers (Motel and Patten 2012; López et al., 2013). Unfortunately, space does not allow for mentioning here these important distinctions. Rather, I will focus on the generational differences and similarities Latinos as a whole

Hispanic nationality

The dramatic growth of the Hispanic population as observed since 1980 to the present is the result of three interacting factors: low mortality rates, high birth rates and high immigration rates. Each of these factors has played a considerable role in the growth of the Hispanic community since 1980. In contrast with the 1980s and the 1990s, however, when most of the population growth was attributed to illegal and undocumented immigration, the growth of the Hispanic population during the first two decades of the 21st century is, for the most part, the result of the natural growth of an existing population (Krogstad and López 2014). For example, in 2004, nearly six of ten Latinos (59.9%) were born in the United States, while 40.1% had been born in other countries. In 2012, the Latinos born in the United States comprised 64.5% of the Hispanic population, while the percentage of Hispanics born in other countries was reduced to 35.5% (Brown and Patton 2014, Table 4).

A recent study, published by the Pew Hispanic Center, demonstrated that children born in other countries are only 11% of the Hispanic children nationwide, while the other 89%

are born in the United States. The majority (52%) are children born in the United States, but with at least one foreign parent, while 37% are third (or greater) generation (Fry and Passel 2009). A similar study found that two thirds (66%) of Latinos between the ages of 16 and 25 are properly Americans (i.e., born in the United States), including 37% that are children of immigrants and an additional 29% that are third generation or greater (Pew Hispanic Center 2009). A more recent study found that among Hispanic adults, 51% were born outside the United States, 20% are children of immigrants and 29% belong to the third (or greater) generation (Pew Research Social and Demographic Trends 2013). This means that nearly 90% of all Hispanics under the age of 18 were born in the United States, while close to 50% of all Latino adults were born in the United States. With births passing immigration as the primary source of growth, an important change is occurring in the composition of the Hispanic population in the United States. Both now as well as in the foreseeable future, the Hispanic-American population will be dominated by Latinos born in the United States, who by virtue of their birth are American citizens.

Generational differences and similarities among Latinos

In developing ministries and programs for Latinos, denominational and church leaders cannot ignore the differences between Hispanics born and raised in the United States and those born in other countries or recently arrived in America. Social scientists and the demographics point out the important differences between Latinos born in the United States and those born in other countries with regard to origin, median

age, language usages, education and income levels, marital patterns and religious affiliation.

Differences in median age

The Hispanic population is quite young in comparison with the rest of the American population. For example, in 2012, the median age of white, non-Hispanics was 42, while the median age for Latinos was 27. The median age drops significantly when only Latinos born in the United States (64% of the Hispanic population) are considered. The median age of the Hispanic population born in the U. S. is 18, while the median age of all Latinos born in other countries is 40 (Brown and Patton 2014, Table 9).

Language usage among Latinos

One of the most important differences between Latinos born in the US and those born in other countries has to do with language usage. The differences in being able to understand and speak in English between the various generations of Hispanics suggest that there is a nearly total transition from fluency in Spanish to fluency in English in the third generation or more (Hakimzadeh and Cohn 2007).

As could be expected, English fluency is quite limited among Latinos born in other latitudes. One out of four report that they can speak English “very well”, a fifth (20%) claim to speak English “well”. Nearly a third (32%) indicate that they “do not speak English well”, and 20% say they speak “no English at all”. On the other hand, a wide majority of second-generation Latino adults say they can speak English either “very well” (85%) or well (8%) (Pew Research Social and Demographic Trends

2013).⁴ Predictably, researchers that study news viewing patterns among Hispanic adults found that, among the demographic subgroups, viewing of the news varies depending upon the place of origin. Almost six out of ten Latinos born in the US (59%) say they only view the news in English. Thirty-nine percent say they view the news in English as well as in Spanish, while only 2% say they view the news only in Spanish. However, among Latinos born in other latitudes, 31% say they watch the news only in Spanish, 59% say they watch in both languages, and only 11% say they view the news only in English.

In spite of the gradual and inevitable transition from fluency in Spanish to fluency in English within the Hispanic population, the majority of Latinos feel that it is “very important” or “somewhat important” that future generations retain the ability to speak Spanish (Pew Research Social and Demographic Trends 2013). Of course, the most obvious difference in language use between earlier groups of immigrants and the Latinos is bilingualism, which persists in a larger percentage of second generation –and later- than in the earlier groups of immigrants (Pew Hispanic Center y The Kaiser Family Foundation 2004). Nevertheless, many third generation Latinos –and later- that point out that they know how to speak in Spanish are frequently reluctant to do so (Hakimzadeh and Cohn 2007).⁵

4 In an exhaustive study titled “Between Two Worlds: How Young Latinos Come of Age in America”, researchers at the Pew Hispanic Center made a similar observation: “In the first generation, only 7% of the youth are classified as English dominant, whereas 40% are bi-lingual and 53% are Spanish dominant. For the second generation, English as the dominant language rapidly expands to 44% of the population, while 54% are bi-lingual and only 2% are Spanish dominant. In the third generation, nearly 80% have English as the dominant language, 15% are bi-lingual, and again, Spanish as the dominant language is merely –5%–” (2009, 33).

5 These observations contradict those of the new nativists, including Samuel P. Huntington. In *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*,

Educational level among Latinos

The educational level among Hispanics is growing, but continues low in comparison with non-Latinos. For example, among all Latinos, 13.9% are university graduates. In comparison, among white, non-Hispanics, 32.6% are university graduates. At the other end of the spectrum, only 2.6% of whites, non-Hispanics have a lower than 9th grade educational level, in contrast with 21.1% of Latinos. When taking into account the educational level, it is important to differentiate between Latinos born in the US and those born in other countries.

Studies by the Pew Hispanic Center show that the educational levels vary considerably between these to subgroups, and between Latinos and other racial and ethnic groups. For example, among first generation Latinos 25 years of age and above, 49% have not graduated from high school, 24.7% have less than a high school education, 15.7% have studied at the university level and 10.6% are college graduates. In comparison, among Latinos born in the US that are 25 and older, 19.6% do not have a high school diploma, 29% have at best a high school diploma, 33.3% have studied at a university and 18% are college graduates. (Brown and Patton, 2014, Table 22).

Employment, income and poverty among Latinos

As could be expected, the jobs that pay better and require a greater educational level and skills elude Latinos. A statistical view of Hispanics in 2012 reveals that, when compared with whites non-Hispanics, Latinos work at manual labor. In fact,

Huntington argues that, unlike earlier generations of immigrants, the reluctance of Hispanics to learn English and to assimilate into Anmerican society now threatens to divide the country into two nations, one that speaks English and the other that speaks Spanish (2004, 316-324).

only 7.3% of all Latinos older than 16 work in administrative positions, compared with 15% of whites, non-Hispanic. At the same time, 9.1% of Latinos work in cleaning and maintenance, contrasted with 3.2% of whites, non-Hispanics. Once again, statistics vary significantly when taking into account place of origin. Among Latinos native to the US over the age of 16, 8.9% work in administrative positions, compared with 5.6% of Latinos born elsewhere. In the same manner, while 14% of first generation Latinos works in cleaning and maintenance, only 4.5% of Latinos born in the US have similar positions. (Brown and Patton, 2014, Table 27).⁶

It is not surprising, then, that income among Latinos languishes with respect to whites, non-Hispanics. The average family income among whites, non-Hispanics in 2012 were \$56,000, compared with \$40,000 in Hispanic homes. The average income among first generation Hispanics was \$37,000 compared with \$43,000 average income among Hispanics born in the US (Brown and Patton 2014, Table 36).

Experts at the United States Census Bureau and the Pew Research Center have observed that the poverty level among Latinos has recently diminished. Yet Hispanics continue to have double the probabilities of being poor than the dominant group. In 2011, only 9.8% of whites, non-Hispanic claimed to be living below the poverty level, in contrast with 25.3% of the Hispanic population (López and Motel 2012, Table 1). Nev-

⁶ It is interesting to note that in a study conducted in 2002 among Latinos over the age of 18, it was more likely to find Latinos who primarily spoke English in administrative positions than those whose dominant language was Spanish. Predictably, bi-lingual Latinos whose dominant language was English had family incomes greater than those whose dominant language was Spanish (Pew Hispanic Center and The Kaiser Family Foundation 2002, Table 7).

ertheless, Hispanic adults native to the United States have less probabilities of being poor than Hispanic adult immigrants (Brown and Patton 2014, Table 37). A comparison between the poverty levels of children is even more sobering. As a result of the Great Recession of 2007 to 2009, in 2010 there were more Latino children living in poverty (6.1 million) than children of other racial or ethnic groups (López and Velasco 2011). Among non-Hispanic white children, 13.8% live in poverty, compared with 33.3% of Hispanic children. The nationality of the parents is an important factor in explaining the poverty levels among Hispanic children. For example, Lopez and Velasco report that in 2011 the poverty level among Hispanic children with immigrant parents was 40.2%, whereas the poverty level was 28.6% among Hispanic children with parents born in the US (2011). Two years later, the poverty levels among children of immigrant parents rose to 41.3%, while the poverty level of Hispanic children of parents native to the US had grown to 33.3% (Brown and Patton 2014, Table 37).

Marital patterns among Latinos

It is worth noting here another difference between Latinos native to the US and immigrant Latinos. Latino immigrants, as with immigrants in general, tend to marry within their own racial or ethnic group. Nevertheless, this is not necessarily true of Latinos born in the US. According to a recent study, close to one fourth (26%) of second generation Hispanic adults married someone of a different race or ethnic group, compared with 7% of first generation Latinos. Among third generation Latinos (as well as older generations), 31% married outside their ethnic or racial group (Pew Research Social and Demographic Trends 2013).

Change in religious identity among Latinos

In 2013, the National Survey of Latinos and Religion found that the majority (55%) of the Hispanic adult population identified itself as Catholic. Latinos that identified themselves as Protestants represented 22% of the Hispanic population. This figure includes the 5% that describe themselves as members of “historic denominations” and 16% that describe themselves as “born again or ‘evangelical’”. The category “Other Christian denominations”, which include Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons and Orthodox comprise 3% of Latinos. One percent (1%) of the Hispanic population marked “Other beliefs”, which includes non-Christian traditions (e.g., Islam). Finally, a surprising number of Latinos (18%) identified themselves as “Without affiliation (religious)”, including those that describe themselves as not belonging to any religion in particular or claim to be atheists or agnostics (Pew Research Religion and Public Life Project 2014).

Experts have also pointed out that the religious profile of Latinos varies with the Hispanic origin and place of birth. Regarding this, it is of note that, while 60% of all Latino adults born in other countries are Catholic, less than half (48%) of all Latinos native to the US belong to the Catholic Church. Nearly equal numbers of Latinos born in other countries and those born in the US (20% and 24% respectively) are Protestants. It is also more likely that Latinos born in the US report themselves as not affiliated to any religion than Latinos born elsewhere (23% versus 15%) (Pew Research Religion and Public Life Project 2014).

Specialists in the field are quick to point out that the number of Catholic Latinos has been declining in the last decades.

Latinos that abandon Catholicism tend to become born-again Christians and protestant “evangelicals”, or else become unaffiliated with any religion. Changes in religious affiliation occur primarily among adult Hispanics less than 50 years of age. Among Latinos between the ages of 18 and 29, the majority of the change is leaving the Catholic Church for no affiliation to any religion. With regard specific regard to Latinos native to the US, the non-affiliated to any religion is the fastest growing group. Among those between the ages of 30 and 49, the change has been from Catholicism to “evangelical” Protestantism or to no religious affiliation. This data suggests that a growing number of Latinos are changing their religious affiliation. Unfortunately, many Latinos, in particular those under the age of 50, are choosing affiliation to no religion. Nevertheless, when the change is from Catholicism to another faith, it is usually toward “evangelical” Christianity, in particular charismatic movements or traditional Pentecostals (Pew Research Religion and Public Life Project 2014).

Very important to the present study are the findings of the Survey of Hispanic Values conducted in 2013 that two thirds (68%) of Hispanics in historical protestant denominations report that religion is either the most important part of their lives (22%) or one of the most important part of their lives (46%). On the other hand, nearly 90% of the “evangelical” Hispanics indicate that religion is the most important part of their lives (50%) or one of the most important parts of their lives (36%). Even higher percentages of “evangelical” Hispanics (62%) believe that the Bible is the literal Word of God and associate belief in God to all moral behavior. This is evident with regard to positions on abortion, same sex sexual activity as well as same sex marriage, in which the percentage of Hispanic “evangelicals” in opposition

is significantly higher than that of many of the protestants of historical churches and of Catholics (Jones et al. 2013).

Demographic data: summary and implications

A fundamental presupposition of this study is that understanding the important differences between Hispanics native to the US and Hispanics born elsewhere (in terms of projection of population growth, country of origin, median age, language usage, education and income levels, marital patterns and religious affiliation) will have profound implications for those wishing to minister effectively among Latinos. One obvious implication is that in Hispanic ministry the “one size fits all” approach needs to be abandoned. In its place, strategies should be favored that seriously consider the differences among Latinos in the US. For example, the dominant language used in activities of assistance, preaching, teaching and worship should vary in accordance with the audience. Interviews with Mexican, Cuban and Puerto Rican pastors throughout the US confirmed the obvious: Latinos born outside the US prefer ministry and programs in Spanish, whereas the second generation (and especially the third generation) of Latinos prefer ministry and programs in English. When churches acknowledged this significant difference and adjusted their programs and ministries in a corresponding manner, an almost immediate success was realized, in terms of the number Latinos born in the US that responded to the appropriate contextual approach. The Hispanic mega churches Alfa y Omega in Miami, Iglesia Pacto de Nueva Vida in Chicago and Vida Abundante in San Antonio, Texas, are excellent examples of churches that have successfully adapted their respective approach to ministry in order to accommodate the linguistic needs of US born Latinos.⁷

⁷ In Chapter 2 of *A Future for the Latino Church: Models for Multilingual*,

Intergroup and intragroup relations among Latinos

If the second –and particularly the third– generation of Latinos prefer English to Spanish and demonstrate greater levels of acculturation,⁸ then some Hispanic churches and denominational leaders could ask: “Instead of creating parallel ministries and programs in English for Latinos born in the US, why not just include the Latinos whose primary language is English in the programs and ministries of the dominant group?” What many do not realize is that there are a number of factors that can combine to create a cultural and socioeconomic barrier between many U.S. born Latinos whose language is English and churches of the dominant group. I have been able to observe in various places that the continuous immigration from Latin America, the strength of family ties and discriminatory treatment in the US reinforce the Hispanic ethnic identity.⁹ The last factor, discriminatory treatment, was found to generate intense intragroup dependency and interaction, while at the same time inhibiting social contact with the non Latino population, which in turn had the unforeseen effect of reinforcing the Hispanic ethnic identity. In other words, when Latinos experienced discriminatory treatment by the

Multigenerational Hispanic Congregations (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), I describe the history and approach to ministry of each one of these multigenerational and multilingual churches.

- 8 *Acculturation* is the process by which adults acquire cultural competency to become functional participants in a new or host country. In other words, a study that would research the level of Latino acculturation with regard to the dominant culture would necessarily ask: “Up to what point is this person like an Anglo-American?”
- 9 The findings of the National Latin Survey (NLS) of 2006, revealed that the most common reasons given for discriminatory treatment by the dominant group included being (29.8%), language usage or accent (13.2%), skin color (12.6%) and immigrant status (8.1) (Fraga et al., 2010, 76).

dominant group (i.e., non-Hispanic whites or non-Hispanic blacks), this reinforced the ethnic loyalty and identity, even among Latinos born in the US and highly acculturated. As a consequence, many Latinos born in the US search for ways to strengthen their ethnic ties, including affiliations with churches predominantly Hispanic (Rodríguez 2011, 55).

One study, conducted jointly by the Pew Hispanic Center and The Kaiser Family Foundation, found that the majority of Latinos interviewed believed that discrimination of Latinos by other Latino is a major problem. This was attributed to socio-economic differences, differences in country of origin and differences in skin color (2002). Similarly, Orlando Crespo observes that Latinos born outside the US are frequently discriminated against by Latinos born in the US, based on what he calls “false ways to define the Latin identity”. The false ways used to determine who is truly Latino include: physical traits (i.e., do you look Latin), geographic parameters (i.e., do you live in the right neighborhood?), religious affiliation (i.e., are you Catholic?), and, of course, use of the language (i.e., do you speak Spanish?). By responding in the negative to any of these questions, in particular the last, Hispanic identity is suspect, especially by Latinos born outside the US whose primary language is Spanish (2009, 28-29). To do justice, both the Latinos born outside the US as well as those born in the US are guilty of discrimination against Latino immigrants. When they do this, the reasons given for discrimination include the country of origin, physical appearance and the inability to speak English well (or not at all) (Pew Hispanic Center and The Kaiser Family Foundation 2002).

Interviews and observations of participants in Hispanic “evangelical” churches throughout the US reveal that when

Latinos born in the US feel rejected by Latinos born elsewhere, they infrequently look for a substitute church among white non-Hispanics or blacks non-Hispanics. Latinos born in the US experience an “up in the air” sense between the ancestral culture and the American culture, and when combined with discriminatory experiences at the hands of the dominant group, a barrier is created –cultural as well a socioeconomic– between them and the majority of the churches in the dominant group. Those interviewed consistently commented that, while they did not always feel comfortable or welcome in churches dominated by Latinos born outside the US, they were also reluctant to attend churches that are predominantly white. Rather, they prefer to attend a church with a *Latin flavor* (Rodríguez, 2011, 57).

These observations support the findings in 2013 by the National Survey of Latinos and Religion, that revealed that Latinos prefer “ethnic churches”, that is, churches that offer services in Spanish, have Latino clergy and are predominantly Latino. Again, it is important to note here the generational differences. For example, attending services in Spanish is more common among Latinos born outside the US (59%) than Latinos born in the US (10%) (Pew Research Religion and Public Life Project 2014).

The important differences that exist between Latinos born in the US and those born elsewhere, in terms of projection of population growth, country of origin, median age, language usage, education and income levels, marital patterns and religious affiliation, as well as the discriminatory experience mentioned above, reinforce the relevance of this study. There is an urgent need for protestant and “evangelical” churches to respond in appropriate, contextualized ways to all Latinos,

without regard to place of origin, race, ethnicity or socioeconomic status. This is particularly important when we consider the contextual danger faced by Hispanic children, youth and young adults in the 21st century.

Creating room for a generation at risk

Recent demographic profiles, provided by the U.S. Census Bureau), Pew Hispanic Center and the National Alliance for Hispanic Families, serve to remind us that for those that wish to serve Hispanic families there are various factors that place in specific risk Hispanic youth. For example, Hispanic children and youth born in the US have the unenviable distinction of being the group of American citizens that in the greatest probability live below the poverty level. Hispanic youth also lead the nation in high school dropout rates, in the number of teen pregnancies and the level of participation in gangs. As to be expected, the children of teenage mothers are in the greatest risk of living in poverty, of having health problems, of behavioral problems and educational challenges (National Alliance for Hispanic Families 2012). Scholars observe, “once the cycle of poverty and violence begins in the life of a teenage Latino boy or girl, it is very difficult to break in following generations” (Ramos 2007, 175).

It is understandable that the particular risk factors mentioned above also affect the parents of Hispanic children and youth. In an important study titled “Hispanic America: Faith, Values & Priorities”, the Barna Group identified the five greatest social challenges facing Latinos today: 1) obtaining and completing adequate education; 2) finding a well-paying job; 3) immigration; 4) housing; and, 5) family break-ups (2012, 8).

Unfortunately, finding creative and strategic ways to deal with the socioeconomic and cultural challenges described above is beyond the reach of the ministry provided by the majority of Hispanic churches, protestant as well as “evangelical”. Nevertheless, according to many Hispanic youth pastors and youth throughout the country, there is much that can and should be done to improve the image and culture of the local church in such a way that the efforts to reach Hispanic youth and young adults can be improved. Some changes require adapting the approach to ministry; others require closer examination of the theology and culture of the church. One of the least encouraging results of the study conducted by Barna is that among Latino adults not affiliated to a church, only 17% have a favorable impression of the Christian church. When asked to give some explication for the negative image that many have regarding the church, youth pastors and student leaders often mentioned the “perception” that the Hispanic “evangelical” churches are too traditional and legalistic (Barna Group 2012, 20).

Joaquín Ochoa, youth pastor at Cornerstone Church in McAllen, Texas, observed that many of the churches in *the valley* (i.e., the Río Grande Valley) are stuck in the 70s, while others are in the 60s, and even some are still observing the church culture and traditions of the 50s. As with other Hispanic “evangelical” churches, Joaquín admits that the gospel does not change. Nevertheless, the way in which we present the gospel needs to adapt to the context of our intended target group. Pastor Ochoa points out that many of the “evangelical” churches in the region insist on maintaining the style and practices of long ago, or the “golden years”. Moreover, they are willing to do so at the cost of the children and grandchildren,

and even at the expense of the gospel. For example, many resist using English because they equate Hispanic ministry with ministry in Spanish, and they defer to the linguistic and cultural preferences of the immigrant generation, even when the majority of the Latinos in the area have been born in the US and primarily speak English (private interview, July 11, 2013). Many Hispanic Christians born in the US are frustrated by what they perceive as indifference on the part of pastors and youth leaders born outside the US. The youth pastors that are most sensitive to the –on occasions profound generational differences that exist in the churches– recognize the cultural and theological reasons for the resistance they find when they propose changes like those by churches mentioned in this study.

Cultural resistance

In his study of Hispanic protestant churches, Edwin Hernández noted that, sociologically, the traditional Spanish speaking churches help Latinos born outside the US to adapt to their lives in the US, while at the same time serving as “an important mechanism to maintain the cultural values, language and customs” (Hernández 1999, 223). As a consequence, for some churches dominated by Latinos born outside the US, incorporating English programs and ministries that take into account the preference of youth and young adults born in the US would minimize their efforts to maintain and reinforce the values, language and customs of the immigrant generation. Various pastors and youth leaders with whom I have spoken in recent years point out that, from the perspective of youth and young adults, especially among those born in the US, the traditions and preferences of the immigrant generation seems to have precedence with regard to reaching the lost.

Theological resistance

There are also so-called theologians that reinforce the determination to resist the calls for adaptations to the linguistic and cultural preferences of Latinos born in the US and whose language is English. For example, the majority of “evangelical” Christians believe that they are called to be holy in all manner of conduct (1 Peter 1.14-16) which is characterized, above all else, by “not conforming” to worldly lifestyles (Romans 12.2). Among many first generation Latinos, their valued traditions and prohibitions are not seen as “cultural preferences”, but rather as a reflection of personal and communal holiness, “without which no one shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12.14). As such, it is impossible to consider adaptation to the needs and preferences of the younger generation, in which the majority has been influenced by *the world*.

Tony Suárez, a Pentecostal evangelist well-known in Virginia, has observed that many pastors and lay leaders, all very devout and well-intentioned, have failed to plan for the future or in anticipating the cultural and social challenges that face Latinos born in the US (personal interview, February 28, 2014). On the other hand, church leaders that think about the mission and are forward thinking recognize that Latinos born in the US and whose dominant language is English are more than just a problem that needs to be addressed. As the Hellenized Jews that spoke Greek in the first century, including the apostle Paul, Barnabas and Timothy, these Latinos are potential agents of a mission and for transcultural and multi-ethnic church growth in the US.¹⁰

¹⁰ In Chapter 3 of *A Future for the Latino Church: Models for Multilingual, Multigenerational Hispanic Congregations* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), I provide various examples of “evangelical” churches dominated by native Latinos that in short time turned their churches into multi-ethnic and multi-cultural one.

Conclusion

Leaders and members of Hispanic protestant and “evangelical” churches today should become aware that Latinos born in the US that primarily speak English are more than just a problem to resolve, or an objective for home missions. The demographic data offered here suggest that Latinos born in the US are the future of the Hispanic church and are invaluable agents for the 21st century mission. For example, Latinos born in the US represent a viable solution to a transcultural and multicultural ministry in a society that is racially discriminatory. In the first century of our era, the Hellenistic Christian Jews helped nurture an identity “in Christ” that did not take into account boundaries established by nationalities, race or ethnicity (e.g., Acts 11.19-30). In a similar manner today, Hispanic “evangelicals” born in the US that reside “between two worlds,” both spiritually and psychologically, are positioned in a very particular way to view critically the narrowest way to view humanity, not only in the church but outside as well.

For this reason, as well, it is incumbent upon Hispanic protestant and “evangelical” churches to respond, in appropriate contextualized ways, not only to Latinos born in other countries whose dominant language is Spanish, but also to Latinos born in the US that speak English.

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CHAPTER 2

Historical Contributions of Southwest Desert Cultures and Religions to Hispanic Evangelicalism Dr. Daniel F. Flores

When we speak of Hispanic Evangelicalism, we must be cautious not to infer that it is possible to put forth any sort of monolithic representation of what is truly a complex demographic. We would do better to think of Hispanic Evangelicals in terms of family systems with matriarchs and patriarchs, uncles, aunts, siblings, and cousins. The matriarchs and patriarchs share religious and cultural heritage with the [medieval] Catholics, Jews, and Muslims of Spain. These first Hispanic families intertwined with the heritages of Mesoamerican Indians and Africans. Other European and Asian families came in subsequent waves of immigration to create a gorgeous kaleidoscope of nationalities that make up modern day Latin America. Significantly, the vastness of New Spain permitted them to nurture a deep-seated anti-clericalism against the old Catholicism. There were periods where spiritual vitality would blossom like cactus after the desert monsoon, then wane under burdensome bureaucracy. This chapter is about their descendants, Hispanic families of the Southwest, whose generations discovered spiritual vitality in the Evangelical movement.

Readers in the twentieth century were right to connect “Evangelicalism” with adherents of Reform and other conservative Calvinistic faith traditions. However, the present twenty-first century admission of Wesleyans and Pentecostals to the family of American Evangelicalism deserves a serious re-evaluation of the semantic range of the term “Evangelical.” The author will argue that several periods of religious renewal and decline have contributed to the success of Hispanic Evangelicalism in diverse communities seeking spiritual liberation. This paper is only a brief overview of an important topic that deserves deeper scholarly research. For the purpose of economy of words, the term “Hispanic” is used here interchangeably for “Latino,” “Latina,” or any other designation for Americans of Spanish or Latin-American heritage.

Roman Catholic New Spain

After the *Reconquista*, Hispanics remained connected to Roman Catholicism as the official religion of New Spain. This included the converted Jews and Muslims of Spain and those who were expelled or who migrated to the Americas. In New Spain, indigenous peoples were introduced to Christianity and the sword. They suffered many indignities in the name of the Roman Catholic Church. Fray Bartolomé de las Casas’ jeremiad against the Spaniards was severe.

Pause now to consider what progress in religion can be made with such examples of Christians as the Spaniards who go out to the Indies. What honor do they procure for the true God? What effort do they make to bring the knowledge of God to the Indians and bring them to worship Him? What care do they take of those souls to plant the seed of faith

and have it grow and burgeon? And judge whether what they did was less sinful than that of Jeroboam who “drove Israel from following the Lord and made them sin a great sin.” Or is it equal to or more than the sin committed by Judas, and did it not create a greater disturbance? (Las Casas, 85, 86).

In the North American region of New Spain, now known as Mexico, shrewd priests allowed Indians to retain their special *fiestas* of harvest and fertility. Each village had a patron god or goddess, a *diosito*. The Indian’s pantheon of deities was challenged by the European Virgin cults which the Spaniards imposed on them. The Indians replaced the names and images of their previous deities with the names of the virgins. Among these were the mother goddesses, *Chalchihuitlicue* and *Xochiquetzalli* (Turner, 61, 63). The most important of these Aztec goddesses was *Tonantzin*. When the Catholic priests came and smashed their idols, the Indians simply resumed their goddess worship under the guise of saint veneration. This practice received special sanction from the Roman Catholic missionaries who considered it “guided syncretism (Turner, 62)”. The once proud Indians were psychologically and spiritually demoralized by the *Conquistadores*. The destruction of their holy places and idols by Spanish missionaries appeared to mark an end to their old allegiance to their gods. Parkes notes the following effect of the *Conquista* on the religion of the Indians.

Cortes had demonstrated so forcefully the superior powers of the Christian God that the Indians were eager for conversion; and they presented themselves for baptism in such numbers that the friars soon lost count of the times they performed the

ceremony, estimating their converts in the hundreds of thousands and even in millions. The Indians continued to celebrate festivals, decorating themselves with flowers and performing their old pagan dances; but they learnt to sing Christian hymns and their dances were now in honor of the Virgin. Except for the disappearance of human sacrifices the change was small; they still prayed for rain and for good harvests, and only the names of the deities had been altered. Many converts hid their idols from the friars and continued to worship them, alongside images of the Virgin, in secret (Parkes, 62).

The most famous of these divine exchanges is La Virgen de Guadalupe, known affectionately as *La Morenita*. According to tradition, in 1531 a mystical manifestation of a virgin converted thousands of Indians and unified hundreds of Mexican tribes. The legend tells of Juan Diego, a converted Indian, who was walking down Tepeyac Hill, north of Mexico City, when he was lured away by beautiful music. The sound led him to a site where the old Aztec shrine to the goddess *Tonantzin* had been before it was destroyed by the Spaniards. There, a dark-skinned lady with Indian features appeared to him speaking in his native *Nahuatl* language. She identified herself as the Virgin Mary and demanded that a temple be erected for her on the site. Diego made several unsuccessful attempts to convince the bishop of Mexico about the vision. The apparition of the lady instructed Diego to pick some roses to take to the Bishop. Diego was surprised to find roses growing among rocks where only cactus grew before. He wrapped them in his *tilma*, or cape, and took them to the Bishop. As he unfolded the cape, the image of *La Morenita* appeared on it and soon a chapel

was built on the site. At first the obvious confusion between the Virgin of Guadalupe and *Tonantzin* caused some priests to call for the shrine to be abolished. However, the spiritual power of the apparition was so instrumental in the evangelization of the Indians that the Catholic Church could not refute their devotion to it. (Milne, 179,180).

Father Virgilio Elizondo believes that this apparition was a great miracle for the Hispanic people and the Roman Catholic Church. For him, it was more than a spiritual experience. It symbolized God's acceptance for a broken people.

The response of the Indians was a spontaneous explosion of pilgrimages, festivals, and conversions to the religion of the Virgin ... The real miracle was not the apparition but what happened to the defeated Indian ... They who had been robbed of their lands and of their way of life and even of their gods, [but which] were now coming to life (Elizondo, 1).

The Roman Catholic Church was so eager to convert the Indians that they not only permitted a syncretistic form of New World Christianity, they also encouraged it. Roman Catholicism in *Nueva España* lost its European roots and was transformed into the cult of *La Morenita*. A chapel still stands on the original site. At the base of the hill is an enormous basilica housing a reproduction of the *tilma* bearing the image of *La Morenita*. The original *tilma* is on display in Notre Dame, Paris. The basilica at Tepeyac, however, remains the most important pilgrimage site, especially on December 12 for the *Fiesta de La Virgen de Guadalupe*. During this festival thousands of pilgrims come to visit the shrine.

Festivities usually begin a week ahead of time and end on the big day. On the night of the eleventh, the main boulevard leading to the shrine from the capital is jammed with pedestrians. Many of the groups are in a festive mood, laughing and singing along the way. In contrast there are always some penitents who “kneel” their way to the shrine, some with horribly lacerated and bloody knees. Every once in a while an Indian bystander will throw down a serape or other garment in the path of one of the penitents. This is not so much from compassion as from the belief that the self-inflicted torture makes the knees and the blood of the penitent holy. Whatever object they touch will absorb this holiness and bring blessings to its owner (Milne, 180).

The long relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the Mexican people initiated in the fifteenth century through the *Conquistadores* may ultimately stand in judgment against the church. The brutal destruction of their language and culture are etched into their racial memories forever. Missions were established early to educate and evangelize the Indians and *Meztizos*. Not all converts were welcome in the Roman Catholic Church. There was a time in Mexican history when the Spanish Inquisition began to seek out and punish Catholics who were also practicing Jews. This charge was referred to as *Judaizante*. A typical record of the Spanish Inquisition process would list the person, personal data, the accusation, and the sentence. An actual example, translated, taken from Catholic records follows:

Flores, Gonzalo a. [alias] Gonzalo Vaez Mendez:
age 44; b. [born in] La Torre de Moncorborbo; son

of Francisco Vaez Mendez and Mari Diaz Flores, both also b. in La Torre de Moncorbo; merchant; single. Arrested in 1643; feigned insanity; demanded Jewish rations, new pots, and oil for cooking. Judaizante and observer of Mosaic laws; relaxed [burned] alive in 1649 auto (Liebman, 74).

In 1579, Luis de Carvajal y de la Cueva was declared governor of the *Nuevo Reino de Leon* which extended from Tampico to the present site of San Antonio. Carvajal was a *Converso*, or a Jewish person who was forced to convert to Catholicism. These *Conversos* were pejoratively referred to by other Jews as *Marranos*, or swine, for the transgression of betraying Judaism. However, once Carvajal became governor he became known as an “observant” Jew. He was arrested by the Spanish Inquisitors for practicing Judaism and burned at an *auto da fe* on December 8, 1596, together with his mother and three of his sisters (Roth, 276).

Not all *Conversos* were burned. For the crime of *Judaizante*, some *Conversos* were burned in effigy. Others were imprisoned and/or tortured until they agreed to do penance. Penance included the public wearing of a sackcloth garment called a *sambenito*. The *sambenito* had various symbols painted on it depicting the nature of the crime and the severity of the sentence. A tall mitre called a *coraza* was also mandatory public attire. This humiliating dress was required at *fiestas* and all public functions. After the sentence had passed, the *sambenito* was inscribed with the name of the *penitente* and hung in the parish church for a memorial of shame (Roth, 129, 131).

During the next two hundred years, at least 767 Mexican Jews were condemned, five of whom were burned (Roth, 278). Thousands of Mexican Jews who escaped detection practiced Judaism secretly (Toro, *passim*). Their religion became much like that of the Crypto-Jews of Spain and Portugal. "...They observed mitzvot in public: they kept the Sabbath and festivals, fasted and prayed on Yom Kippur, observed the Passover according to tradition, sat in *Succoth* and observed Shavuot and Hanukah" (Beinart, 70). Mexico eventually abolished the Spanish Inquisition when it gained its independence from Spain in 1821. However, it was not until then that the humiliating *sambenitos* were removed from the parish churches and burned (Roth, 131).

The Roman Catholic Church in America has been facing a serious shortage of priests since the last quarter of the twentieth century. The shortage of Hispanic priests is even more alarming. Roger B. Luna laments the sad situation of the lack of Mexican priests for the large Mexican parishes. In his article entitled, "Why so few Mexican-American Priests," Luna cites four principle reasons for the shortage:

1. The Spanish tradition of not creating a native clergy;
2. Open discrimination against Mexicans by priests;
3. Taking Mexicans for granted on the part of the church; no specific effort to keep them Catholic;
4. The lack of education, especially higher education, among Mexican young people (Stevens-Arroyo, 160).

Perhaps the most grievous *faux pas* of the Roman Catholic Church was their slowness to appoint indigenous priests into the episcopacy. They did not appoint an American Hispanic bishop until the mid-twentieth century. In 1970, Father Patricio Flores, a poor Mexican American priest from the San Antonio *barrio*, became the first ever American Hispanic to be appointed Bishop in the United States of America. Flores made history a second time when he moved up to the office of Archbishop (Lucas, 39). The appointment of Archbishop Flores was a landmark victory for American Hispanic Catholics. The unfortunate note is that this new acknowledgment of Hispanic leaders came at least 500 years too late. This delay resulted in a painful rift between the Catholic Church and their disenfranchised Hispanic parishioners. There is little doubt that this shunning contributed to the already shaken pride of Hispanic people. The people had little choice but to look for other outlets to exercise their spiritual gifts.

Stoll identifies two reasons Catholic thinkers cite for the massive defections of Hispanics to Protestantism and Pentecostalism. First, the internal structure of the pastoral bureaucracy left the flocks “vulnerable to proselytism.” In order to compete with Protestants and Pentecostals, Catholics advocate emulation of Protestant evangelism, worship, and lay leadership training. Stoll adds that such efforts are not new, nor have they been effective in competing for converts (Stoll, 33, 35).

The other reason Catholic thinkers give for defections is that a massive Protestant conspiracy poured American dollars into Hispanic missions while their indigenous efforts languished financially. These Catholics also feel that Evangelicals took gross advantage of them during their Vatican II inter-

nal reformation. Stoll meets this excuse head on by pointing out two glaring inconsistencies. First, Catholics also pumped “Yankee” and European money into Hispanic missions. Second, Protestants had a long history of missions to Hispanics. That is, Protestant and Pentecostal missions to Hispanics are motivated out of theological conviction. They are not specifically prompted as an opportunistic response to the crisis of the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America (Stoll, 35).

The Borderlands

Along the Mexico-United States frontier, Protestants and Methodists offered new religious options for the Hispanic community. Since the period following the Mexican-American War, Protestants had sought to evangelize the Mexicans in “the spirit of Manifest Destiny - not in the political sense, but as a religious conquest” (Baldwin, 19). It is no wonder that the ban against Protestantism in Mexico continued until 1857, nine years after the war. By 1883, there were twelve mission boards with 85 missionaries serving 264 congregations (Baldwin, 3).

One of the lesser known reasons for the success of missionaries may have been due to the Crypto-Jewish remnant’s revulsion to Roman Catholicism. As noted above, the Spanish Inquisition in Mexico forced some Sephardic Jews into practicing Judaism secretly. Study of the Holy Scriptures is central to Judaism, but forbidden to laypeople in Roman Catholicism. In New Spain, Crypto-Jews were cut off from the Synagogue and Torah study. According to Tomas Atencio, sociologist at the University of New Mexico, Crypto-Jews converted to Protestantism in order to acquire the Bible (Tsoodle, 10). How widespread this situation may have been across the frontier is unknown. However,

at least two Spanish Bibles, the Sanchez family and the Gomez family Bibles, inspired growth among Presbyterians in New Mexico by facilitating access to former Catholics (Atencio, 50).

Not much happened by way of Methodist missions with Spanish speaking people on the borderlands until the 1870s. The primary reason was that the Missionary Society focused their efforts on Latin America rather than Spanish-speaking people living in the borderlands. The ethnic variety of borderland peoples, besides Anglo and European colonists, included Africans, unassimilated Indians, Spaniards, Canary Islanders, and “Mexicans.” Roman Catholic priests maintained an elaborate level of racial distinctions for their parishioners, assigning social strata according to ethnic background and parentage. Some of the categories for these castes were “*español, indio, negro, meztizo, mulato, lobo, and coyote*” (Chipman, 250). Attempts to successfully missionize borderland peoples would have to deal with this complexity of race and culture.

In 1845, Melinda Rankin, under the auspices of the Western Presbytery of the Presbyterians, established the Rio Grande Female Institute in Brownsville, Texas. It survived for only a few years. Following the 1848 General Conference, the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) expanded their boundaries into the newly annexed western territories. In 1850, an English speaking MEC mission was established in Sante Fe, New Mexico under the supervision of Enoch G. Nicholson (Sylvest, 296, 304, *passim*). Benigno Cárdenas, an evangelical-minded Roman Catholic priest, offered his services to Nicholson and the Methodist mission. Not wishing to interfere with the Roman Catholic in-house dispute, Nicholson refused the priest’s kindly offer. Cárdenas was sent to Rome

to answer to the authorities for his rebellion. On his return voyage, he stopped over in London where he was befriended by William H. Rule, a veteran British Wesleyan Methodist missionary who had served in Gibraltar and Spain. It is curious that Rule did not mention Cárdenas in his memoirs. However, he recorded that he provided letters of introduction for Don Angel Herreros de Mora, an ex-priest from Spain, for employment in the American Bible and Tract Societies (Rule, 232). Cárdenas remained with Rule for ten weeks of personal mentoring. Cárdenas arrived in New York with letters from Rule to the Methodist Missionary Society. By chance or by providence, Cárdenas encountered Nicholson who was there to discuss the New Mexico mission. Walter Hansen, a resident of Mexico, joined the team. Nicholson returned as superintendent. Hansen and Cárdenas were to assist as colporteurs and preachers. Disregarding Bishop Jean-Baptiste Lamy's threats of excommunication, he boldly delivered his message under the portals of the Governor's Palace on November 20, 1853 (Nañez, 5-7). This Methodist sermon in Spanish is often regarded as the first preached in America. This popular claim does not adequately consider John Wesley's journal entry of April 4, 1737 which stated: "I began learning Spanish, in order to converse with my Jewish parishioners." Wesley's conversations with the German and Italian colonists included preaching to them as "parishioners." It is reasonable to speculate that John Wesley may very well have preached the first Methodist sermon in Spanish (Wesley, 47).

Walter Hansen abandoned the mission after a few months, and Nicholson returned to New York in less than a year. Cárdenas, still only a *colporteur*, was left to his own devices in New Mexico. He made enough converts to successfully form

congregations in both Socorro and Peralta. In 1855, the mission was terminated after pejorative reports were received by the Missionary Society from Dallas D. Lore, the new superintendent (Barclay, 237). The Methodist work among Spanish speaking people was left to languish away under the care of Ambrosio Gonzalez, a lay exhorter (Barton, 65-67). Methodist work among Spanish speaking people was sporadic in the years following. The next major push did not occur until 1869, with the bilingual efforts of Thomas Harwood in New Mexico (Barclay, 239). The Mexican Mission began in Texas in 1873 when Alejo Hernández, an aspirant for the Roman Catholic priesthood, was received as a Methodist preacher under the authority of the MEC, South (Gillett, 37).

It is helpful to review the 1855 funding report of General Missionary Committee. It reflects ambitious plans for the expanding mission of the MEC in the coming quadrennium. Funds for foreign missions included \$31,000 for Liberia, \$8,500 for China, \$10,500 for foreign German work, \$5,000 for France, \$1,000 for Norway, \$1,000 for Norway or Sweden, \$400 for Sweden, \$7,500 for India, \$5,000 for Turkey, \$2,750 for Argentina, \$3,000 for northern South America and \$1,500 for Central America. The General Missionary Committee also made financial provision for future expansion into the territories and domestic ethnic missions. Regarding the latter, they allocated \$48,000 for German Domestic Missions, \$13,250 for Indian Missions, \$1,000 for a mission to the Jews in New York City and a paltry \$1,250 for “concluding” the New Mexico mission (MEC, *passim*).

The 1939 union of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Methodist

Protestant Church gave opportunity to consolidate their Hispanic missions into the Southwest Mexican Mission, later renamed the Rio Grande Conference (Vernon, 280-283, 322). This venture which featured Mexican leadership immediately attracted Mexican Nazarene pastors and disenfranchised Pentecostals to their growing ranks. This new conference of churches overlapped all the conferences of Texas and New Mexico from 1939 to January 2015. The Rio Grande Conference failed to grow their “family chapels” after the creation of The United Methodist Church in 1968. This unsustainable condition resulted in a unanimous jurisdictional decision to close the conference by January 2015. The plan would permit congregations to be designated as mission outposts for the newly formed Rio Texas Conference, formerly the Southwest Texas Conference, or unite with their nearest geographic United Methodist conference. It is unclear how this “marriage of convenience” will play out with the Hispanic Evangelicals within the former Rio Grande Conference.

As noted above, the Protestants had a decided advantage over the Roman Catholics because of Protestant and Methodist interest in missions. In the USA, almost all Hispanics were considered *Católicos* by the Catholic Church. Therefore, priests focused their attentions on converting Anglo-Protestants. In the meantime, Hispanics were converting to Protestantism which was meeting their specific needs. They found in Protestantism those things which were severely lacking in Roman Catholicism: acceptance, warmth, sometimes financial aid, and more often than not, a minister who was Latin-American or could speak Spanish as well. Also, many Protestant churches sent young people to be educated in Protestant schools and gave them leadership training (Stevens-Arroyo, 162).

During the Mexican Revolution, Protestant missions in Mexico declined. In April of 1914, U.S. Marines began an eight month occupation of Veracruz. On the advice of the U.S. State Department, American missionaries fled Mexico until the crisis ended in 1917 (Baldwin, 156). During the interim years of the American's absence, Mexican nationals discovered they could successfully operate the mission schools and churches by themselves. When the American missionaries returned, they demanded control over the fledgling Mexican leaders. Those ministries which would not relinquish control had their support cut off. This plan was met with bitter resentment by the Mexican nationals. One Mexican minister referred to this as the "*plan de asesinato*" (Baldwin, 160, 161).

Holland questions the apparent lack of involvement of Anglo-Protestant missions to Hispanics in Southern California. He notes that the many Hispanic churches were planted between 1870 and 1930 due to the efforts of Anglo missionaries returning from the Latin American mission field. However, the majority of Hispanic congregations were not established on the part of Anglo interests or efforts. He adds that not since 1930 "have many Anglos or their churches been involved in Hispanic ministry in Southern California" (Holland, 405, 106).

If Hispanics are tempted to question the motives of the few Anglo missionaries, it may be linked to a history of mutual contempt. In the early days, there were some Anglos who had the motivations of social work or soul-saving or improving morals. Others merely wanted to build separate worship halls because "some of the American Protestant churches resented the appearance of a Mexican in their congregations"

(Holland, 406). There was a definite institutionalized agenda to keep Mexicans in their place.

One of the principle arguments used to secure Anglo support for Mexican missions was that converting Mexicans to Protestantism would protect the socioeconomic *status quo* in the Southwest (Anglos exploiting “cheap” Mexican labor), and would preserve Anglo American cultural institutions--the principle of “Americanization through evangelization” (Holland, 406).

The practical difficulty Hispanics have with “Mainline Protestant” denominations is their extremely formal mode of worship. At least in Catholicism they could dance and sing during their *fiestas*. On the positive side, the sophisticated organizational models provide sound structure for Hispanic congregations. Negatively, this regimentation tends to work against the Hispanic preference for festive spontaneity and participatory worship (Martin, 214). Disappointment with the hierarchy of Catholicism and the hegemony of Protestantism paved the way for greater openness to free, self-governing forms of worship.

Wesleyan-Holiness and Pentecostalism

Hispanics longed for the opportunity to express themselves in the joys of the Spirit. The Holiness and Pentecostal traditions provided the cultural medium for such expression for Hispanics. From its earliest days, this movement has emphasized freedom of worship in egalitarian settings. It allows for people of any ethnic, economic or educational background to have equal participation in singing, preaching or praising. It stresses

that all are baptized into the same Holy Spirit. Suddenly, in a moment of ecstatic worship, the outward appearances and situations lose their importance. This is the spiritual dynamic of Pentecostal liberation and it is very appealing to many Hispanics. Pentecostalism offered Hispanics an alternative to the highly ritualistic Roman Catholicism and the rigid Mainline Protestantism.

Dayton insightfully traces Pentecostalism to the distinctive Wesleyan holiness tradition. He agrees with scholars who identify Wesley as a “theologian of the Spirit,” although there are some theological differences from classical Pentecostalism (Dayton, 42). He further notes Wesley’s apparent break into themes of pneumatology more like the radical traditions. One major source of the accusation that Wesley was an “enthusiast” was his doctrine of assurance, which was rooted in an affirmation of “perceptible inspiration.” Wesley rather consistently taught that “the testimony of the Spirit is an inward impression on the souls of believers, whereby the Spirit of God directly testifies to their spirit that they are the children of God” (Dayton, 43). Nevertheless, Pentecostal doctrine of the subsequent baptism in the Holy Spirit changed the Protestant message radically. Pentecostalism, like true Methodism, is a tradition that is neither Catholic nor Protestant. Gause acknowledges that Protestantism is the root of [Anglo] Pentecostalism, but he also emphasizes a definite break from Protestantism.

I emphasize Pentecostalism’s break with Protestantism because it arose from within Protestantism. There is an equally distinctive break with the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. It lies in Pentecostalism’s rejection of most of the sacramentalism

of the Roman Catholic Church, and particularly in Pentecostalism's order of the experience of salvation and the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Gause, 111).

Although there are disputes as to the actual date and location of the beginnings of American Pentecostalism, the 1906-1909 Azusa Street Revival was the major fountainhead of Pentecostal activity for the twentieth century (Bartleman, ix). It was at the Azusa Street mission that African-American Holiness minister William J. Seymour, a student of Bible teacher Charles Parham, brought the message of Pentecost. He preached that the New Testament experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit was available for the modern believer subsequent to salvation (Hollenweger, 22). Central to Seymour's message was Parham's doctrine that the evidence for receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit was the manifestation of speaking in other tongues, or "xenoglossy." This was based upon the Acts chapter two narrative concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Just as Seymour had preached, many were baptized in the Holy Spirit. The word of this unusual revival received major press coverage. Hundreds of people came from all over the country to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. They freely received the message of the subsequent baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. They in turn took the message to the far corners of the world. The Azusa Street Revival continued uninterrupted for three years (Menzies, 51).

The Azusa Street event reminds people of all racial groups that color or language has no bearing on spirituality. An eyewitness remarked about the interracial aspect of the revival.

It is noticeably free from all nationalistic feeling. If a Mexican or a German cannot speak English he gets up and speaks in his own tongue and feels quite at home, for the Spirit interprets through his face and the people say "Amen." No instrument that God can use is rejected on account of color or dress or lack of education. That is why God has so built up the work (Menzies, 51).

Given that turn-of-the-century Los Angeles was populated by a richly diverse ethnic mixture of nationalities, including Mexicans, Chinese, Russians, Greeks, Japanese, Koreans, and Anglos, it is not surprising that these groups were present to receive the message of Pentecostalism at that little Methodist chapel on Azusa Street (Bartleman, xi). There, at that tiny mission, people of all ethnicities were received with open arms. It is most significant to note that early in the movement Hispanics were granted equal status among other peoples. The exactness of who became the first modern Hispanic to receive the Good News of Pentecostal baptism is not as important as who initiated Hispanic Pentecostalism. An earlier Holiness mission was begun in 1904 among Hispanics in Los Angeles by May McReynolds, at the First Church of the Nazarene (Hodgson, 1). The first recorded Hispanic conversion to Pentecostalism in California occurred in 1909 when Luís López was baptized by an unknown Pentecostal preacher (De Leon, 61). Frank Bartleman may have been one of the first Pentecostal missionaries to the Hispanic people. Azusa Street Pentecostals were reported to have made several ministry trips to Tijuana, Mexico to pray for the sick (Bartleman, 83). The emphasis on prayer for the sick, direct from the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition, became a central feature of classical

Pentecostal missions (Dayton, 20). A.J. Tomlinson, father of the two Wesleyan-Holiness based sister denominations, The Church of God (Cleveland) and The Church of God of Prophecy, noted the presence of Mexicans during the 1912 Church of God convention at Raton, New Mexico. “During almost all the convention we have had with us four Mexicans, three men who could only speak Spanish and one woman who could interpret. Very interesting indeed...” (Tomlinson, 186). Although Tomlinson did not mention their place in the church nor their religious affiliation, it is worth noting his first contact with Spanish-speaking constituents.

For Hispanics, healing ministries effectively replaced their need for folk shamans, or *curanderas* (Sterk, *passim*). In spite of Bartleman’s role in the inception of “healing evangelist” ministry, it is unknown whether he ever became a significant figure in Hispanic ministry. The old Catholic tradition of saint veneration shifted to veneration of spirit-filled men and women dedicated to preaching the Gospel. In every movement there are giants, or “apostles” who give sacrificially of themselves for the cause of the Gospel. Hispanic Evangelicals revere these *Santos* as special people, qualitatively different from themselves. Such are the acknowledged leaders “anointed” for special ministry. Two such “apostles” of Hispanic Pentecostalism for the Hispanic people were Alice E. Luce and Henry C. Ball. Alice E. Luce was a well-educated Anglican missionary to India. While in India, she heard about the Azusa Street revival. Inquiring about the baptism in the Holy Spirit, she was led to two Indian women who had recently received the blessing. There in India, she also experienced the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Her missionary tour was cut short when she was sent home to recover from a serious illness. After her recovery, she

was reassigned to Great Britain, Canada, and Mexico (De Leon, 19-21).

Alice Luce and her co-laborer, Sunshine Marshall, were forced to leave Mexico during the Revolution. They moved to Texas where they met Henry Cleophas Ball (De Leon, 20- 21). These women were to have a profound influence on the young preacher and the Hispanic community. H. C. Ball started his ministry to Hispanics as a Methodist minister. Ball was a local preacher appointed to two congregations, one Anglo and the other Hispanic, which he founded in Ricardo, Texas. Shortly after learning about sanctification as the “second blessing” from a traveling Wesleyan-Holiness preacher, he came into contact with Pentecostals. The movement was barely known in South Texas, but he was impressed by the power and authority with which they preached. He soon began to emulate their style, noting the receptiveness of his Hispanic congregation. Ball fully intended to remain a Methodist preacher. However, due to pressure from his District Superintendent, he resigned his pastorate. In January 10, 1915, H.C. Ball was ordained as an Assemblies of God minister.

Ball preached to Mexican pickers in the South Texas cotton fields and used the Wesleyan strategy for establishing Class Leaders to build up the churches. Ball later married missionary Sunshine Marshall and enjoyed many years of joyous ministry to Hispanics in both Americas. Ball was a splendid example of fully acculturated missionary. Although his Spanish vocabulary was limited and he spoke with a distinctive Anglo accent, his parishioners were always eager to hear him preach. H.C. Ball served as missionary, pastor, educator, and district superintendent. His gentle spirit and warm personality endeared him to those he served. Raul P. Flores, my late

father, recollected his former pastor with affection. He noted Ball was well accepted by most Hispanics, even though Ball was an Anglo. “Brother Ball always considered himself one of us - a Mexican.” He also noted that Sunshine’s willingness to be close to Mexicans endeared her as well. “I remember one time when Sister Ball was sick, she couldn’t nurse her baby. My mother nursed that baby for her.” (Flores, interview).

Martin Marty once observed: “Curiously, Pentecostals seek spontaneity and impose great order to arrive at it,” (Marty, 121). Ball, being a good Methodist at heart, was no different. He responded to the need for Spanish-language hymns by translating and editing several hymnbooks. It is unknown exactly how many books were sold worldwide. However, records from HarperCollins indicate sales of *Himnos de Gloria* from 1965 – 2000 reached over 2.5 million (Calkins). Although he was a Wesleyan, he actually published more Spanish translations of compositions by Charles Gabriel than Charles Wesley. Curiously, the hymns of Ira D. Sankey, nicknamed the Sweet Singer of Methodism and ministry partner of Evangelist D.L. Moody, was more often published by Ball. Despite his productive leadership skills, a major faction led by Francisco Olabazal, also a former Methodist minister, challenged Ball as an unwelcome expression of Anglo hegemony. Olabazal separated from the ministries of Ball and Luce to form a new denomination, the Latin American Council of Christian Churches, or CLADIC (Holland, 2009). The CLADIC is distinctive in that it re-introduced Methodist ecclesiology and maintains a predominantly Hispanic heritage leadership.

Together, Luce and Ball founded the Assemblies of God mission to Spanish-speaking people worldwide. Realizing the

importance of theological education, they established twin short term Bible institutes, strategically located in Texas and California, for the training of Hispanic pastors and evangelists. Luce founded and operated the San Diego, California ministry known as the Berean Bible Institute from 1926 to 1955. The school, later known as Latin American Bible Institute at La Puente (LABI), was subsequently moved to La Puente, California. (De Leon, 68-72). Ball founded the Latin American Bible Institute at San Antonio, Texas in 1926. It first operated in the annex of El Templo Cristiano, the second Hispanic Assembly of God church and the flagship in Texas. Rapid growth required it to be moved to a farm house in Saspanco, Texas. It continued for many years before being moved again in 1945 to Ysleta, Texas, near El Paso (De Leon, 78-81). In 1981, it was returned to the outskirts of San Antonio, at the recently defunct *Instituto Nazareno* campus. LABI continues to train men and women in a bilingual class setting (Duran, interview). These two Bible institutes were operated under the authority of the former Gulf Latin American District and the Pacific Latin American District of the Assemblies of God, respectively. Their graduates were encouraged to pastor or pioneer new congregations and missions. At the time of this research, institute graduates are able to apply their credits to four year degree programs at Assemblies of God colleges and universities.

Alice Luce and H.C. Ball were probably the most important of the early Hispanic Pentecostal leaders, in regard to evangelizing the Mexican American community. However, there were several other notable leaders who deserve credit for their faithfulness to the Pentecostal work. It is worthy of note that Dr. Jesse Miranda, founder of AMEN and NHCLC, also had Methodist roots as a member of El Buen Samaritano United Methodist Church in

Albuquerque, New Mexico. Dr. Miranda recounts that the family moved their membership after his mother experienced a physical healing at an Assembly of God prayer service (Sellers, 56).

The Cycle of Spiritual Renewal

We have focused our examination on the Hispanic religions and cultures of the Desert Southwest. However, all branches of Hispanic Evangelicalism share a long and complex heritage of diverse religions and cultures. Since the Golden Age, Spain has enjoyed a history of contributing to spiritual revitalization cross-culturally. The creative thought of medieval Spanish philosophers Averroes, a Muslim Arab, and Maimonides, a Spanish Jew, influenced the European Renaissance and the Roman Catholic Church by reviving dialogues between Greek philosophy and theology. In like manner, the evangelical Catholicism of Juan de Valdez influenced Thomas Cranmer and Peter Martyr. Cranmer and Martyr were instrumental in forging the English Reformation. When the English Church was faltering, John Wesley, an English priest, launched the Evangelical revival in the British Isles. Wesley himself was deeply affected by German Moravians on his missionary journey to America. Although Wesley later rejected pietism, he continued to draw inspiration from Mexican hermit Gregory Molinos. He also identified similarities between Methodism with the ecstatic spirituality of Gregory López, a sixteenth century Spanish mystic (Wilson, 182, 183). Nearly one hundred years after Wesley, Anglican-Pentecostal Alice Luce took the message of Pentecost from America to a receptive Spanish colony in Wales, thus completing the circle of renewal (Thomas, 1).

The Evangelical movement, regardless of the contextualization, has always emphasized the “religion of the heart.”

The hybridization of many Hispanic cultures with the religious traditions of Catholicism, Protestantism, Methodism, Holiness-Pentecostalism has resulted in richly diverse forms of Evangelicalism. These Spirit-infused forms have the wondrous bonus of spilling over the renewal, even to their institutionalized parent denominations. While it is scarcely possible for an Evangelical to revert completely to Catholicism, Protestantism, or Methodism, those who do return to positions of leadership bring with them a spiritual vitality and ethos that is beneficial to the entire institution.

This phenomenon of cyclical renewal is not limited to any one people group. It has been witnessed as far away as Ghana where “Pentecostal-type movements” are now a major part of Presbyterian, Methodist, and Catholic congregations (Omenyo, *passim*). It is too early to suggest what could come after Hispanic Evangelicalism has moved on. However, if past history is any indicator, the future will be marked by deeper levels of renewal for the next generation which will cycle back with vitality for the former.

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CHAPTER 3

Hispanic Evangelical Institutions

Alianza de Ministerios Evangelicos and
National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference

Dr. Jesse Miranda

The Alianza de Ministerios Evangelicos Nacionales (AMEN) and the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC) is a story of what the diverse Hispanic community in the United States is capable of achieving when it moves beyond the intimidation of its traditional image and complex of “no se puede” (no it can’t be done), becomes inclusive of all its members by believing that “en la unidad esta la fuerza” (in unity there is strength), makes a paradigm shift in acts of imagination “que si se puede” (yes it can be done) and truly believes in the spiritual culture of its people and its surrounding community by creating unity for the Kingdom of God in the Lord’s timing. ¡Ya era tiempo! (It’s about time!)

“Since we cannot study the future yet, we need the past to help us see the present more clearly.” C. S. Lewis

I. The Context

The Decades of Change

Our society has moved from the family community and the world of corporate structures to one of systems that has be-

come globalized in the information age of social networks. This has changed the dimensions of contextual organizations in this nation. Simultaneously, the organization culture moved from competition to collaboration and moved the vertical forms to horizontal forms.

It is within this environment that a significant growth of the Latino population in the United States began to take place. Locally, the growth was in part due to the amnesty bill under President Ronald Reagan and the continued stream of immigration. The door was opened for thousands of Evangelicals from Latin American, thus contributing to the growth of the Latino church, both Catholic and Protestant. This brought Hispanics national notoriety.

Suddenly, there were demographic, social, cultural and ecclesial changes taking place in the nation, including the fledgling Evangelical Latino church. As it began to grow, it also began to see change through a new generation of more educated and acculturated young leaders bringing a new sense of hope to the Latino church with notable contributions toward a more visionary and progressive church.

A World Apart

The North American church and the Latino church were impacted by the growing cultural changes as communities became more distant and impersonal. A notable contrast became apparent between the “mainline” Protestant, the “mainstream” Evangelical churches and the Latino church. The spiritual and social function that the North American church once fulfilled in American life had been lost. Why? There was a (1) a lack of focus in the midst of a proliferation of church programs; (2)

loss of meaning in the work of clergy and laity alike; (3) and an uneasiness that our faith does not really fit in the world in which we live. This trend could very well extend to the Latino church, if it has not already done so, contributing to a “disease” in congregations across the land.

While the North American church became somewhat stagnate, Latino churches and denominations began to grow in number, experiencing spiritual renewal and becoming more prominent, yet remaining isolated and separate. Their spiritual ethos, social role, and cultural values became parochial, rather than “salt and light” in their community. Consequently, the Latino church became ill prepared to fulfill the spiritual and social function that is most needed in American life, particularly in the Hispanic communities. Christ’s prayer for his church “that they all be one,” was far from being answered.

The Cry Heard Across the Globe – A Wake-up Call

The Los Angeles Riots of April 1992 brought to light the isolation and/or division the church and society were experiencing socially. The cry of Rodney King, “Why can’t we all just get along?” was heard, not only in Southern California but across the nation and around the globe. Many questions and answers were circulating as to the cause of this civil disaster. Moreover, people sought an answer as to how this could happen in one of, if not the most, advanced nations of the world.

The question that prevailed or should have prevailed in congregations across the land was, why did this take place? More importantly, where was the Christian community in the midst of this human crisis? Is not the Church to be “salt and

light”? Why the prevailing darkness in society? ¡“Qué hará el justo”? (What is the just thing to do?)

The need for unity, both in the church and in the community, became evident. There were many questions, but faith prevailed and the final note was “*si se puede*” (Yes it can). Herein was the beginning setting to form a national alliance of Latino evangelicals.

II. FORMATION OF AMEN

A Clarion Call to the Latino Church in North America

“Seek the peace and prosperity of the city where I have sent you...” Jeremiah 29:7

By the 1990s, the Latino community had become a focus of society. Friends and stakeholders of the Hispanic church became interested in its quality and sustainability as an institution in society. One of the institutions that became interested in the Hispanic Christian community was the Pew Charitable Trusts (PCT) based in Philadelphia. Rev. Daniel Cortés, a friend and minister from Philadelphia was an employee at PCT and he and his boss, Dr. Luis Lugo, became advocates for the Latino church in the nation.

In the Fall of 1991, a group of Hispanic Evangelical leaders from across the nation accepted an invitation to a meeting by the Pew Charitable Trust in Philadelphia. This was the

initial meeting of what was later to become La Alianza de Ministerios Evangélicos (AMEN).

The question posed at this initial gathering was: What is the greatest need in the growing Hispanic community and what can the Latino church contribute in response. A long list of needs and solutions were submitted and discussed. But at the end of the day, the decision was that Hispanic leaders needed to unite and form a national organization. Stating that “En la unidad esta la fuerza” (there is unity in strength), the group unanimously voted to do the impossible, which was to bring together dozens of denominations and independent groups, and consisting of members from 20 some nationalities.

The meeting ended in a positive and promising note with an agreement to host a national convention and invite Latino church leaders to vote on a decision to form a national organization. The plan was for members of this steering committee to recruit delegates from their region. The grid of invitees was to include leaders from every region of the nation and Puerto Rico, all Evangelical denominations and independent organizations, all nationalities, men and women, young and old. It was proposed and approved that the initial convention be held in Southern California where I was serving as associate dean of the School of Theology at Azusa Pacific University. My staff and I were assigned the task of hosting and organizing this first historic meeting.

The First Convention in Long Beach, CA.

Sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trust, the first convention was held at the Hyatt Hotel in Long Beach, California in the

month of November of 1992. The purpose was to present the vision for and the formation of a national organization of Hispanic Evangelicals. In attendance were 500 delegates from the various regions of the United States and Puerto Rico. Canada and Mexico became members a year later. The end result was a unanimous vote for the formation of a national organization of Hispanic Evangelicals. AMEN was born!

It was agreed that the name of the organization would be La Alianza de Ministerios Evangelicos Nacionales (AMEN). I was honored to be voted in as the first president. The national advisory board of AMEN included Larry Acosta, Francisco Colop, Danny DeLeon, Lisa-Treviño Cummins, Jim Ortiz, Luciano Jaramillo, Bob Sena, Danny Villanueva, and Pedro Windsor. My assistants included Johnny Méndez and Victor Méndez. In charge of research projects was Gaston Espinoza. Dr. David Hubbard, then president of Fuller Theological Seminary served as my advisor. He retired in 1993 and spent much time with me until his untimely death on July 15, 1996. Much of his wisdom and many of his ideas left an imprint on AMEN's organization.

The four-fold mission of AMEN was established as follows: (1) to promote unity among leaders, churches, and para-church organizations in the Latino community; (2) to represent the collective aspirations of 11 million Latino Evangelicals in the United States and Puerto Rico in both church and society; (3) to develop the awareness and knowledge of the Latino church's role in spiritual and civic life in the nation; and (4) to provide a public voice for Hispanic Evangelicals.

Besides the business sessions of this first convention, there were plenary sessions, seminars and workshops which

allowed plenty of conversations and fellowship regarding the growth and development of the Latino church. Each evening ended with a celebratory service. The music for the evening included the renowned Azusa Pacific University choir and outstanding messages urging the unity of the church. Among the guests at this historical event were dignitaries from the National Evangelical Association, Christianity Today magazine, denominational superintendents and bishops, presidents of independent parachurch entities, such as World Vision, Focus on the Family, and various seminary and college representatives.

AMEN's Trajectory

In its ten plus years' tenure, AMEN has been able to accomplish much. It served to create a positive spirit of unity with regard to the presence and future of the Latino church in America. For the first time in this nation's history, Latino Evangelicals were able to work in unity with tangible exponential growth God's kingdom. As evidence, 27 denominations, 77 independent groups and community-based ministries ultimately became active members of AMEN.

The activities of AMEN have included: (1) four major conventions, (2) twelve regional convocations; (3) two national convocations in the nation's capital, (3) a historical press conference to introduce President Bush's Faith Base Initiative at a national press conference; and (4) Co-sponsor with Nueva Esperanza of the Hispanic Presidential Breakfast, which continues to be held annually.

AMEN has produced products such as (a) \$1.3 million research project which fielded three surveys on Latino re-

ligions, politics and activism on *The Hispanic Church in the Public Life of America* which included both the Evangelical and Catholic church; (b) publications include *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States*, *Hispanic churches in American Public Life Summary of findings*; and *Religion, Race and the American Presidency* as well as over a dozen other articles, books, chapters and miscellaneous publications; (c) a book and directory by Amy Sherman listing and describing Hispanic Christian social ministries nationwide. AMEN received awards from the Mayor of Los Angeles, the Indiana University Center on Philanthropy and Fund Raising School, World Vision and the Sepulveda Award from the New York City chapter.

The final convention of AMEN was held at the Anaheim Convention Center in the year 2000. The program consisted of a “who’s who” program lineup! This celebratory event included many prominent Latino Christian leaders in the U.S. Latin America without envy or competition. As president of AMEN, my message for the evening was prophetic in that it was on the theme of passing the baton to the next generation of leadership.

During the ensuing months, the AMEN board dealt with the matter of succession and continuation of what the Lord had begun.

III. Passing the Mantle to a New Generation of Leadership

“Your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.” Acts 2:17

In Search of a successor

AMEN served to gather some of the most prominent Hispanic organizations in the nation and helped to give an identity to its people, first within its own community, and then to the nation. But then I felt of the Lord that it was time for this united effort be taken to another level. After informing the board that AMEN should “pass the mantle”, discussions began regarding what younger person and/or organization should become the successor of AMEN. For several months I searched for a successor among younger leaders, and the possibility of a new organization to continue or take over AMEN. Several candidates were proposed and some were interviewed, but to no avail.

Finally, at one of the annual gathering events I held for Latino Leaders at Vanguard University, some of our board members met Samuel Rodriguez. He attended one of the sessions and shared about NHCLC and his vision. After the afternoon session, two of the AMEN board members who were present heard him speak and suggested we interview him as a candidate and possible successor of AMEN. The end result was a merger between AMEN & NHCLC in 2006. A memorandum of understanding was written stating in order to carry on some of the “genes” of AMEN on leadership development in the Hispanic community, the Jesse Miranda Center at Vanguard would oversee of the educational initiative for NHCLC.

The National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference

The NHCLC organization has taken AMEN’s agenda to another level. NHCLC represents the Latino Evangelical

community via seven directives: Life, Family, Great Commission, Education, Justice, Stewardship, and Youth. Its purposes and functions are to offer a prophetic voice and a collective voice and leadership for the Latino church before legislative, economic and ecclesiastical authorities in the national and state capitals; to provide networking opportunities for leaders and churches for the purpose of creating faith-based community programs; and to engage in political and social advocacy.

Growth and Expansion of NHCLC

NHCLC represents a broader platform and a more extensive agenda. According to President Samuel Rodriguez, “instead of framing its work in terms of the Social Gospel and Liberation Theology, it balances righteousness and justice in American public life in the form of evangelistic, social, civic and political work by seeking to promote spiritual renewal and social transformation.” (Outreach Magazine, March/April 2014)

NHCLC has broadened its list of partners and affiliates to over 40,000 churches and dozens of organizations such as the National Association of Evangelicals, the Southern Baptist Convention, Willow Creek Community Church, Liberty University, and many others. More recently, CONELA, one of the largest organizations in all of Latin America, merged with NHCLC, making it the largest Evangelical organization in the continent.

For a more complete report on both AMEN and NHCLC’s political and civic engagement, see Chapters 11 and 12 in *Latino Pentecostals in America, Faith and Politics in Action*, by Gaston Espinosa (Harvard University Press).

IV. The Next Generation: Gatekeepers to the Future

“...you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (I Peter 2:9)

Facing The Challenge

The church in America is in crisis. Why? John Perkins writes:

We have over-evangelized the world too lightly. Evangelism becomes counter-productive to God’s purpose for the church when it is not partnered on discipleship. Evangelism and discipleship should be an inseparable pair. Salvation is imperative (2 Peter 3:9), it is the basic starting point to the Christian faith. However, the starting point should not become a substitute for the divinely and ordained process to follow - Christian discipleship.” (*Christianity and the Crisis of Cultures*, p. 52)

A new generation is forthcoming offering a broader vision for the gospel to move first *in* and *through* the church into its community. Here is what some of these “chosen” younger leaders are thinking and saying. Wilfredo de Jesus, Senior Pastor of New Life Covenant in Chicago, in his book *In the Gap-What Happens When God’s People Stand Strong*, pp.18-20), states:

Gaps are all around us and God is looking for men and women to stand in the gap in our hour. There are gaps in neighborhoods, in cities and towns, in our nation and in every

corner of the world. People are in trouble in need for someone to step in on their behalf.

Who stands in the gap for others? De Jesus says it is a man or a woman who is a champion for a cause, one who protects or supports someone in need. Someone who finds the courage to sacrifice everything to represent God and block evil from destroying those He loves.

Another successful young pastor and leader of Mosaic church in Los Angeles, Erwin McManus, calls the church to reassess spirituality in terms of the artisan soul, all its beautiful colors and shades, and argues passionately for us to view life as a masterpiece in process:

Bees create hives, ants create colonies, but humans create futures. And for those who would cling to an eschatology that blunts innovative and compassionate action toward creating a better world now. We have to believe in the eternal nature of temporary things. You cannot survive in time and space without eventually holding onto some hope of that... the church is still viewing humankind through the distorted lens of the Industrial Revolution and its obsession with assembly-line efficiency... (has) left the church biased toward impersonal systems, instead of individualized and creative approaches in spiritual development. (Outreach Magazine, May/June 2014)

Then there is Dave Gibbons, a new generation leader of Newsong, a multiethnic church in Irvine, CA., and leader of the Newsong movement with churches in Mexico City, India, Korea, London and Southeast Asia. A son of an American father and an Asian mother, Gibbons believes most churches focus on the cultural definition of success devoid of the reality and theology of suffering. He says:

Call it an obsession with comfort or size or consumerism or playing in your strengths, the goals end the same: the idolatry of control. What can be done? Our main task shifts from church growth to the development of people. Small is big. It's not about preaching to people; it's about loving them. Pain fuels. Reach the fringes for the maximum impact. "Neighbor" is someone who doesn't look like you. (Outreach Magazine, May/June 2014)

Young leaders have change and transformation in mind, but in a more distinct way. "The American church will be more holistic. It will reconcile the vertical and the horizontal. It will reconcile the Way with the Dream" writes Samuel Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference predicting that the church of the future is to be comprehensive and inclusive, (Outreach Magazine, March/April 2014) Is this not the purpose of the Great Commission?

Forging a New Identity

What comes to mind as I try to understand the life and thinking of this new generation is the Nahuatl term *nepantla*. It is the term used by the Aztec Indians that means "in between-ness". During the conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards, they were asked where their loyalty laid, and the response was *nepantla*. The conquest forced them to live between two cultures. It resulted in their seeing double. First, from the perspective of one culture, then from the perspective of another, rendering both cultures transparent. From this "in between" place one sees through the fiction of the monoculture and the myth of the superiority of one culture. Eventually, when one sees beyond an ethnic cultures' myth of inferiority, a new identity is formed and a demythologization of race occurs.

Consequently, race is seen as an experience of reality from a particular perspective, a specific time and place (history), not as a fixed feature of personality and identity. *Nepantla* indicates a liminal, “in-between” space where transformation can occur. It becomes a postmodern paradigm or consciousness rooted in the creation of a new middle. That is, it is a crossroads, even a bridge to new borderlands.

Hence, as in the case of NHCLC, Rodriguez states that instead of framing its work in terms of the Social Gospel and/or Liberation theology, NHCLC balances righteousness and justice in American public life in the form of evangelistic social, civic, and political work by seeking to promote spiritual renewal and social transformation simultaneously.

A Spiritual Renewal and Social Transformation

What our new generation of leaders are saying is that the church is not an end in itself, but rather the means through which God brings his kingdom into fruition by seeking to promote spiritual renewal and social transformation. Thus, a new perspective and new identity is forged. A transformation from the kingdoms of our world into the kingdom of Christ can best occur when leaders of all types and in all contexts are poised, as Christ disciples, to influence and direct the institutions and systems of government, education, economics, commerce, law, medicine, and religion. When this takes place, the kingdom of goodness and blessing will begin to permeate every arena of life, every family, every street corner, every neighborhood, every city and every citizen throughout the world.

Is this not the case of the human and divine nature of Jesus the Christ, an incarnational model of a “both/and” par-

adigm for all generations? It reconciles the vertical and the horizontal and it reconciles the Way with the Dream, as Rodriguez states. The nature and quality of the vertical (spiritual) and horizontal (human) within the reality of Christian community can serve as a powerful witness. Through the creation of a unique and distinct community with its own set of values and its coherent way of incarnating them (both/and), the church can offer the world an alternative to its patterns of social order. It can model an open and loving community of creative conflict, of innovative freedom, and of authentic, reconciliation.

Christianity, therefore, is not an individual, deeply private experience, but rather a very concrete and practical way of life that is learned, practiced, supported, and empowered in community. While not yet fully consummated, the reign of God is not solely a future or a transcendent reality, but the irruption of a new order and a new people into human history ¡Ahora! (Now!) The kingdom of God is a creative, redemptive, and transforming relationship with His people.

A people called, redeemed, and empowered for an important mission should be taken seriously as the organizational blueprint for the Christian congregation. The institutional church, instead of exhibiting the values and beliefs of modern secular culture, should be the incarnate and distinctive social reality of the kingdom of God, offering an experience of the joy of the presence of God with us and among us.

A Celebration of the In Breaking Rule of God

The Latino church must not follow the confinement of the American church by secular reason, but rather seek to un-

derstand its community problems from a more biblical perspective and relate all of life to the creative, redemptive and transforming activity of the triune God. As God's kingdom people, let us celebrate the gracious miracle of the in breaking rule of God. It is the church offering to the world an alternative or "contrast" society in which the freedom and reconciliation opened in principle by Christ must be lived in spiritual and social concreteness.

As the church seeks to confront secular reason in the fulfillment of its mission to proclaim and embody the loving and reconciling society of God's reign in the face of injustice, alienation, despair, and hatred of modern society, a new way of ministry arises. It is a new paradigm that retrieves and reinterprets a very old, yet revolutionary message for a faithful and effective ecclesiology.

We cannot answer the world's problems by adopting toward them an attitude either of surrender or of escape. We can answer the world's problems only by changing these problems, by understanding them in a different perspective. What is required is a return on our part to that source of energy, in the deepest sense of the word... What the Church brought into the world was not certain ideas applicable simply to human needs and reason but first of all the truth, the righteousness, the joy of the Kingdom of God. (Schmermann , *Liturgy and Eschatalogy*, p. 13)

V. The Essence of Christ-like leadership - The Kingdom of God *Hoy*

Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. (Romans 12:2, The Message).

Richard Halverson, former congressional chaplain, summarized not only the history of the American church but also defined its present condition when he stated:

Christianity was birthed in Galilee as a relationship. It spread to Greece and became a philosophy. It spread to Rome and became an empire. It spread to Britain and became a culture. It spread to America and became an enterprise.

The American entrepreneurial culture

The present challenge for the racial and ethnic churches that live in the so-called American entrepreneurial culture is to not fall into this same pattern of ministry. The prominence and function the churches in North America once fulfilled in American life are gone and continue experiencing a new social and spiritual location. Today the Church faces a changed context in which former conceptions of identity and purpose are being challenged. This new situation is requiring Latino churches to approach its ministry as a new and contextual mission.

This calls for the Latino church to find new and contextual forms for the church's life and witness through gospel discernment and cultural assessment between the church and culture. Joseph Ratzinger writes,

Our greatest need in the present historical moment is people who make God credible in this world by means of the enlightened faith they live. The negative testimony of Christians who spoke of God but lived in a manner contrary to him has obscured the image of God and has opened the doors of disbelief. (*Christianity and the Crisis of Cultures*, p.52)

A significant part of our Western Christian heritage over the past few hundred years, and much of the practical teaching that we hear from our pulpits, is more about what its members “do” or “not do” in waiting for Christ’s return. This is what a witness must be able to faithfully embody. Jesus’ kingdom has been deferred until his return, or until after he is able to “clean house” at the final judgment.

The Gospel of the Kingdom

However, the dominant theme of Jesus’ teaching was the kingdom of God. Out of the 137 references to the kingdom, 100 of these are during Jesus’ ministry. In the Gospels, the new reality is the presence of Jesus himself. He is here among us and in him the kingdom of God has come near. If we are to be true to the intention of Jesus today, we must put in the center of our vision, not the Church, but the kingdom as something that is not readily available or accessible in the here and now.

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus revealed most pointedly the intent and the effect of the gospel of the kingdom of God. Here he reconstructed a positive and hopeful vision of the kind of existence human beings were created to experience under the loving and grace-filled reign of God. Hope is that

God-given virtue that is desperately longed for in our ethnic communities throughout our land.

From our pulpits we hear about John's vision in the book of Revelation of the creation of a future kingdom. It is a vision that is still under construction and has been for some time. This heavenly new creation, new home and new reign will necessarily include every human race and kindred. What they need to know, however, is that presently there is an earthly kingdom now being formed personally (internally) and within the church (globally).

God's will is to reign "on earth as in heaven." The kingdom of God has indeed come; it has a past, it is with us now, and it has an unending future. He plans through his church to form a "divine conspiracy," (to use Dallas Willard's term) to overcome the kingdoms of this world with love, justice, and truth. This includes the whole world and all of human society--at the individual, corporate, and government-al levels. *The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign forever and ever* –Rev.11:15. The scriptures describe this as the "day of the Lord," when God will have his turn "at bat."

A Missiological Agenda

The primary question is this: How can we best participate in this reality now? The forming and manifesting of the kingdom of God in and through his people, which includes all races and ethnicities, has always been at the heart of God. He expects his children to be "light, salt and leaven" to the broader world. It is the people of God who have the task of exemplifying confidence in the nature of God and his way. This is what a wit-

ness must be able to faithfully embody. Witnesses “are” more than they “do”.

In laying out the Jesus’ plan for attaining life to the full, there must be some significant alterations, deconstruction if you will, to Jesus’ original message contained in both liberal and conservative forms of contemporary Christianity. And simultaneously reconstruct a positive and hopeful vision of the kind of existence human beings were created to experience under the loving and grace-filled reign of God. This is one way to change the practice of “the most segregated hour of the week is Sunday morning”.

The major role of the Church in relation to the great issues of justice and peace will not be in its formal pronouncements, but in continually nourishing and sustaining men and women who will act responsibly as believers in the course of their secular duties as citizens and “light, salt and leaven” to the world. The church, acting corporately through its appointed leaders, will have to remind those who hold power that they are responsible for all their actions to the one who sits at the right hand of God and warn them when they pursue policies manifestly contrary to his revealed nature and will. But these pronouncements will lack authority if they are not reflected in the activities of believers from day to day in their secular involvement.

This requires a collaborative effort to focus on (1) a cultural and social analysis of our American setting; (2) theological reflection on the question, what is the gospel that addresses us in our setting, and not just in our mind? and (3) the renewal of the church and its missional identity in our cultural setting. What exactly does it mean to say that this set of issues is missi-

ological in its essence? It means that mission takes place in the crossing of cultural frontiers that have become apparent in our American culture. The required quality of being cross-cultural is precisely that our whole culture-theology-church agenda is to be *missiological*.

Jesus' mission is seen as inseparable from his preaching of the kingdom, and his inauguration of a new sort of community, the Church. It is the active reign and eschatological mission of God – the kingdom of God – rather than institutional survival or efficiency that provides the criteria for church management. Management activities have no validity in and of themselves, but only as they are oriented to the accomplishment of the desired theological results that actualize the church. These results are to symbolize the quality and purpose of life to be found when God's will is done; that is, by instituting a relational and communal life of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control." (Gal. 5:22 NRSV)

Finally, our kingdom vision for the Latino work in America is to cast and articulate a broader vision for the way the gospel must move first *in* and then *through* the church into our communities. The church is the means God uses to bring his kingdom to fruition. Such a transformation from the kingdoms of our world into the kingdom of Christ can best occur when disciples as leaders of all types and in all contexts are poised to influence and direct the institutions and systems of government, education, economics, commerce, law, medicine and religion. This means that our vision must be "holistic". When this occurs, the kingdom of goodness and blessing would begin to permeate every arena of life, every family, every street

corner, every neighborhood, every city, and every citizen poses behind the Great Commission.

The vision of the Jesse Miranda Center for Hispanic Leadership as part of Vanguard University, and now in the School of Religion at the University of Southern California, is to develop leaders who are followers of Jesus and seek to incarnate the virtues, faith, wisdom, power and godly character enough to infect our communities with an insatiable virus of goodwill beyond the pulpit into every arena of our Latino community's life.

My Advice to Future Generations

Jesus said, "the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:21) The apostle Paul said "you are a chosen race..., God's own people". Like the sons of Issachar, the following generations "must understand the times and know what to do." (I Chronicles 12)

The Law of Use. This kingdom law underlies all personal and corporate development (Matt. 25:14-30) In other words, use what is given to you and you will gain more. Whether in physical, intellectual, financial, or relational dealings, whatever is given you, however small it is, use it. Use it diligently and use it to get goals to increase whatever you do for God's kingdom.

The Law of Reciprocity. The kingdom law is at the heart of all relationships. (Matt. 7:12) Whatever you would want men to do to you, do also to them. This is the kingdom foundation for all social relationships. Give, and it shall be given to you.

The Law of Dimension. The cross is about righteousness (vertical) and justice (horizontal), and is the liminal initial stage of a process and occupying a position on both. Jesus taught the value of constant prayer (to God) and steadfast

persistence (in human endeavor). He said, “Ask, and keep on asking; seek, and keep on seeking; knock, and keep on knocking” (Matt. 7:7-8). The emphasis is on continuous action. It is necessary to keep at something long enough to let the laws of use and reciprocity work for you. In whatever task God places you, do not quit, but stay the course.

Remember that Christianity is about diversity. It is not an individual and deeply private experience, but a very concrete and practical way of life that is learned, practiced, supported and empowered in community. In Genesis 10, the Old Testament portrays with the most significant text in the Bible for understanding the blessing of cultural diversity. In the New Testament the “many tongues” at Pentecost was not only experiential, but also manifested God’s acceptance of all creatures within the scheme of salvation, reinforcing the position that Jews and gentiles were equal before God. The mission of Christian community (pulpit and pew) is to be a sign, foretaste, and instrument of God’s present and future reign.

Seek the development of a theological paradigm, i.e., a faithful and effective ecclesiology. Develop an organization that incarnates (*nepantla*), incorporates and expresses a valid, appropriate approach to church leadership and management. Avoid the modern theology that accepts the division between the secular and the sacred. Do not give the social sciences the right and responsibility to lay claim to the description and understanding of empirical reality on these matters. Your theology must challenge the confinement by secular reason. Move into the sometimes confusing, communal reality of church life and work in the development of a “social theology”. Seek to relate all of life to the creative, redemptive, and transforming activity

of the triune God. Theology and polity, church organization and Latino culture must be reunited in an imaginative and dynamic relationship in order that God's people may become both more faithful and more effective in their ministry and mission so that God's creative intent for his people be fulfilled.

CHAPTER 4

Higher Education and Theological Education: Considerations for the Latin@ Evangelical Church Today

Dr. Elizabeth Conde-Frazier

Introduction

This essay will begin by describing the present context that informs the educational panorama of a global and technological era. I will define the state of higher education of the Hispanic community followed by the featuring of a variety of ways that the Evangelical churches are contributing to the improvement of education in their local communities with the purpose of removing barriers and creating smooth pathways to higher education. As part of this discussion, we will note the educational ecology that these endeavors are beginning to form. Theological education for the preparation of pastoral and congregational leadership is important to these educational endeavors. The challenges and current creative solutions taking shape in theological education will also be briefly discussed.

The context of the 21st century and education

Toward the end of the twentieth century we began to see the shift from an industrial era to an information age. The industrial revolution was brought about by the machine and the ability to manufacture goods in large quantities. It changed

the workforce and the means necessary to educate persons from apprenticeship to public schools which a large number of immigrants who then comprised the work force of unskilled and semi-skilled workers attended. Work and education went from the locus of the home to factories and public schools. Education was uniform in providing the basic skills and information needed for responsible and participatory citizenship. Since then, education has been the way to mainstream persons into society, hence the important issue of equity in education.

The information age began with the coming of the personal computer in the mid-seventies spawning the internet's ability to reach across the globe, thus creating an educational lifestyle where knowledge is accessible digitally anywhere. This digital industry has created a knowledge based, high tech society and global economy which has redefined work and the type of workers needed in this age. Many of the tasks of a massive work force in the industrial era have now been automated and workers find themselves needing new skills and competing for jobs with a global, rather than a local workforce as jobs are outsourced. The jobs of the industrial era created a pathway to upward mobility and established local communities who lived in and around the place of work. Churches, small businesses and other service providers became a part of these communities. Assembly line workers, data processors, foremen and supervisory jobs began to disappear and a need for what has been called "mind workers" (engineers, teachers, attorneys, scientists, executives, etc.) was on the rise, along with low wage, no benefits service jobs on the other end.

The high school diploma was no longer the needed level of education for this economy, but rather the college degree. In a global economy, service workers in industrialized countries

are unable to compete with workers in developing countries, losing their jobs to outsourcing; most accept lower wages and cuts in benefits. In the United States, the number of persons employed in manufacturing jobs between January of 1972 and August 2010 fell from 17,500,001 to 11,500,000.¹¹ Moreover, those with a college degree that are entering the job market find that companies require persons that are able to come into the workforce with a new set of skills for problem solving, collaboration and experience in the application of knowledge, something that colleges have not been known for teaching. College education must include internships and certifications for learning to apply the knowledge pertaining to a degree so that graduates can become more marketable. The new economy is less labor intensive and more information intensive. The wage system also works differently, as it is no longer tied to national economies but to a global system where developing countries provide skilled workers at cheaper wages.

The focus of education is shifting from the need to teach basic instruction and the knowledge of different disciplines to teaching generic skills that equip persons in doing problem solving and communication in different digital media. Students must learn to learn and seek out the resources of knowledge necessary. The venue for education is also changing from public schools to multiple venues, such as homes, church buildings, learning centers -- anywhere that one can put a computer and have access to the web. The uniform system of educating is changing to a custom designed system in accordance with students' needs and interests.

11 "U.S. Manufacturing: Output vs. Jobs, January 1972 to August 2010 " . BLS and Fed Reserve graphic, reproduced in Smith, Fran. "Job Losses and Productivity Gains", OpenMarket.org, Oct 05, 2010. //www.openmarket.org/2010/10/05/job-losses-and-productivity-gains/

In light of these changes, the issue of improving schools is not the only way to improve education. Creating access to learning videos, websites, computers and other teaching/learning technologies is important. Mathematical reasoning is more important than ever. The ability to solve sophisticated problems, as well as learning and finding information needed in the process are the ways for lifelong learning in the information age. The skill of recognizing when information is needed and evaluating the information attained are crucial tools. Going back and forth between learning and work will be a constant for the new generation entering the workforce.

For the Latina evangelical church to become engaged in these issues it must look at a more expanded vision of education reform that includes an understanding of how new technologies assist in learning. Such matters cannot be done individually; one must create collaborative projects, with a focus on equity, for exploring and opening up a variety of opportunities for learning. Collins and Halverson point out that, "Schools have been the means by which many immigrants and minorities gained access to the mainstream and are therefore the institutions that foster equity more than any other institution."¹² If the responsibility for education continues to shift to parents of younger children and to individuals for teenagers and adults, then public schools could potentially become places where it is the poor who will predominantly be educated. The resources needed for the quality of these schools will have

12 Allan Collins and Richard Halverson, "Rethinking Education in the Age of Technology: The Digital Revolution and the Schools, p.7. <http://llk.media.mit.edu/.../collins-Rthinking-Education.pdf>. For further reading see Collins, Allan and Richard Halverson *Rethinking Education in the Age of Technology: The Digital Revolution and the Schools*. (New York: Teacher's College Press, 2009).

to be advocated, as parents with more means seek to educate their children by way of private schools, home schooling and other learning centers. The variety of ways that Evangelical churches have sought to respond to the needs of education in the neighborhoods they minister in will be discussed below.

Latinos and education

The population in the United States has shifted so that Latinos are the largest group of college going persons who will be entering and sustaining the workforce for many years to come. So, where are we in terms of college completion and how might Latinos as a group affect the strength of the economy of the United States? The U. S. Census Bureau reported that in 2010 the median age of Latinos in the United States was 27 compared to 42 for the White non-Hispanics.¹³ Excelexencia in Education's report on Latino completion in the U. S. claims: "For the U. S. to regain the top ranking in the world for college degree attainment, Latinos will need to earn 5.5 million more degrees by 2020."¹⁴ The Pew Research Center reports that "over the past four decades, the number of Hispanics graduating with either an associate or a bachelor's degree has increased seven-fold, with growth outpacing that of other groups."¹⁵ The same report shows that in 2010 Hispanics became the largest minority group on college campuses, "reaching a record 16.5% share of all college enrollments."¹⁶ While this is true, the number of Hispanics that have completed their degrees lags behind the numbers of other groups, and the number of college graduates remains below that of all

13 U.S. Census Bureau, Population and Housing Units Estimates, *National Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin*: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2012, PEPSR6H. Released 06/13/13, Retrieved 06/19/13. www.census.gov.

14 Latino College Completion: United States <http://www.edexcelencia.org>

15 <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2012/08/20/iv-college-graduation-and-hispanics/>

16 *Ibid.*, p. 4.

college students enrolled. In 2010, 71% of all bachelor's degrees were awarded to non-Hispanic whites, 10% to non-Hispanic blacks, and 8.5% to Hispanics. Of the associate degrees 65% were White non-Hispanic and 13.2 % were Hispanic.¹⁷

The current population survey of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor documents the unemployment rates and earnings for full time wage and salary workers of those who are 25 years of age. Those with less than a high school diploma have an 11% unemployment rate and weekly earn \$422 which is almost half of the median weekly earnings (\$827). It is not until one has a bachelor's degree that one is making more than median weekly earnings (\$1,108) and that unemployment is at 4%. The median unemployment rate in 2013 was at 6.1%, whereas for those who have a masters, professional or doctoral degrees the unemployment rate ranges from 3.4% to 2.2% and weekly earnings range from \$1,329- \$1,714. Still, 24% of Hispanics do not have a high school diploma. Of these only one in ten has a General Education Development (GED) certificate which is an alternate route to entering college. When comparing foreign born to native born Hispanics, 21% of the native born have a GED while only 5% of the foreign born do.¹⁸

This data comparing educational attainment to median weekly earnings and unemployment rates are predictors of future social conditions for any group. In a knowledge based economy, education is a fundamental requirement for the economic success of any group. Moreover, college graduates also find jobs that are stepping stones in their careers as opposed

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 2-3.

¹⁸ <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2010/05/13/hispanics-high-school-dropouts-and-the-ged/>

to a job that gets them by. College graduates are also more satisfied in their jobs.¹⁹

Hispanics and Evangelical higher education

If Hispanics are the largest minority group going to college, how do they fare at Evangelical Christian Colleges? There are over 300 Protestant institutions of higher learning in the United States. However, among the schools belonging to the Council of Christian Colleges and universities (CCCU), the number of Hispanic students is low. Guerero-Avila documents that during the 1980's leaders from Catholic and Protestant institutions demonstrated concern for better serving Hispanic students as a part of their larger mission to the Hispanic faith community. This concern was also expressed by the Catholic Church in a pastoral letter on higher education which stated that new sources of income would need to be produced in order to provide scholarships for minorities. This was to address the substandard education that these groups receive. In like manner, an article published by Christianity Today titled "Can Christian Colleges Mix with Minorities?" describes the imbalance as a moral and spiritual issue. The author, Robert Niklaus also mentioned the financial aspects of the problem. He suggested that Cristian colleges deal with creating a hospitable environment and with the educational realities of this population by: developing support structures, role modeling, financial aid, remedial programs, creating minority organizations and by celebrating the cultural contributions of these groups to U.S. society.²⁰ While these supportive

19 The Rising Cost of Not Going to College <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2014/02/11/the-rising-cost-of-not-going-to-college/>

20 See Robert L. Niklaus, "Can Christian Colleges Mix with Minorities?" *Christianity Today* XXV, 19 (November 1981).

measures are important, curriculum review still remains the primary focus of any efforts to attract and retain Hispanic students. Along with this, the need to hire more Latino faculty is still an existing challenge.

One response to these needs began in 2010 when the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC) and the National Association of Evangelicals partnered to launch the Alliance for Hispanic Christian Higher Education. The alliance includes universities such as Oral Roberts, Regent, Liberty, Indiana Wesleyan, and Cedarville. Evangelical seminaries such as Denver, Gordon-Conwell and William Jessup have also joined the coalition.

Andrew Thomas, in his March 2013 article in *Christianity Today* titled “Latino Enrollments Surge,” noted that the median household income for a Latino family is \$40,900 which is \$10,000 below the national average.²¹ Finances is the major reason for lower Latino enrollments and retention at colleges overall, but particularly at private four year colleges. Many of the CCCU schools are private schools and they charge private school tuition. They are located in communities that are not close to where Latinos live and requiring that students live on campus, thus increasing the price of attending such schools. Some of the alliance schools have committed to provide as many as three full scholarships to qualifying Hispanic students. There are smaller Evangelical schools such as Fresno Pacific University that are in communities with large Latino populations, and they offer greater numbers of scholarships to Latino students.

The first annual summit of the alliance addressed the retention of Hispanic students in higher education, financing a

²¹ Andrew Thomas. “Latino Enrollments Surge” *Christianity Today* 57, 2: 15.

college education and culturally relevant curriculum, faculty and leadership. The goal of the alliance is to forge a partnership between Hispanic Evangelical churches and Christian colleges and universities as a way of focusing on increasing the Latino graduation rates.

As a part of this endeavor, a Hispanic effort called Project Fe (faith in Spanish) has been launched by the NHCLC with the hope that a movement will emerge that incorporates family and education. The following are the metrics of accomplishment for the movement: “Engage pastors and parents in prophetic activism by making educational success a priority in the community, empower our children with the necessary acumen to attend the best colleges and universities, enable a firewall against poverty and multi-generational government dependency via the emergence of a community committed to vertical and horizontal mobility, and equip Hispanic American Christians with the educational tools necessary to advance the Lamb’s agenda.” The Lamb’s agenda presents biblical social justice in accordance with the kingdom values. The objectives of this project are to:

1. “Launch the “National Hispanic Evangelical Adopt a School” initiative: Equip, engage and empower our churches for each to adopt a school in the community with the purpose of providing a dual accountability apparatus for children that attend both the church and corresponding local school. Pastor and Principal will make a commitment that corresponding children will graduate from high school and pursue higher education. This initiative includes partnering with schools to provide after school tutoring and a mentoring component for single parented children.

2. Sponsor FE SUNDAY. The first Sunday of September, our 40,118 churches will preach and teach on the importance of education and a biblically literate community. We will provide sermon outlines, visual aides and resources.
3. Host a National Summit on Hispanics, Christ and Education, addressing the educational crisis via the bible believing Christ following church.
4. Formalize and provide capacity, personnel and a messaging platform for the Alliance for Hispanic Christian Education.
5. Champion the cause of raising the curriculum standards for all of God's children. We find it to be reprehensible for children in more affluent regions of our states to engage a "high quality" curriculum while other children, particularly students of color, receive a sub-standard education. We desire high standards for all; without exception."²²

Support by Latino Evangelical local congregations for this group's agenda still waits to be seen on a large scale in order for one to see the full effects of the movement. We will note the configuration of school and church that is formed by these efforts.

This is not to say that prior to this movement Latino evangelical pastors and local congregations had not been working on these issues at the local level. Many churches have been involved in providing after school centers that provide tutoring, information sharing with families about how to enter college, much one-on-one advisement of youth to stay in school and advocacy at schools in the neighborhood for quality education.

²² <http://nhclc.org/project-on-faith-and-education/>

Some churches have started their own private academies, charter schools and early childhood centers. Discussion of some of these model efforts throughout the country will be highlighted below.

There are also other coalitions such as the Boston Education Collaborative (BEC) which is a part of the Emmanuel Gospel Center, a para-church organization. Since 1998 the BEC has brought together urban congregations including Hispanic congregations, Evangelical colleges and other local educational resources for creating a pathway to college. The goal of the BEC is to “work with churches, schools and non-profits to empower underserved urban students with the education they need for transformation in their lives and in their communities.” Their work addresses the challenges of: “working in isolation from other Christian organizations, addressing the capacity to fully support their staff with professional development, the know-how or connections to access resources, and funding instability and frequent staff turnover.” The BEC provides “a current understanding of urban education and the ways they can engage in the process of empowering urban students through education, support around resources, curriculum, and training, and the mental and physical space to evaluate and reflect on their programs.”²³

While there are programs, coalitions and other organizations that have been formed to address education and pathways to higher education in the Latina community, the heart of the matter still begins in the home. How do parents influence and support the educational journey of their children? How is it that Hispanic Evangélica churches partner with parents and schools to create an educational configuration that nurtures this journey? An educational configuration is a network of institutions

23 <http://egc.org/BEC>

that educate in tandem, creating a synergy that reinforces the values and systemic efforts of formal and informal education. One might call it an educational ecology.²⁴ The work of Guerrero-Avila gives us some insights.

The home, the church and the schools: An educational ecology

In 2001, Guerrero-Avila conducted a study with Mexican Southern Baptist families from the Los Angeles area to determine the values they gave to education. He found that the attitude towards higher education among the group of high school students and their families was highly positive. He found no difference in the attitudes between foreign born and native students. The two groups also perceived the same attitude from their parents when they spoke about their desires to attend college.²⁵

Guerrero-Avila's study demonstrates how family income is a great determinant of whether or not parents feel like they can support their children's desire to go to college. It deeply affects academic success.²⁶ Guerrero-Avila found that the lack of financial resources was seen as a barrier for higher education. Over 90% of families in his study did not have any form of information regarding financial aid or scholarships. Some of them expressed the need to see more concern from their churches towards the education of their children.²⁷ Parents in the study

24 This term and was first introduced by educator Lawrence Cremin in discussing the complexities of the industrial revolution and increased urbanization and plurality and its implications for education. See Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education: The Metropolitan Experience 1876-1980* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980).

25 Juan B. Guerrero-Avila, *Hispanic Experience in Higher Education: Mexican Southern Baptists' Attitudes Toward Higher Education*. (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 2001).

26 *Ibid.*, 53.

27 *Ibid.*, 68.

suggested that the church provide a bank of information about higher education opportunities for the children. While parents and children had a desire to go to college, they commented on the lack of their church leaders talking about the importance of education or giving any type of encouragement regarding the matter, except for information acquired from other congregational members about financial assistance. Families felt isolated when it came to finding information about higher education. For the church leadership to provide these they must be able to navigate the culture of education themselves, or to learn enough about the system so that they could network with the purpose of bringing such information to the congregation.

Other studies also look at the potential and positive influence of churches in the larger community when it comes to motivating and creating pathways towards higher education. They are finding that churches are participating along with parents, businesses and school principles to form alliances that foster parent friendly schools across the southwest. Organizers have affirmed that “Latino churches can bring to public schools the same organizing power that African American churches brought to the civil rights movement.”²⁸ Focusing on church involvement as a way of generating parental participation in school affairs and as a way of creating stronger alliances for building more culturally appropriate environments for teaching Latinos has been successful in the southwest. In San Antonio, a broad based group called Metro Alliance was formed in 1989 by parents, principle businesses and church leaders to spread the concept of parent-friendly schooling for all age levels. Some of the things that parents do

28 Scott Baldauf, “Schools try tuning into Latino ways,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Vol. 89 (Issue 186): p. 3.

Let us note that many have called educational equity the new civil rights issue of the twenty first century.

are: volunteer as reading tutors, carry petitions door-to-door in the neighborhood, or hold house meetings to discuss upcoming school bond initiatives.²⁹ We see how this educational configuration includes businesses as well.

At other times churches create their own programs. Neva-rez-La Torre sees these as playing the role of cultural brokers.³⁰ Teachers, principals and other public school administrators often do not know how to approach Latino parents, and parents may not feel comfortable approaching them at the school. However, they may all encounter one another in a church setting where they can listen and learn to relate to one another as they share the common goal of educating the children in the community. Churches may also help to broker other resources in the community that could benefit the schools, including small businesses with which they interact daily.

While the church leadership could play a more direct role and capitalize on the motivation that is already present among the families that form the congregational community, the sense of sharing this common interest and drive as a community shows three sources of motivation: the home, the church and the school appear to play similar roles when it comes to motivating the students to develop positive attitudes towards higher education. The point of intersection between the three builds a positive attitude towards a variety of things that can motivate students to attain higher education as a life goal.

This is a powerful educational configuration that becomes a nurturing point for the things that also contribute to making these goals a reality; things such as family finances, the improve-

²⁹ Ibid. p. 2.

³⁰ See Aída A. Nevárez- La Torre "Influencing Latino Education: Church-based community programs," *Education and Urban Society*, 1997 30:58-74.

ment of quality of life and contributing to the mission of God on earth. Together, these create a momentum for performing well in school. Contributing to a mission greater than and outside of oneself nurtures meaning in a person's life that should go beyond the usual understanding of bettering one's life in order to make more money, to one that considers the improvement of one's community as a positive response to God's will. This incorporates a sense of equity for self and others, a sense of social justice. It points to the fact that church leaders and teachers must be intentional about introducing this other-directed dimension to the understanding of what it means to better one's life away from the ideals of the "American dream" which tend to unintentionally take us to a "God bless me and nobody else" mentality, to an understanding of how we love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind and our neighbor as ourselves (Lk. 10:27).

An example of this type of integration was a seminar sponsored by the General Board of Church and Society and the Board of Higher Education and Ministry, as a part of the National Plan for Hispanic Ministries, that took place in Washington, D.C. Latina/o college students discussed the critical issues they believed challenged their communities and explored the relationship between cultural identity, faith and their concern for political and social justice issues as they discerned God's plan for their lives in light of the scriptural passage of Micah 6:8. A part of the three days of deliberations included meeting with Latino organizations such as the National Council of La Raza and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. Students created models of their initial thinking about how their educational endeavors would be a part of addressing justice issues in their communities. This was an intentional way of connecting the educational and social justice dimensions of their lives. The

program brought together the denominational resources of churches, college, theological schools, community based organizations and government. This shows how broad and rich a large church body can make an educational ecology. It is also a positive example of mentoring between generations and how it can inform the doing of theology among a new generation.

Creating this connection is a matter of the broader understanding of Christian education for Evangelical churches. It is an understanding that goes beyond personal salvation to one that includes a holistic view of the reign of God, a view that transforms every aspect of how we live so that the will of God of justice, peace, and holiness can be expressed. The values of God's reign affect our moral, personal and social lives. The intent and final vision of this reign are to bring forth life in all of its fullness and education is a vehicle of bringing life to the community. It nurtures and impacts the lives of persons intellectually, financially and emotionally. When the church sees its various endeavors on behalf of the educational ecology of the community as a part of its mission, it will understand that education is one of many ways to create a new community, a sustained effort in which it develops persons and groups.³¹ Let us see some examples of how the Evangelical Hispanic churches have sought to give expression to this fuller sense of Christian education and discuss the ways that this has indeed brought life to the communities in which they minister.

Latino/a Evangelicals address education in their communities

In this section I will feature some examples of how Latino para-church organizations, congregations and faith-based

31 See Samuel Pagán, "Education, Mission, and Hispanics: Implications for church renewal," *Lexington Theological Quarterly* 26, 2-3 (July-October): 1991, pgs. 93-100.

non-profits have been addressing educational needs in the communities where they minister. These examples serve as models and by no means are exhaustive of the work that is taking place.

One way that churches have offered alternative education in the communities where they serve is through private academies. This demands a great commitment from the church that runs it. Such an example is the Bay Ridge Christian Academy established in September of 1982 by the Bay Ridge Christian Center in Brooklyn, New York, a Hispanic church that serves a multicultural community. The founders of the congregation are the Rev. and Mrs. Luciano Padilla, Jr. When the school first opened its doors it served children in pre-kindergarten through the fifth grades. Gradually, upper grades were implemented and today there is a new building project that will include high school. This private school has a computer lab, performing arts club, and an after school program including music instruction. The academy is overseen by a school board of professional Christian leaders, including some of its pioneering principals which have been Latino/a leaders. The Academy's curriculum is aligned with the standards of learning of the state of New York, but maintains a Christian identity that includes Bible instruction with Christian values and morals. Graduates of the school have gone on to serve the community in professions such as business administration, computer technology, psychology, medicine, law, engineering and pastoral ministries, to name a few. The church sees this as "passing on the torch."

Another way that churches have found to control the quality of education in their communities is through charter schools. A charter school is a school that receives public funding and is an alternative to traditional public schooling with the purpose

of bringing educational reform to underperforming schools. Charter schools can be found in 40 states, as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Because these schools are granted greater flexibility, they can potentially be more innovative through thematic or specialized curriculum. They have more parental participation, and may be run by community groups, small companies or non-profits. The majority of charter schools are in urban areas serving low-income students and children of color.³²

The Edward B. Cole, Sr. Academy (EBC), located in Santa Ana, California, is a charter elementary school established in September of 2003 in the economically distressed Federal Empowerment Zone of Santa Ana. The school currently enrolls 387 students. Parents partner with the school through a parent contract to ensure that the investment of the parent is an essential part of the support system of the child. Most of the parents are non-English speaking, low-income and Latino families. The school has an after school program named the Physical Fitness, Arts and Homework Club (P.A.H.) that serves not only its students but also the community at large. It offers activities such as dance, drama, music, cooking and soccer. Many of these are activities were once a part of the public school curriculum, but through budget cuts have been eliminated.

The academy partners with the community in a variety of ways. The Santa Ana Parent Project is a collaborative group formed by educators, parents and the Kingdom Group, the latter composed of local churches, and non-profits. This collaboration operates in 15 different elementary schools. Parents are trained on the school's curriculum that was written by Focus on the Family, a non-profit organization founded by

³² <http://www.greatschools.org/find-a-school/defining-your-ideal/192-seven-facts-about-charter-schools-gs>

psychologist James Dobson that provides Christian advice on marriage, parenting and other topics. The Kingdom Group is a collaboration of local pastors and ministry leaders who come together to pray, to build strong relationships and serve the city of Santa Ana. Templo Calvario is a part of this collaborative effort and a supporter of the Edward B. Cole Sr. Academy. Templo Calvario is one of the fastest growing Assemblies of God congregations and holds services in both English and Spanish.

The Latino Pastoral Action Center (LPAC) in the Bronx, New York, founded and directed by the Rev. Raymond Rivera, is a non-profit providing a number of services to the community and other faith based non-profit organizations. Its educational dimension reaches several age groups. First Steps is a child care center with an early childhood development program for pre-schoolers. The curriculum includes community involvement, family engagement and mentoring as a way of developing leadership capacities in children. The New Hope After School Program is for children ages 5-12. The curriculum includes conflict management skills. The Greater Heights Youth Program is for youth ages 13-24. It seeks to “develop strong, independent, articulate youth who legitimately represent and are accountable to their families and communities. The youth develop a greater sense of self, and serve as resources to their peers and communities. It prepares youth to hold decision-making and advisory positions in their school and community, manage their conflicts non-violently, master their reading grade requirements, meet or surpass the standards for academic and job performance, be physically fit, arts-oriented, and nutritionally responsible, be active members of their family and in their communities as well as mentor their peers or

younger individuals.”³³ The center employs a holistic ministry designed to engage people and institutions so that they gain awareness of the state of affairs of their context, accept their call to address the situation (vision), take action (service), and bear fruit (impact).³⁴

The methodology of a program is important because it can nurture dependency or empowerment. Many other forces and programs in the community do not look to make its recipients decision makers and agents of their own lives. Latino ministries have sought to provide a corrective to this. LPAC is intentional about this and shares its methodology. This methodology contains not only an instructional approach, but also one that is transformational resulting in a lasting impact in the community.

The Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) is an organization that began in San Diego, CA. Most studies show that parents do more to strengthen the educational skills and progress of their children than any other aspect of the educational system. It was this knowledge as a retired principal and minister that led the Rev. Vahac Mardirosian, in partnership with Dr. Alberto Ochoa, to begin the Parent Institute in San Diego in 1987 as a result of discussions with parents of a predominantly Latino elementary school. The program includes workshops targeted for parents of K-12 children. Since its inception, it has become a nine-week curriculum for parents, delivered in their primary language. The curriculum’s purpose is to help parents become educational advocates for their children. The program has had such an impact that school districts in other counties of California have invited

³³ www.lpacministries.com/366018.html

³⁴ *Ibid.*

PIQE to launch a program. Today, the program extends into 36 of the 58 counties in California and has offices in two other states. Their Best Practices Model has been licensed in three additional states and is offered in 16 languages. More than 475,000 parents have graduated from the program.

The PIQE program educates parents on how to create a positive and lasting educational environment at home, using a number of proven academic tools and fostering ongoing dialogue with their children about academic success, challenges and college expectations of both students and parents. The series of classes culminate in a parent group meeting with the school principal. PIQE also includes a Teachers' workshop on effective parent engagement, a parent leadership program that educates parents on the importance of helping children build a strong foundation in math and science, and a family financial literacy workshop.³⁵

Much of this essay has focused on the ways that churches have encouraged students, or established programs to ensure that students move through the process of education all the way through college. A few examples of partnerships that are being formed between churches and colleges have been presented, as these are important pathways to college that are being developed. However, there are few educational models of Christian, accredited college/university education in which the Hispanic community, church or non-profit, actually manages the system, educational philosophy, hiring of faculty, the budget, facilities and the process of recruitment and admissions. Most Christian schools will create a program or a small number of scholarships to admit Latino/a students, but having students at the college and having administrators, board members, numbers of faculty

³⁵ See <http://www.piqe.org>

in proportion to the Latinos in the community is very different as these radically change the culture of a school.

One such school is the Esperanza College of Eastern University, a college that was birthed by the Hispanic evangelical churches in Philadelphia. The Hispanic Clergy of Philadelphia was formed as a result of the heart felt need by a group of pastors who wanted to create an impact in their community beyond the Sunday morning service. In 1987, they developed a non-profit faith based organization called Nueva Esperanza Inc., with Rev. Cortes, Jr. as its president. After visiting with many different colleges and universities in the area, he finally met with the then president of Eastern University (EU), David Black who agreed to partner with Nueva Esperanza to form the Nueva Esperanza Center for Higher Education, on a junior college level. A college council composed of the leaders of both organizations was established to serve as the policymaking and guiding body of the school. As the program developed, the school became the Middle States accredited branch campus of EU and was named Esperanza College.³⁶

The vision of the school is to “provide members of the Hispanic and local communities a Christian faith-based education that is affordable, culturally appropriate so that they can continue their contributions to and leadership in their communities and become even more effective in their service.” They achieve this mission through “the integration of faith, reason and justice” and developing a “Christian world view that informs intellect, attitude, and behavior.”³⁷

Through the partnership of EU with Esperanza, the students receive a tuition discount of over 50% in order to make

³⁶ <http://esperanza.eastern.edu>

³⁷ *Ibid.*

private education affordable to them. The college also provides English as a Second Language (ESL) to the community through its English Institute which provides four levels of ESL. At the end of the fourth level, these students are often able to test into the college where they will continue in the language transition track through more intensive English classes, taking general education courses in Spanish during the first and second semesters and transitioning into English throughout the third and fourth semesters.

The college offers an associate of arts and associate of applied sciences degrees. S.T.E.M (science, technology, engineering, and math) programs are offered. Over 50% of the graduates transition into Eastern's BA/BS programs and over 85% of them graduate with their four year degree within the following two years. Courses in the area of concentration, internships and field experiences give students an edge in the job market when they graduate.

Many of the students are not Christian, and the school does not proselytize. The curriculum is designed to help them reflect on the values of a spiritual life and uses the Christian lens to help persons engage the "value of human beings, the relationship of human beings to the rest of creation, our responsibilities in the world, the ways in which knowledge can be discovered and used and the values and ethics that should guide our learning and our everyday living."³⁸

The student population is 81% Hispanic, 75% female, and 44% first generation to college. Of the 40% of the students who are themselves dependents, the average household income is \$28,684. Of the 60% who are independent the average fam-

³⁸ Ibid.

ily income is \$22,913; 74% have children. Students entering from high schools come from Philadelphia's low-performing public high schools. Esperanza College provides developmental education through its English and math bridge by way of a 20 week semester. Classes have a 16:1 student/teacher ratio so that a great deal of individual attention is given to students. Professors are representative of the ethnic composition of the community with the majority of them being Latinos.

Esperanza College is an Excelencia in Education finalist at the associate level (2013)³⁹ and a recipient of the Hispanic Choice award for the Education champion of the year in 2011. Graduates go on to serve the communities they live in positively impacting the quality of living of those communities.

These programs have started as part of the mission of Latino Evangelical congregations and leaders that have sought to serve, not only their memberships, but also the broader communities they serve. They provide parenting skills, enrichment programs to enhance the curricula of impoverished urban schools and alternatives to traditional public school education. They are only models of what many other churches are doing across the nation, informed by the biblical and theological values of the churches.

The Dreamers

An issue that has come to the forefront of our nation is the education of immigrant youth who are alternately documented. These young men and women face legal barriers that bar their access to higher education. These youth have organized themselves as the "dreamers." The term comes from the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act. The 10 states with the most potential beneficiaries of the DREAM

³⁹ www.edexcelencia.org/program/esperanza-college

Act are: California, Florida, Texas, New York, Illinois, Arizona, Georgia, New Jersey, North Carolina, and Washington. Approximately 71% are originally from Mexico. There are approximately 1.8 million immigrants in the United States who might be, or may become eligible, for the Obama Administration's "deferred action" initiative for unauthorized youth who were brought into the country as children. All studies on this matter note that the numbers are not precise figures, but approximations.⁴⁰ With the guidance of Hispanic administrators and/or faculty, some Evangelical Christian colleges have managed to address the issue of access through scholarships and donations, thus removing financial barriers. The theological/biblical underpinnings that inform the values and mission of these schools affirm the advocacy of Latino/a leaders serving in them.

Addressing the legal barriers demands community organizing and sustained, civic participation at federal, state, and local levels. While such efforts may not be seen as direct services, given the large group of immigrants, many youth and young adults form the efforts of churches or church related groups working towards justice in higher education. The issue of the "illegal" student is one of power or access to power that limits justice in the United States.

The Latino churches have addressed these by organizing in groups, such as La Red, in order to keep each other informed, and to address the practical, pastoral everyday problems of immigrants at the local level while joining civic political efforts for immigration reform. Others join interfaith coalitions, such as the Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights in San Francisco, with programs that include the training of immigrant leaders from faith-based organizations on how to increase civic

⁴⁰ www.immigrationpolicy.org/.../who-and-where-dreamers-are-revised-est...

participation so that they can represent their cases in larger forums. This includes learning how federal and local legislations are created and working with elected officials, knowing which programs at federal and state levels they are eligible for, doing advocacy and teaching non-immigrant congregations how to mobilize support for immigrant rights.

These and similar training efforts are connected to access to higher education for Latino immigrants. For the Hispanic Evangelical church to address education at deeper levels, it must make the connection between racial justice and economic justice. The reasons for mass migration of peoples from many countries, not only Latin America, is due to U.S. foreign trade policies in which corporate interests are placed before humanity and individual needs. A historical need for workers without rights has been a root cause of injustice in education.

Higher Education and Theological Education

An important and not much studied dynamic is that of the pipeline to college that a Bible Institute can provide. The aim of a Bible institute is to train consecrated men and women, both lay and clergy for qualified ministry. They are grass roots institutions that are affordable and flexible. They serve as vehicles for passing on the tenets of the Christian faith and the doctrinal distinctive of congregations. They are many times the first formal educational option for immigrants. Certificates, diplomas and in some cases degrees, are conferred by these denominational and independent schools. Some of them offer ESL and literacy in the first language to those who may not have had the privilege of formal education in country of origin and even citizenship classes. As these are attended by multiple generations, youth opt to come to a Bible Institute to

further their education after high school. These institutions are also accessible to dreamers.

A Bible Institute that has a program and campus for young people is the Assemblies of God Latin American Bible Institute (LABI) in La Puente, California. In 2007 the school began conversations with their denominational university, Vanguard University, to create an articulation agreement whereby a certain number of the courses which the students took in their program at the institute would be accredited towards their bachelor's degree at the university. Doctoral students from the Claremont School of Theology created a writing center at LABI which increased their writing skills for college and also assisted them in the application process. Students would enter Vanguard with advanced academic standing making their degree shorter and more affordable.

The Institute gave the students a port of entry even when they originally had not imagined themselves entering college. The participatory action research done by the Claremont School of Theology doctoral group showed that participation in and commitment to a religious community can be a unique source of personal support and empowerment for educational motivation and success.⁴¹ In this study, the students of the Bible Institute, claimed that their motivation to study came from their sense of calling to the ministry. Their homework became a way of worshipping, or giving an offering to God. This endeavor showed the configuration between theological school and Bible Institute, denominational bodies and university.

41 Mark Hearn, Jon Hooten, Jina Kim and Anne Carter Walker, "Homework is an offering to God: The role of the religious commitment in retaining post-secondary Hispanic students," Unpublished paper Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, CA., January 21, 2011.

Another similar model of Bible Institute to bachelor's degree to seminary is the Center for Hispanic Theological Education (CHET) in Bell Gardens, CA which is linked to its denominational college and seminary, North Park in Chicago. This type of model is one to be further explored and used by Latina Evangelical churches.

The Bible Institute is the first accessible and affordable option of theological education for the preparation of Hispanic pastors and lay leaders. Bible Institutes exist at the pre-collegial level, but are an integral part of educational reform because the education of the pastoral leadership and laity will greatly inform the resources, services and advocacy that the congregation carries out in its community. Congregations have the capacity for increasing the quality of life of the communities they serve, often providing social services. In 2002-2003, researchers from the Hudson Institute and the Urban Leadership Institute gathered data on the outreach initiatives of Hispanic and other congregations and found that even congregations of 100-150 adult members can conduct impressive social service programs.⁴² Services provided by churches range from food or clothing assistance to longer term ministries such as the ones discussed previously in this essay. These programs require a set of leadership skills that include business administration, community organizing and the ability to apply and translate theological, biblical, spiritual and practical knowledge to the practical reality of Hispanics in America. In order for this to occur, church leadership needs to have an understanding of culture and society, of the legislative process and of how to organize a community for action.

⁴² See Amy L. Sherman. *The Community Serving Activities of Hispanic Protestant Congregations*. Hudson Institute's Faith in Communities Initiative and The Center for the Study of Latino Religion Notre Dame University, December 2003.

Pastors can be agents for generating the educational agenda of a Hispanic community. Bible Institutes and seminaries are the educational institutions for training pastors to become these agents. However, the level of affordability and accessibility of seminaries has not been aligned with the level of demand for education of the Hispanic pastors. The language barrier has not been met for M.Div. (masters of divinity) programs in Spanish. The need for pathways from the Bible Institute to the M.Div. has been met with inflexibility on the part of seminaries, in spite of the creative alternatives that have been offered by Hispanic scholars and pastors working at denominational levels and through Hispanic programs at seminaries.

To address this and other related issues, in 1990 historic theologian Justo González gathered a group of Latino theologians and theological educators to found the association for Hispanic Theological Education (AETH) with the purpose of responding to the theological needs of the Hispanic Evangelical community. Since then, AETH exists to stimulate dialogue and collaboration among theological educators, administrators of institutions for ministerial formation of students in the U.S., Puerto Rico and Canada. AETH provides pastoral and community leadership development training through national and regional conferences, seminars and retreats as well as through the publication and distribution of resources covering a range of biblical, theological, programmatic, liturgical, cultural and issue-oriented topics.

AETH, through a substantial discussion with the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), created a process whereby it has aligned AETH certification requirements for Hispanic Institutes with the ATS accredited schools so that graduates from Bible Institutes wishing to continue their studies beyond

the Bible Institute are prepared for and ensured a pathway to seminary enrollment.

The certification process includes a self-study that determines the Bible Institute's capacity to meet a set of standards which include: institutional capacity, financial capacity/sustainability, quality of academic programs (curriculum, faculty credentials) and student support resources. Institutes that meet the standards are endorsed by AETH. The ATS seminaries can then work with the endorsed institutes to set up a pathway for students to enroll in their school beyond the 15% special student admission category for participants who enroll without a bachelor's degree. AETH also provides supports to help the institutes build capacity for endorsement and identify the contents of a model library. For this work of self-study, certification, and support, AETH has named a commission of certification. These efforts have created a configuration between networks of churches, denominations, Bible Institutes, grassroots organizations and an accrediting body.

As the Hispanic Evangelical church seeks to address the growing needs of the community, including the second and subsequent generations which has quadrupled since 1980, theological education that equips the leadership will need to include expansion of the traditional understanding of the mission of the church and training in the areas of advocacy, practical administrative skills and conflict resolution.⁴³

Conclusion

The challenge of higher education for Latinos begins in the home and extends to the public school systems and college

⁴³ Pew Hispanic Center. *Statistical portrait of Hispanics in the United States*. Washington D.C.: Pew Hispanic Center, 2009.

networks. Hispanic Evangelical churches have sought to address these in a variety of ways: 1) by creating awareness and providing information; 2) training immigrant parents in how to advocate for their children; 3) creating educational alternatives and enrichment programs at every level; 4) creating grassroots educational options such as Bible Institutes; 5) generating collaborative partnerships between community agencies, pastors, para-church organizations, the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, faith based non-profit organizations, businesses, government, public schools and school districts and with educational accrediting bodies such as the ATS; and 6) through the formation of alliances, networks and theological centers.

All of these have formed an educational ecology through which institutional configurations such as the home, church and schools are able to generate a positive synergy for motivating students and for transforming the status quo of the system. The relational nature and work of the Hispanic Evangelical churches has fostered a learning environment through which the schools and their infrastructure have learned about and from the larger Latina community and vice versa. The impetus of this work has been a larger sense of mission, of equality, and of justice that is biblically and theologically based, a result of the work by Latino/a Evangelical scholars over the last twenty years of theological. Higher education and theological education are linked together as they foster the strength of communities that will integrate a sense of justice and integrity. The empowerment of the Hispanic community and of the labor force of the United States will in large part be determined by the continued efforts and creative contributions by the Hispanic Evangelical community.

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CHAPTER 5

A Chronology of Significant Hispanic Protestant Beginnings or Events in the USA, 1829-2000

Compiled and edited by Dr. Clifton L. Holland

1. Introduction and background

The idea of compiling a chronology such as this first occurred to me during the late 1960s when I was a graduate student in the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary (FTS) in Pasadena, CA. At that time I was engaged in bibliographical research, fieldwork and writing for my Master of Arts thesis, which was published under the title, *The Religious Dimension in Hispanic Los Angeles: A Protestant Case Study* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1974 – 554 pages). Although the subject matter was focused on the geographical confines of Southern California, I dreamed about the possibility of expanding the coverage of my research to the whole nation.

The second time the idea emerged was when I returned to FTS in 1980-1981 for my doctoral studies at the School of World Mission. Between 1972 and 1980 I served as a missionary in Costa Rica with the non-denominational Latin America Mission (LAM) with headquarters in Bogota, New Jersey. Later, I relocated to Miami, Florida on-loan to the International Institute for In-Depth Evangelization (IIN-

DEPTH, sponsor of the Evangelism-in-Depth national crusades in Latin America). While at FTS, I was invited to teach a course in the Hispanic Studies Department of the School of Theology with my previous study of the Hispanic Protestant Church in Southern California as the primary textbook. I was privileged to have 33 Hispanic students in my course, which was taught in a bilingual format (Spanish-English) since the textbook was written in English. Most of my lectures and questions and answers were in Spanish or bilingual.

One of the primary requirements for the course was for each student to write a brief historical account of the origin and development of his/her denomination in English or Spanish, building on what I had written earlier in *The Religious Dimension* about each denomination. Some of the students were allowed to write about the origin and development of their individual congregations and to include a “church growth” analysis. While some of the students did an excellent job of researching and writing their respective articles, others were unable to live up to my expectations; a few did not complete the assignment. Thinking about the future, I made photocopies of the best term papers for my files and added them to the material I had accumulated during my research for *The Religious Dimension*.

After my year of study in residence at FTS, I returned to Costa Rica in late 1981 and resumed my responsibilities with IINDEPTH in Central America, while completing the writing of my doctoral dissertation on “The History of the Protestant Movement in Central America,” and doing the final editing of *World Christianity: Central America and the Caribbean*, which was published by MARC-World Vision in 1982.

The next time the idea of compiling a chronology such as this on the Hispanic Protestant Church in the USA was during the period 1985-1989. I was encouraged by some of my Hispanic friends to think seriously about this task, after I had completed a series of national studies in each country of Central America between 1977 and 1981 under the auspices of the Central American Socio-Religious Studies Program (PROCADES), which I founded and directed while serving with IINDEPTH. By the mid-1980s, PROCADES had evolved into PROLADES (Latin American Socio-Religious Studies Program) as a consequence of expanding the ministry to other Latin American and Caribbean countries. The limits of time and funding made such a national study of Hispanic church growth in the USA impossible during the 1980s, although we did gather a group of national Hispanic leaders in Irving, TX for a weekend consultation during April 5-7, 1988, which was intended to be the startup for a national study. Although we were able to obtain “seed money” to organize a National Coordinating Committee for the Hispanic USA study and hold the 1988 consultation, we were unsuccessful in obtaining major grants from foundations to finance the national study during the late 1980s. The name chosen for this project was “Let Hispanics in North America Hear His Voice!” For more information about the 1988 consultation, see: http://www.hispanicchurchesusa.net/documents/clh-special_report_for_HABBM_1993.pdf

During the early 1990s, I returned to the Los Angeles area from my home in Costa Rica to coordinate “A Study of Ethnic and Religious Diversity in the Greater Los Angeles Metro Area (GLAMA)” with the logistical support of a dozen partnership agencies, which enabled my organization to establish

a project office in Pasadena on the campus of the U.S. Center for World Mission and the William Carey International University. During the period 1990 to 1994, the PROLADES office staff -- Andy and Dorciane Toth (PCA), Ben Capps (YWAM), Enrique Danwing (ARPC), and several other part-time volunteers, including Alan Young, our computer technical support person -- and I were able to create a database of over 12,500 local congregations of all religious groups in GLAMA, which included all known Hispanic Protestant churches. We later expanded the Hispanic database to include all of Southern California, building on the *Directory of Hispanic Protestant Churches in Southern California*, produced by Mr. Lou Cordova of the Institute for Latin American Studies (ILAS) at the U.S. Center for World Mission, in collaboration with PROLADES, and published in April 1986 by the Hispanic Association for Theological Education (AHET, Asociación Hispana de Educación Teológica) with offices in Montebello, CA.

During the early 1990s, I became an active member of AHET, led by the Rev. Jesse Miranda (Superintendent of the Pacific Latin American District of the Assemblies of God), and participated in the AHET History Committee under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Rodelo Wilson. I served as the project manager for the production of a 224-page compendium of articles on the history of a dozen Protestant denominations with Hispanic ministry in Southern California. This volume was published by AHET in April 1993 under the title, *Hacia una Historia de la Iglesia Evangélica Hispana de California del Sur*. Some of the original articles that were considered for publication had been written by students in my FTS course on the History of the Hispanic Protestant Church in South-

ern California in 1980-1981. However, since these earlier articles had been written about ten years previously, the History Committee decided to ask each author to update them or to invite other Hispanic leaders to write new articles about their respective denominations. Consequently, some of the articles published by the AHET History Committee in 1993 were updated versions of the original 1980-1981 documents, while others were newly written. See the following website for the online version of the AHET History compendium: <http://www.hispanicchurchesusa.net/AHET/indice2.htm>

During 1993, my PROLADES office staff and I were able to conduct a preliminary study of Hispanic Protestant denominations in the USA and produced a series of documents. These were presented to the board of directors of the Hispanic Association for Bilingual-Bicultural Ministries (HABBM) in Santa Ana, CA, on October 13, 1993 in fulfillment of our contract with HABBM, which had provided a small grant for this undertaking. At that time, I was an active member of the HABBM board of directors and one of its founding directors under the leadership of Rev. Danny de Leon, senior pastor of Templo Calvario of the Assemblies of God in Santa Ana. It was not until the mid-2000s that I was able to process this information and make some of it available on my website at: www.ideaministries.com. With the creation of a new website at www.HispanicChurchesUSA.net, we have now made some of these documents available at: http://www.hispanicchurchesusa.net/national_hisp_study_93.htm

More than twenty years have passed since the publication of the AHET History compendium in 1993. After my retirement as a professor and founding member of the board

of directors of the Evangelical University of the Americas (UNELA = Universidad Evangélica de las Américas) in Costa Rica in 2007, I resumed an active role as director of PRO-LADES and once again began to think about the possibility of coordinating a national study of Hispanic church growth in the USA.

However, another opportunity soon presented itself. I was invited by Dr. J. Gordon Melton, general editor of *Religions of the World: A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Beliefs and Practices* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO Publishers, First Edition, three volumes, 2002) to update my original articles included in the first edition. In addition, I would help Dr. Melton update articles on other countries in the Americas for the second edition to be published in 2010. This activity took up most of my time during 2008 and 2009, and it resulted in the production of 35 updated country articles for the *Encyclopedia*. In addition, he encouraged me to rewrite all the country articles for Latin America and the Caribbean and to prepare them to be published in three or four volumes under the working title "Encyclopedia of Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean." The process of final editing and formatting continues, as well as negotiations with the publisher.

As my work on the *Encyclopedia* neared an end, the opportunity of turning my attention to a national study of Hispanic church growth in the USA presented itself between July and December of 2009 during two trips that I made to Southern California from my home in Costa Rica. My preliminary conversations with Hispanic leaders in Southern California during late 2009 resulted in the impetus needed to launch a national study. A dozen or more key Hispanic and Anglo

leaders supported me in the belief that the time had come for such a study. In early January 2010, I took the necessary steps to launch the project with a support group of Advisors and a new website. Thus began the long process of research, writing and production of a series of new documents for the “Online Handbook of Hispanic Protestant Denominations, Institutions and Ministries in the USA” at: www.Hispanic-ChurchesUSA.net.

The documents on this website are a compilation of information from many sources, as noted in each section of the Home Page and related links. We have begun the process of consulting with leaders of over 150 Protestant denominations with Hispanic ministry in the USA. The website and related documents are designed to be “a work in progress” so that corrections, additions and updates can be added continuously by participating individuals and organizations.

Finally, a more complete national picture of the origin and development of the Hispanic Protestant Church in the USA is emerging as each piece of the mosaic is added, trimmed, fitted and polished. This is what I had previously experienced regionally when I wrote *The Religious Dimension in Hispanic Los Angeles* during 1970-1972. Other authors have added other pieces to the national mosaic by contributing regional and denominational histories of the Hispanic Protestant Church in the USA. See the following web pages for more information:

http://www.hispanicchurchesusa.net/history_docs.htm

http://www.hispanicchurchesusa.net/hispanic_regional_studies.htm

The specific development of a series of chronologies on the origin and development of Protestant denominations in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as among Hispanics in the USA, began in the early 1990s in conversations with Dr. Daryl Platt, a missionary with O. C. Ministries (now known as OC International and as SEPAL in Latin America, Servicio Evangelizador para América Latina). Daryl is a fellow graduate of the SWM, who later became part of the Latin American Church Growth Task Force (LACGTF) that I directed beginning in 1988.

The first meeting of the LACGTF was held on the campus of Fuller Theological Seminary and was hosted by Dr. Paul Pierson, then Dean of the SWM. This task force was formed in 1988 as an ad hoc “working group” whose primary purpose was to facilitate the process of establishing a “permanent national research function and resource center” (PNRF/Center) in as many countries as possible within the Latin America and Caribbean regions during the 1990s. I was asked to serve as the Director of the LACGTF, and later Daryl became the Assistant Director. Together we travelled to the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador to promote the PNRF/Center concept and to provide technical assistance to key evangelical leaders who had invited us to visit them and discuss this mission strategy.

During our travels we compiled and verified information about the historical origins of Protestant denominations and independent church movements in these countries, building on Daryl’s innovative study “Who Represents the Evangelical Churches in Latin America? A Study of the Evangelical Fellowship Organizations” (School of World Mission, Fuller

Theological Seminary, June 1991), in which he produced a chronological chart of all the Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries in Latin America. Later, I was able to build on Daryl's work and produce an updated series of computerized chronological databases and tables on Protestant beginnings in the Americas by region and country that became part of the Religion-In-The-Americas (RITA) Database on my PROLADES website (www.prolades.com) in the early 2000s. These chronologies are now available at: <http://www.prolades.com/historical/chron-index.htm> Included in this series is a preliminary version of the chronology presented below on the origins and development of Hispanic ministry in the USA.

In order to orient the reader to our classification system of religious bodies in the Americas, please see the following document: <http://www.hispanicchurchesusa.net/clas-eng.pdf>

We welcome comments, corrections, suggestions and contributions to this study so that the final product will be more comprehensive and, hopefully, free of distortion and misinformation.

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San José, Costa Rica - 26 July 2014

2. A Chronology of the Origins and Development of Hispanic Protestant Ministry in the USA

1829 – 1844 Sumner Bacon, known as “a colorful and controversial **Cumberland Presbyterian** evangelist,” was the

first Presbyterian to begin missionary work among Hispanics in Texas. He began his ministry as an itinerant evangelist among the Anglo Americans of east and central Texas and later became a colporteur with the American Bible Society in 183. He distributed Spanish Bibles and New Testaments and shared the gospel message with the Spanish-speaking people with whom he frequently came into contact. When he died in 1844, no one in his denomination was willing to continue his work among the Mexican population.

1839 - William C. Blair, an **Old School Presbyterian** clergyman, became the first person to receive a formal denominational appointment to evangelize Mexicans in Texas, when he began his ministry with the Assembly's Board of Foreign Missions in Victoria, Texas. He had a long career in Texas and died in 1873.

1846 - Another **Old School Presbyterian** minister, John McCullough, was assigned to work in San Antonio, Texas by the Board of Foreign Missions, where he ministered to Anglos, Germans and Mexicans. In 1848, McCullough secured the services of a converted Roman Catholic Spaniard who came to San Antonio under the auspices of the Evangelical Society of New York to minister to the Mexican American population. McCullough later moved to Galveston, Texas, where he died in 1870.

1849 - The Rev. Hiram W. Read arrived in Santa Fe, New Mexico to begin Hispanic ministry for the **Southern Baptist Convention**. His first convert in Albuquerque was Blas Chávez, who became a Baptist preacher and served for fifty years.

1852 - Melinda Rankin (1811-1888), an **independent Presbyterian missionary** and school teacher, arrived in Texas to begin her ministry among Mexicans in Texas and Mexico. She made several frustrating attempts at establishing a school for Mexican girls in Brownsville, which she finally accomplished in 1858. Rankin's sister arrived to help her in 1855, supported by the nondenominational American and Foreign Christian Union.

1853 - **The Methodist Episcopal Church (North)** began Hispanic work in New Mexico under the ministry of the Rev. Benigno Cárdenas, a former Roman Catholic priest in Santa Fe.

1860s - The Rev. Henry C. Riley, an **Episcopalian**, was reported to have pastored a Spanish-speaking congregation in New York City "for some time," according to Melinda Rankin in 1868 (Rankin, 1875); in 1869, Riley was sent to Mexico by the American and Foreign Christian Union to organize nondenominational Protestant churches in Mexico City. In 1873, he was appointed "Bishop of the Valley of Mexico" for the Mexican Church of Jesus, which in 1904 became affiliated with the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA.

1861 - **The Texas Baptist Convention** (part of the Southern Baptist Convention) appointed J. W. D. Creath as its first missionary to work among the Mexican population.

1869 - The Rev. Thomas Harwood reopened the New Mexico mission of the **Methodist Episcopal Church** and began to train Mexicans for leadership in the Methodist church.

1871 - Alejo Hernández, a Roman Catholic seminary student in Aguascalientes, Mexico, was converted to Protestant-

ism in Brownsville, Texas, where he became a licensed preacher with the **Methodist Episcopal Church (South)** and served in Laredo, Texas, and Mexico City from 1871-1875.

1874 - The West Texas Conference of the **Methodist Episcopal Church (South)** created a Mexican border district.

1876 - **The First Baptist Church (Southern Baptist) of San Antonio** organized a Mexican mission under the direction of Jacob Korman.

1877 - The first Mexican Presbyterian congregation in Texas was organized in Brownsville by the **Presbyterian Church in the US (Southern Presbyterians)**.

1879 - The Rev. Antonio Diaz began work among the Mexican population in Los Angeles under the auspices of the **Methodist Episcopal Church (North)**. Diaz established a Spanish-speaking mission at the Fort Street Methodist Church. In 1884, Diaz became a Presbyterian minister and worked with the Rev. Carlos Bransby and established several Presbyterian missions among the Mexican population in the Los Angeles area.

1881 - This was the official beginning of permanent **Southern Baptist work** among the Spanish-speaking population of Texas, at Laredo. In 1981, the **Mexican Baptist Convention of Texas** celebrated 100 years of Hispanic Baptist work.

1885 - The New Mexico Spanish-speaking Mission of the **Methodist Episcopal Church (North)** was organized in Peralta, New Mexico, under the leadership of Thomas Harwood.

1885 - **The Methodist Episcopal Church (South)** organized the Mexican Border Conference. Previously, ministry to Mexicans in Texas had been coordinated through two mission districts, one in San Diego (near Corpus Christi) and the other in San Antonio.

1888 - The Rev. A. Moss Merwin, a former missionary in Chile under the Presbyterian Board of Missions, began his ministry among the Mexican population of Los Angeles. Merwin became the first Superintendent of Mexican Work in Southern California for the **Presbyterian Church in the USA (Northern)**. Mary Merwin, Moss' daughter, became the Superintendent after his death in 1905. By 1930, about 20 Spanish-speaking Presbyterian churches and missions had been established in Southern California.

1892 - Walter S. Scott of San Antonio, Texas, was ordained for the Presbyterian ministry and commissioned as "evangelist to the Mexican people" by the **Presbytery of Western Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the US (Southern)**.

1896 - The Rev. A. B. Case began work among the Mexican population in Southern California. He had previously served in Mexico as a missionary with the **American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions** of the Congregational Church. Several Spanish-speaking congregations were established by Case in Redlands, Chino, Santa Ana, San Bernardino and Piru. In 1897, Case and his supporters founded the interdenominational California Spanish Missionary Society (Case, 1897).

1899 - **The Christian Church-Disciples of Christ** began Hispanic ministry in San Antonio, Texas.

1901 - The First Baptist Church of Santa Barbara, California, established a Mexican mission, pastored by C. T. Valdivia, who also established a mission in Oxnard, CA in 1903. These were the first two Spanish-speaking ministries of the **Southern California Baptist Convention**, affiliated with the **American (Northern) Baptist Convention**.

1905 - The **General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists** began Hispanic ministry in the Boyle Heights district of East Los Angeles. In 1980, the Hispanic membership in the North American Division was 28,400; in 1990, there were 65,402 members; in 2001, 115,244 members; in 2007, there were at 994 Hispanic Adventist churches and missions in the USA, with a total of 132,360 members.

1906 – The famous **Azusa Street Pentecostal Revival (1906-1913)** began in an industrial area on the eastside of downtown Los Angeles, under the leadership of Black holiness preacher William J. Seymour, who founded the Apostolic Faith Mission. According to historian Robert Mapes Anderson, Mexicans were present at the **Apostolic Faith Mission** early in its existence. Within a decade, Hispanic Pentecostal preachers had firmly planted Pentecostalism among migrant Mexican workers in many cities, towns and migrant camps from Los Angeles to San Jose in the north, and to San Diego in the south. However, most of these early efforts did not produce permanent congregations due to the migratory nature of the Mexican farm works.

1908 - The **Texas-Mexican Presbytery** was organized by the **Presbyterian Church in the US (Southern Presbyterians)**.

1909-1920 The first leaders of what was to become the **Apostolic Assembly of Faith in Jesus Christ**, the first Hispanic (Oneness) Pentecostal denomination founded in the USA, began to evangelize Mexicans in Southern California: Luis López and Juan Navarro (1909), Francisco F. Llorente (1912), Marcial de la Cruz (1914) and Antonio Nava (1916), all immigrants from Mexico. In 1912, the **Spanish Apostolic Faith Mission** was established on North Hill Street in Los Angeles by Genaro Valenzuela, although it is not confirmed that this was a Oneness Pentecostal congregation. During 1914-1915, preaching points were established in Colton, San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles and Watts. The first annual convention of this new denomination was held in 1925 in San Bernardino with the participation of 27 affiliated pastors from California, Arizona, New Mexico and Baja California in Mexico; however, it was not incorporated in California until 1930.

1910 - **The Church of the Nazarene** began Hispanic ministry in the Bunker Hill section of Los Angeles, CA.

1911 - The Rev. Vernon McCombs is appointed by the **Methodist Episcopal Church (North)** as director of Spanish work in Los Angeles. The McCombs had previously served as Methodist missionaries in Peru from 1906-1910. In 1912, the Spanish and Portuguese District of the Southern California Conference was organized under McCombs leadership. Between 1911 and 1920, about 70 Mexican missions were established in California by the Methodists.

1911 - **The American Baptist Churches in the USA (formerly known as the American Baptist Convention or Northern Baptists)** appointed the Rev. and Mrs. L. E. Troyer as general missionaries for Spanish work under the Southern

California Baptist Convention. The Troyers had served as Baptist missionaries in Puerto Rico and Mexico prior to returning to California in 1910. Between 1911 and 1917, more than 17 Spanish-speaking churches and missions were established.

1912 - **The New York City Mission Society** begins work among Spanish-speaking immigrants, later establishing the Church of the Good Neighbor, which became the “mother church” for many other Hispanic congregations.

1912 - **The First Hispanic Church of God (Cleveland, TN)** in the USA was founded in Raton, New Mexico, but at that time the Hispanic work did not have an identity of its own. In May 1946, the Church of God established the Office of Superintendent for Latin America. The Hispanic work was included in that office, and this date is known as the “official date” of the beginning of the Hispanic COG.

1915 - **The young Rev. Henry C. Ball** begins his life-long ministry with the newly formed Assemblies of God in Texas, where he established a Spanish-speaking church in Kingsville. He was appointed the first General Superintendent of the Mexican District of the Assemblies of God in 1917, which was renamed the Latin American District Council in 1929. With the retirement of Ball in 1939, Demetrio Bazán was appointed the superintendent of the Latin American District Council, which introduced a new era in the growth and development of Hispanic work. In 2000, there were seven organized Hispanic districts in the USA, with a total of 1,367 churches and 139,586 members.

1915 - **The Friends Church (Quakers)** began Hispanic ministry in Whittier, California, under the leadership of En-

rique Cobos, originally called the Jimtown Mission and now known as the Pico Rivera Friends Church.

1916 - **The Christian Church-Disciples of Christ** organized the Texas State Mexican Sunday School Convention, with annual meetings between 1916 and 1922.

1917 - **The Free Methodist Church in North America** began ministry among Hispanics in Los Angeles, California.

1917 – 1918 **The Plymouth Brethren-Brethren Assemblies** (a loose nondenominational network of local churches) began Hispanic ministry when Ervin D. Dresch and R. H. Hall (who had been a missionary in Honduras) joined forces to evangelize Spanish-speaking people in rural communities from Texas and New Mexico to Michigan. In 1918, a small Sunday School and Brethren Assembly were started in a Mexican community in San Antonio, TX, at 629 South San Jacinto Street, which became known as the San Jacinto Gospel Hall.

1918 - Miss Alice E. Luce began missionary work among Hispanics in Los Angeles, California, and established the **first Spanish-speaking Assemblies of God church, “El Aposento Alto,”** in a rented hall near the Mexican Plaza. Ball reports that another Spanish-speaking Assembly of God congregation also existed in 1918 in San José, California.

1920s - **The Evangelical Lutheran Church** began Hispanic ministry in Texas.

1920s - **The Evangelical United Brethren** (a German denomination) begins Hispanic ministry in Texas. In 2003, there were 15 Hispanic congregations in six states, with the largest number in California (9).

1921 - **The Christian & Missionary Alliance** began Hispanic ministry in San Antonio, Texas.

1921 - **The First Spanish Baptist Church** was organized in New York City as part of the American Baptist Convention, under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Perry D. Woods of the Home Mission Board and Miss Albertina D. Bischoff of the Women's Baptist Home Mission Society.

1921 - **Rodney W. Roundy, Associate Secretary of the Home Mission Council**, reported that Protestant denominations had at least 300 Spanish-speaking churches and missions in the USA, with a paid staff of 250 ministers and Christian workers, in addition to 157 mission school teachers. Also, that there were more "preaching points" than the number of reported churches and missions.

1923 - **The Latin American Council of Christian Churches** (known as CLADIC in Spanish) was organized in Houston, Texas, at Bethel Temple under the leadership of the Rev. Francisco Olazabal, who left the Assemblies of God over a dispute with the Anglo-American leadership; CLADIC's headquarters are now located in Brownsville, Texas. Bethel Temple was established in the Belvedere Gardens district of Los Angeles in 1923 by the Rev. Francisco Olazábal. Originally, this denomination was called **the Interdenominational Mexican Council of Christian Churches**, which by 1924 counted over 30 churches in California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Kansas, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Mexico. After Olazábal's death in an automobile accident in Texas in June 1937, Miguel Guillén became CLADIC's president (1937-1971), followed by Dr. Arturo R. Muñiz (1971-1997), and Dr. Gilberto C. Alvarado (1997-to date).

Note: Francisco Olazábal (1886-1937), called “The Great Aztec,” the “Brown Moses” and the “Mexican Billy Sunday,” was a powerful preacher who conducted large-scale evangelistic-healing services in Hispanic communities across the USA and in Puerto Rico and other Caribbean islands during the 1920s and 1930s; according to Gastón Espinoza, Olazábal contributed to the growth and development of at least 14 denominations, either directly or indirectly: **Hispanic Ministries of the United Methodist Church** (he was a Methodist pastor from 1908-1917 in Mexico and California); **Hispanic Districts of the Assemblies of God** (1917-1923, he challenged the leadership position of Henry C. Ball as Superintendent); the **Latin American Council of Christian Churches** (1923-1937, founded by Olazábal); **Hispanic Ministries of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel** (1927-1929, founder Aimee Semple McPherson was fascinated with Olazábal’s leadership and healing gifts); and following the Spanish Harlem Revival of 1931 in NYC and the Puerto Rican Crusade For Christ in 1934 and 1936, the **Hispanic Church of God of Prophecy; Defenders of the Faith**, founded in Puerto Rico in 1934; the **Missionary Church of Christ (Concilio de Iglesias Cristo Misionero)**, founded in Puerto Rico in 1938; the **Church of Christ in the Antilles**, founded in Puerto Rico in 1935; the **Assembly of Christian Churches; Evangelical Assemblies, Inc.**; the **Pentecostal Council of Christian Churches**; and the **Pentecostal Assembly of Jesus Christ**, founded in Puerto Rico in 1938 (Espinoza 2008:294).

1925 - **Latin American Council of the Pentecostal Church of God** began work in New York City as an extension of its ministry in Puerto Rico. The former became indepen-

dent of the mother church in Puerto Rico, **Iglesia de Dios Pentecostal, Misión Internacional**, in 1954. This denomination in Puerto Rico was affiliated with the Assemblies of God from 1921 to 1947. Everett Wilson referred to the related denomination in NYC as the “**Council of (Spanish) Christian Churches of New York.**”

1926 - Alice E. Luce established the **Latin American Bible Institute of the Assemblies of God** in San Diego, California. Later, the school moved to La Mesa, then to Los Angeles, and finally to La Puente, CA, where it remains today. Also in 1926, H. C. Ball established a similar institute in San Antonio, Texas, which was relocated later to Saspamco, and then to Ysleta, Texas, now a suburb of El Paso, where it is presently.

1926 - **The Assemblies of God in Texas** reported that two-fifths of its membership was Mexican, even after a dozen or more churches had been lost to a defection (Burgess 2002-2003: 717).

1926 - **The Texas District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod** began Hispanic work in San Antonio, Texas, in 1926, although that denomination’s primary ministry was directed to German immigrants between 1840 and 1940. The language of worship and parochial education was changed from German to English after the outbreak of World War II (1939-1945).

1929 - **The Assemblies of God** reorganized its Spanish-speaking work into two districts: the **Latin American District Council** (includes all the states west of the Mississippi River, in addition to Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan and Indiana) and the **Spanish Eastern District Council** (the rest of the states of the Union plus Puerto Rico).

1929 - **The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel** began Hispanic ministry in Los Angeles, California. Pastor Antonio Gamboa, who defected from Francisco Olazábal's organization, founded the McPherson Mexican Mission (later renamed "El Buen Pastor").

1929 - The Rev. Gotthold H. Smukal, first pastor of **St. John's Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) in Boyle Heights**, an eastern suburb of Los Angeles, California, begins a branch Sunday School in 1929 with the aid of his daughter, Lorna, as a teacher among Mexicans in East Los Angeles. This was followed by a Wednesday evening Bible hour for Spanish-speaking adults, and later he held regular preaching services, according to the 1934 Mission Board report to the Southern California District Convention. The Rev. Smukal became the "father of mission work" among Hispanics in Southern California as an outreach of St. John's Lutheran Church.

1930 - **The Pacific Coast Latin American Conference** was organized under the **General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America**. In 1930, McLean reported there were ten Spanish-speaking churches with a total of about 300 members.

1930 - **The Church of the Nazarene organized its Latin American District in the Southwest**, which included Spanish-speaking churches in California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and Northern Mexico (Chihuahua, Sonora and Baja California); this district included 11 churches in the USA with 415 members in 1930, according to McLean.

1930 - **The Rev. Robert McLean** reported the existence of 367 Protestant Spanish-speaking congregations in the USA

with an estimated 26,600 members, but his report did not include any Pentecostal denominations or local churches (McLean, *The Northern Mexican*, 1930).

1931 - **The Church of God of Anderson**, Indiana, began Hispanic ministry in the Belvedere Gardens district of Los Angeles, CA.

1931 - **The Southern California District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod** opened its **Mexican and Italian Mission** in October 1931, after the arrival of the Rev. Bruno Martinelli from New Orleans, Louisiana. Previously, Martinelli had been a Methodist missionary (1922-1928) to Italians in Texas and Louisiana. While living in New Orleans he became acquainted with the Missouri Synod and studied Lutheran theology and polity between 1928 and 1931. In early 1931, he was called to serve as a missionary to Italian and Spanish-speaking people in the Pacific Southwest District. He was installed as such on May 17, 1931, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Los Angeles. The first Italian and Mexican Mission building was located on Atlantic Street in East Los Angeles. In 1934, this building housed the San Pablo Mexican Lutheran Church, which was closed in 1940 after the outbreak of World War II.

1932 - **The Mennonite Church** began Hispanic ministry at the Chicago Home Mission in Chicago, Illinois, under the leadership of missionary J. W. Shank, who previously served in Argentina. In 1999, there were 68 Hispanic congregations and 3,471 members.

1933 - **The Salvation Army** began Hispanic ministry in the Belvedere Gardens district of Los Angeles, CA.

1937 - **Fifty-five Spanish-speaking congregations were reported to exist in New York City:** six were affiliated with the New York Mission Society, 18 with Pentecostal groups, and the others with the Christian and Missionary Alliance, Adventist, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian churches.

1937 - **The Mennonite Brethren** began Hispanic ministry in Texas in 1937 and in California in 1956. In 1982 there were seven congregations and 284 members in Texas, and eight congregations and 291 members in California. Training for Hispanic leaders is offered at the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, CA. In 1994, the Pacific District Conference reported 20 Hispanic churches and missions with a total membership of 600.

1938 - **The Texas Mexican Border Mission of the Mennonite Church** was organized at Normanna, Texas, on 11 December 1938 under the leadership of A. H. Kauffman and his wife, who were the Mission's first missionaries. Mission churches were established in Mathis (Calvary Mennonite Church), Falfurrias, Tynan, Helena, Alice and Corpus Christi prior to 1960.

1938 - Miss Alice Fiene and a group of Lutheran women from **St. John's Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod)** in Orange, California, organized a mission society to begin work among the Mexican population in the nearby city of Santa Ana. A Sunday School was begun in a rented building in Santa Ana in October 1938, and the Rev. Bruno Martinelli conducted Spanish preaching services there until June 1939, when the work was organized as Misi3n Luterana San Juan under the leadership of Mr. Raymond Andersen of Immanuel

Lutheran Church of Orange. In 1941, at the request of the women of **St. John's Mission Society, the Southern California District Mission Board of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod** took over the Mexican Mission in Santa Ana.

1939 - **The Assembly of Christian Churches (AIC)** was organized in New York City among Puerto Rican leaders who were loyal to the Rev. Francisco Olazabal, but who decided to form their own organization and separate from the **Latin American Council of Christian Churches**, with headquarters in Brownsville, Texas, which was led by Mexicans who discriminated against them. The founders of AIC were Carlos Sepúlveda, Felipe González Sabater, Frank Hernández and Gilberto Díaz.

1939 - While attending **Concordia Theological Seminary (Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod)** in St. Louis, Missouri, Alfredo R. Saez (born in Puerto Rico in 1917) began teaching Spanish classes to fellow seminary students and became a missionary to Spanish-speaking people in an extremely poor section of East St. Louis (Illinois). Later, Saez became a Spanish translator for the "Lutheran Hour," and still later he became the "Spanish Lutheran Hour" speaker (1940s).

1941 - Alfredo R. Saez served as vicar at **Misión Evangélica Luterana San Juan in Santa Ana**, California, from August 1941 to August 1942, and then returned to Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis in September 1942 to finish his studies. Following his graduation from seminary in 1943, Saez again worked for the "Lutheran Hour." Saez was the first Spanish-speaking student to graduate from a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod preparatory school and seminary. Between December 1942 and December 1945, the Rev. Er-

herdt Henry Riedel (a former missionary to China) was in charge of Misión Evangélica Luterana San Juan in Santa Ana.

1942 - **The Olazábal Council of Latin American Churches (Concilio Olazábal de Iglesias Latinoamericanas)** was founded in 1942 by Hispanic leaders who were loyal to the family of the famous Mexican evangelist Francisco Olazábal following his death in an automobile accident in 1936. This denomination changed its name in 1981 to **Concilio Cristiano Hispano Pentecostal, Inc.** In 2000, the name was changed again to Iglesia Evangélica de Jesucristo, Inc.

1945 - **St. John's Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod)** allowed the Rev. Alfredo R. Saez to begin a Mexican Mission in its facility in the Boyle Heights section of Los Angeles, beginning in March 1945. This Mexican congregation was later organized as Concordia Lutheran Church in East Los Angeles. In the summer of 1946, Valparaiso University in Indiana invited Pastor Saez to teach in its Foreign Language Department, which he accepted and served there for 18 years.

1946 - In May, the **Church of God (Cleveland, TN)** established the **Office of Superintendent for Latin America.** Hispanic work in the USA was included in that office, and this date is known as the "official date" of the beginning of the Hispanic COG-CT. Hispanic ministry began under the leadership of Josué Rubio on the West Coast, East Coast and Texas. By 2000, there were 640 organized Hispanic churches in the USA with 44,533 members.

1947 - **La Iglesia Luterana de Nuestro Salvador** was organized in Santa Ana, California, in its own building, under the leadership of Vicar David M. Stirdivant (August 1946-August

1947) who replaced Pastor Riedel. This work was formerly known as Misión Evangélica Luterana San Juan. This work in Santa Ana was discontinued in 1956 in order to devote more attention to the growing Mexican population in East Los Angeles.

1950 - **The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod** begins Spanish-speaking work in the Boyle Heights section of Los Angeles under the leadership of the Rev. David M. Stirdivant with the support of the Southern California Lutheran Women's Missionary League. These early missionary efforts led to the formal establishment of Iglesia Luterana La Santa Cruz in May 1957 on Whittier Blvd., in East Los Angeles, pastored by the Rev. Stirdivant.

1950s - **The independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ (non-instrumental)** began ministry among Hispanics in Los Angeles, CA.

1950s - **The Episcopal Church** began Hispanic ministry in East Los Angeles, CA.

1950s - **The Damascus Christian Church** was organized in New York City among Hispanics by the Rev. Leoncia Rosada Rousseau (known as "Mama Leo"), who had previously been a pastor and evangelist with Olazábal's CLADIC.

1953 - **The Conservative Baptist Association** began Hispanic ministry in Whittier, California.

1958 - **The General Conference Mennonite Church** began its work among Hispanics in Lansdale, PA. During the 1980s, Hispanic work began in several other states and in Toronto, Canada. In 1986, there were seven Hispanic congregations in the USA and Canada.

1958 - The Christian Church-Disciples of Christ organized the **Convention of Hispanic Christian Churches of the Northeast** with six churches.

1960s - **The Evangelical Free Church** began Hispanic ministry in Los Angeles, CA.

1960s - **The Baptist General Conference** began Hispanic ministry in Chicago, Illinois. Later, the **Mexican Baptist Seminary** was founded in 1973 in Chicago. In 2003, there were 10 Hispanic churches and missions in Illinois, 18 in Southern California, seven in northern California and three each in Colorado and Florida, for a total of 41.

1960s - **The Church of God of Prophecy** begins Hispanic ministry in the USA.

1960s - **The Christian Church-Disciples of Christ** begins Hispanic ministry in Los Angeles, CA.

1960s - **The Baptist Bible Fellowship** begins Hispanic ministry in Los Angeles, CA.

1960s - **The General Association of Regular Baptists (GARB)** begins Hispanic ministry in Los Angeles, CA.

1960 - Leo Grebler, et al., in **The Mexican-American People: the nation's second largest minority** (New York: The Free Press, 1970) reported the existence of 1,535 Spanish-speaking churches in the USA with an estimated 113,130 members, based on a survey by Glen W. Trimble for the National Council of Churches. This report, however, included only one Pentecostal denomination: the Assemblies of God. Other non-Pentecostal denominations (such as the Church

of the Nazarene) were omitted from the report. PROLADES estimates that there were at least 2,200 Spanish-speaking churches in the USA in 1960, based on its own research.

1960 - **Frederick Whitam reported there were 460 Protestant churches in New York City** with “some form of ministry to Spanish-speaking people,” which included 16 denominations as well as independent churches and missions. These included Adventist, Baptist, Congregational, Christian, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, New York City Mission Society, Presbyterian, Salvation Army and other non-Pentecostal denominations. The Pentecostal denominations reported to exist were the following: Spanish Eastern District Council of the Assemblies of God (40 churches and 5,400 members), Latin American Council of the Pentecostal Church of God (32 churches and 2,325 members), Assembly of Christian Churches (26 churches with 1,600 members), and others with fewer than 10 churches each, including Damascus Christian Church, Defenders of the Faith, and the Church of God (Cleveland, TN)-Spanish District Council for the East.

1967 - **Victory Outreach** was organized in the Boyle Heights district of East Los Angeles under the leadership of a former drug addict turned Pentecostal evangelist, Sonny Arguinzoni, under the slogan “East L. A. for Jesus.”

1969 - **The Soldiers of the Cross of Christ International Evangelical Church**, founded in Cuba between 1922-1925 by Ernest William Sellers, transferred its headquarters to Miami, Florida in 1969 due to restrictions on religious liberty and the exodus of Cubans from Cuba following the Marxist Revolution led by Fidel Castro in 1959. Until 1974, the name of this

denomination was “Soldiers of the Cross of Christ”; previously it had been called “Gideon Mission” and “Gideon Evangelistic Band”. In 1922, the mother church in Florida suffered a division when an affiliated church in the State of California became independent under Bishop Rolando González Washington, with headquarters in West Covina, CA.

1971 - **The Hispanic United Pentecostal Church** was founded in Houston, TX, by pastor Hernán Silguero with 19 people. In 1973, he purchased property at 6518 Fulton Street in Houston to hold services, and this location became known as the Central Church for 96 local congregations that have been founded in the USA as of 2011. The Central Church in Houston is pastored by the Rev. Felipe Chicas, who is now the General Superintendent.

1974 - **The Religious Dimension in Hispanic Los Angeles: A Protestant Case Study (550 pages)**, authored by Clifton L. Holland, was published by the William Carey Library in Pasadena, CA. This study was based on two years of field research by Holland while a graduate student at the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA. The book includes a directory of 227 Hispanic churches in Los Angeles and Orange counties.

1978 - The Christian Church-Disciples of Christ organizes the **Convention of Hispanic and Bilingual Christian Churches of the Midwest** with five churches.

1978 - The **United Pentecostal Church** began work in Bronx, NY, where John Hopkins pastored a Spanish-speaking church among Apostolics. A retired missionary from Colombia, Lewis Morley, was appointed to be the Coordinator of

Spanish Ministries as a new initiative under the Home Missions Department.

1979 - **The Brethren Church (Ashland, OH)** began Hispanic work in Southern California under the ministry of the Rev. Juan Carlos Miranda (born in Argentina) in Pasadena: Centro Cristiano para la Familia (Christian Center for the Family).

1981 - The Christian Church-Disciples of Christ organizes the **National Hispanic and Bilingual Fellowship of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)** in the United States and Canada with 28 churches: Northeast (12), Southwest (9), Midwest (5) and Southeast (2).

1983 - **Ildefonso Ortiz of WorldTeam** produced a "**Directory of Churches, Organizations and Ministries of the Hispanic Evangelical Churches in Miami-Dade,**" with technical assistance provided by PROLADES, that included 222 Hispanic churches and missions, distributed as follows: Southern Baptist Convention (37), independent Pentecostal churches (31), Assemblies of God (17), other independent churches (15), United Methodist Church (14), independent Baptist churches (13), Church of God-Cleveland, TN (9), Lutheran churches (9), Presbyterian churches (8), Episcopal churches (6), and the Pentecostal Church of God (6).

1985 - **Dr. Everett Wilson** reported the existence of at least **2,159 Hispanic Pentecostal churches in the USA** in his article on "Hispanic Pentecostals" in the *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, edited by Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee.

1985 - **The Hispanic Association for Bilingual-Bicultural Ministries (HABBM)**, a national association of churches and ministries targeting second and third generation Latinos, is organized in Santa Ana, CA, under the leadership of the Rev. Daniel de León of Templo Calvario (Assemblies of God) in Santa Ana, CA. The Rev. Luis Madrigal (a Presbyterian minister who worked with World Vision USA in Monrovia, CA,) was named the Executive Director.

1986 - **Lou Cordova**, a staff member of the **Institute for Latin American Studies (ILAS)** at the U.S. Center for World Mission in Pasadena, CA, produced a “**Directory of Hispanic Protestant Churches in Southern California**” for the Hispanic Association for Theological Education (known as AHET in Spanish), with technical assistance provided by PROLADES. A total of 1,048 Hispanic churches were listed in nine counties: Los Angeles county (687), Orange (80), San Diego (75), San Bernardino (65), Riverside (52), Ventura (29), Kern (26), Imperial (22) and Santa Barbara (12). The denominations with the largest number of churches and missions were: Assemblies of God (124), Apostolic Assembly (108), American Baptist Churches (97), Seventh-day Adventist (68), Southern Baptist Convention (67), Foursquare Gospel (48), Church of God-Cleveland, TN (45), Church of the Nazarene (40), Conservative Baptist Association (24), United Methodist (19), Presbyterian Church USA (18), and the Assembly of Christian Churches (16).

1988 - **Graduate student Stewart Stout** produced “**A Guide to Hispanic Protestant Churches in the San Francisco Bay Area**” as part of a National Study of Hispanic Church Growth in the USA, sponsored by PROLADES.

The study lists 157 Hispanic churches in six counties, with the denominations with the largest number of churches being: Assemblies of God (28), Southern Baptist Convention (16), Seventh-day Adventist (9), American Baptist Churches (8), and the Church of God-Cleveland, TN (7); 49 churches were unaffiliated.

1989 - **The United Pentecostal Church of Colombia** (established by Canadian and U.S. branches of the United Pentecostal Church) began ministry among Hispanics in the USA in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and New York City, NY, among Colombian immigrants. Pastors José Aldemar Torres and Guillermo López requested help from the mother church in Colombia to send a missionary to help them care for the new churches established in the USA. Eliseo and Marlene Duarte were sent by the UPC of Colombia as its first missionaries to work with Hispanics in the USA.

1992 - Dr. Jesse Miranda founded the **Alianza Ministerial Evangelical Nacional (AMEN)**, the first ever national Hispanic evangelical network. Meanwhile, in 1995, the Rev. Samuel Rodriguez joined other Hispanic next generation leaders such as Nick Garza, Charlie Rivera and others in the strategic coordination and development of a **Hispanic Evangelical Next Generation Movement** under the canopy of **The National Hispanic Youth Congress**. In partnership with denominational conventions where attendance reached close to 10,000 in the Texas Region, Rodriguez led a mobilization conference platform that provided an impetus for the organization of the **National Hispanic Evangelical Association**. In 2001, these statewide and regional conferences, under the leadership of the Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, united the statewide associ-

ations of Hispanic evangelicals and merged with AMEN to form a united national voice on behalf of the Hispanic Evangelical Church. Founded in 2001, the **National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC)** exists to unify, serve and represent the Hispanic Evangelical Community with the divine (vertical) and human (horizontal) elements of the Christian message via 7 Directives of Life, Family, Great Commission, Education, Justice, Stewardship and Youth.

1992 - **The “Soldiers of the Cross of Christ in the State of California”** separated from the mother church in Florida (Soldiers of the Cross of Christ International Evangelical Church) when affiliated churches in the State of California became independent under Bishop Rolando González Washington, with headquarters in West Covina, CA. This splinter denomination reported affiliated churches in California, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru and Spain. In Mexico, the church is known as **The Missionary Church of the Disciples of Christ**, mainly along the California-Mexico border.

1993 - **PROLADES** reported the creation of a national database of Hispanic churches in the USA with 6,837 listings, which was developed as a support service for the **Hispanic Association for Bilingual-Bicultural Ministries (HABBM)**. The distribution of Hispanic churches and missions by state was as follows (8 largest): California (2,388), Texas (1,799), Florida (643), New York (353), Illinois (277), Arizona (231), New Mexico (173), and New Jersey (118). The largest denominations in terms of number of churches and missions were: Assemblies of God (1,268), Southern Baptist Convention (759), other Baptists (447), Apostolic Assembly

(444), Seventh-day Adventists (283), Christian Churches / Churches of Christ (248), Church of God-Cleveland, TN (227), United Methodist Church (199), Presbyterian Church USA (143), Church of the Nazarene (129), American Baptist Churches (124), International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (113), Evangelical Lutheran Church (111) and the Christian & Missionary Alliance (102). The total number of Hispanic churches and missions in the USA was estimated to be over 10,000 in 1993.

1993 - The History Committee of the Hispanic Association for Theological Education (known as AHET in Spanish) publishes "Hacia una historia de la Iglesia Evangélica Hispana de California del Sur," with Dr. Rodelo Wilson as the General Editor. This study provides a historical overview of the first 120 years of Hispanic ministry in Southern California (Chapter 1), followed by a chapter each on the historical development of Hispanic ministry of 12 denominations: United Presbyterian Church, United Methodist Church, Congregational Church, American Baptist Convention, Apostolic Assembly of Faith in Jesus Christ, Assemblies of God, Free Methodist Church, Church of God (Anderson, IN), Southern Baptist Convention, Conservative Baptist Association, Churches of Christ and Victory Outreach.

1995 - **PROLADES** produced "A Resource Directory of Hispanic Protestant Churches in Southern California" that included 1,626 Hispanic churches and missions, distributed in 10 counties as follows: Los Angeles (1,026), Orange (182), San Diego (99), Riverside (97), San Bernardino (93), Ventura (45), Imperial (29), Santa Barbara (27), Kern (25) and San Luis Obispo (6). The denominational totals were as follows: Assem-

blies of God (148), Apostolic Assembly (131), various Baptist groups (99), Seventh-day Adventist (95), Foursquare Gospel (83), Southern Baptist Convention (54), Church of the Nazarene (54), Church of God-Cleveland, TN (54), American Baptist Churches (48), various Pentecostal groups (44), Church of God of Prophecy (43), and the Presbyterian Church USA (34).

1996 - **The Ancient Path Pentecostal Church (Iglesia Pentecostal La Senda Antigua)** was founded in the Spanish Harlem district of Manhattan, NY, on March 2 as an effort to unite Spanish-speaking Apostolics (Jesus Only, or Oneness Pentecostals) under Hispanic leadership as a reaction against Anglo-American cultural domination in the United Pentecostal Church International. In 1997, the Seminario Bíblico La Senda Antigua was founded in Harlem, NY.

The Date of Origin of Hispanic Ministry is currently unknown for the following groups:

- Advent Christian Church
- American Lutheran Church
- Assemblies of Pentecostal Churches of Jesus Christ (Asambleas de Iglesias Pentecostales de Jesucristo)
- Baptist Missionary Association of America
- Brethren in Christ
- Christian Reformed Church
- Church of God of Prophecy
- Concilio Cristiano de la Iglesia Pentecostal Hispana (Los Angeles)
- Concilio Hispano Pentecostal de la Iglesia de Dios (Chicago)
- Concilio de Iglesias Cristo Misionera, Inc. (NYC and Chicago)

Evangelical Church of Apostles and Prophets (Chicago and Los Angeles)
Evangelical Covenant Church (Chicago and Los Angeles)
Evangelical Methodist Church
Free Will Baptist Churches
Grace Brethren Churches (Chicago, with headquarters in Winona Lake, IN)
Lutheran Church in America
Mexican Border Missions (Texas)
Open Bible Standard Churches
Orthodox Presbyterian Church
Pentecostal Assembly of Jesus Christ
Pentecostal Holiness Church International
Presbyterian Church in America
Reformed Church in America
Seventh-day Adventist Reform Movement
Soldiers of the Cross, International Evangelical Church (founded in Havana, Cuba, between 1922-1925; also in Miami, NYC, Los Angeles, etc., after the Cuban Revolution of 1959)
United Lutheran Church (Texas and Chicago)
Vineyard Ministries International
Wesleyan Church
World Wide Missionary Movement (from Puerto Rico)

NOTES:

1. Dates listed indicate the earliest recorded ministry or in case of discrepancies, the date most frequently indicated.
2. Protestant denominations include those that have begun ministry among Hispanics or those

that were founded as Hispanic organizations by Hispanic leaders.

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PART II

MINISTRY

CHAPTER 6

Anti-transformational Paradigms of the Latino Church

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Dr. Oscar García-Johnson

Introduction

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!” So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. (Acts 3:1–10)

“I am tired of seeing the same scene...” said the young Latino⁴⁴ preacher at the beginning of his sermon. He continued, “I am tired of seeing more and more people who come to church expecting to receive alms from God to sustain the mediocre lives they are living. I am bothered by the fact that God has been converted into a crutch that holds up our dysfunctional lives and is not seen as the way to develop wholeness — a God who affects every level of our lives.”

When I heard David confront the audience, a US Latina church, with such boldness, I felt seriously convicted, concerned, and at the same time, hopeful. I saw rising up before my eyes a nonconformist generation fed up with a rickety, transplanted Western Christianity. David is a second-generation Hispanic young adult who, thanks to his immigrant family, managed to hold on to the fundamentals of the Spanish language and developed a great appreciation for its Latino cultural tapestry. He also excels in his first language, English. As many US-born Latinos, he studied hard and adopted as his own various regional Anglo-American cultural elements.

In sum, David represents an emerging generation of evangelical Latinos that dares to look critically at their evangelical legacies. It goes without saying that David and his generation know the Four Spiritual Laws by heart, recognize the levels of racial and cultural discrimination in many civic and ecclesiastic structures, are no longer impressed by the deception of the “name it and claim it” prosperity gospel, and despise the cyni-

⁴⁴ The use of inclusive language is one of the values of US Latino/a theology. Due to the fact that no word in the English language suffices to represent the kind of gender inclusivity we seek, I will use “Latino” and “Latina” interchangeably to convey the spirit of such inclusivity. I will avoid the conventional “Latino/a” or the informal “Latin@” expressions in this particular document, except when it is a title or a quotation.

cism permeating much of Latina pastoral politics. I was personally impressed by the boldness of his complaint and the audacity of comparing a biblical event to current times with a prophetic voice. I was concerned, however, by what David and his generation represent as a challenge to the current Latino pastoral network and by the decisions that both generations will have to make in order to provide continuity for the Latina evangelical faith in the United States, the Americas, and the world at large.

The question arises: what models of ministry, paradigms for pastoral leadership, and processes of discipleship have we left as a legacy of the kingdom to this emerging generation? How can we prevent this young man from giving himself up to an Anglo-centric model, believing it to be superior to the familiar Latino models in which he was raised? Or, if he instead chooses to assume his Latina evangelical legacies as the basis for ministry and leadership, how can we prevent him from becoming an authoritarian figure once he becomes a leader?

I feel hopeful due to the fact that the Spirit of the triune God is active and is making both the older and the rising generations uncomfortable. I am also encouraged to see that several of us who function within both the pastoral and academic worlds are restless and looking for new ways to offer a more autonomous Latina theological formation, one that seeks to open the horizons for critical faith and committed pastoral practice for the next generation of Latino evangelicals.

I have two goals for this essay: 1) to present a theological diagnosis of the possible reasons why we have difficulty founding and sustaining evangelical ministries that are involved in holistic transformation of our contexts and communities; and 2) to point toward an alternative, viable theological

horizon in which we can articulate a holistic kingdom gospel within our current global context. Both exercises represent a starting point, not a full strategy, from which we can effectively train and launch the next Latino evangelical leaders in the Americas, especially in the United States. Even though this essay focuses on U.S. Latino evangelicals, our scenario is global and continental (including North and South, Western and non-Western) in the sense that these geographical lines have been changing and contributing to the cultural and theological formation of our Latina evangelical identity.

Scenarios in the Latino Church

Let me begin by presenting three brief scenarios which, in my view, represent the bulk of the U.S. Latino church and its most obvious religious tendencies:

Scene One

The curtain rises, and there appears a community that is nominally Roman Catholic. Most of its members are comprised of immigrants who bring their regional Catholic faith from Latin America, and upon arriving in the North they take refuge in a different Catholic faith that is much more complex and diverse than what they brought with them. This is a shock for most of them. Many immigrant Catholic Church members respond in one of two ways: they either get lost in the rampant materialism in which God is irrelevant to us (the American Dream) or, at best, they convert to the Pentecostal evangelical faith. Here we must look at certain religious tendencies at work in Latin America that stretch transnationally into the United States.

According to the Hispanic Trends Project national survey by the Pew Research Center, the number of Catholics in

Hispanic areas is diminishing considerably (by 12% in the last four years). At the same time, the number of Hispanics who call themselves Protestant (or not religiously affiliated) is growing. One in four Latinas, or 24% of Hispanic adults, state they have left Catholicism. And out of this number, half left before arriving in the United States.⁴⁵ In this scenario, the US Catholic Church adopts a parochial role of maintenance and, in some instances, of advocacy for the immigrants who make up a large part of its membership. The curtain falls.

Scene Two

The curtain rises, and there appears a Pentecostal immigrant community that also takes refuge in its faith, which is lived out as a celebratory experience (feast) of the Spirit through charismatic worship. The majority of its membership is made up of converts from nominal Catholicism and the growing population of immigrants from Latin American Pentecostal churches. The Spirit-filled experience is immediate and not very structured, hence facilitating visions, dreams, private biblical interpretations, words of prophecy, and spontaneous ministries, all of which are informed by existential needs and the social and economic challenges that surround the lives of believ-

45 See Pew Research Center: Hispanic Trends Project, "The Shifting Religious Identity of Latinos in the United States," May 7, 2014, <http://www.pewforum.org/2014/05/07/the-shifting-religious-identity-of-latinos-in-the-united-states/>. It is worthwhile to emphasize the importance of the tendencies toward conversion, principally to Pentecostalism, which for decades have characterized Latin America. According to Gastón Espinosa, in 2004, nearly 40% of Pentecostals around the world were in Latin America, where the Catholic Church estimated a rate of conversion (from Catholicism to Protestantism) of about 8,000 to 10,000 persons a day. Espinosa argues that "the demographic shifts taking place in Latin America today continue to shape the religious reformation taking place among Latinos in the United States." See Gastón Espinosa, "The Pentecostalization of Latin American and U.S. Latino Christianity," *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 26, no. 2 (2004): 263, 267.

ers in an impoverished Latino context. The desire for financial prosperity (the American Dream) is channeled through faith, and believers cling to their hope of favor from the Holy Spirit.

This context brings together several elements that lead to a highly damaging theology within indigenous (criollo) Pentecostalism:⁴⁶ the controversial “doctrine of prosperity.” Factors such as extreme poverty, the experience of social-cultural displacement, the lack of a holistic biblical discipleship, and deficient pastoral-apostolic-prophetic leadership conspire to project a kind of magical “formulism” into the religious imagination of the people to the tune of words of faith, words of prophecy, models of anointed ministry, prophetic and apostolic endorsements. All of this offers the Latino public an evangelical success package, an option that allows them to become exclusive, privileged, and affluent, all of which has been denied them by the dominant economies, societies, and mainline denominations. “I’m a child of the King, and I deserve the best” is invoked as a mantra. Here the role of the church becomes that of offering a spiritual refuge and projecting an attitude of triumph in the life of the Christian. The curtain falls.

Scene Three

The curtain rises, and there appears a Protestant Latino community we will call criolla (Creole).⁴⁷ This community arises with-

⁴⁶ This phrase was coined by the Pentecostal ethicist Eldin Villafaña. See Eldin Villafaña, *Introducción al pentecostalismo: manda fuego, Señor* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2012), chapter 4.

⁴⁷ “Creolism” is historically related to the colonial period in Latin America’s history and refers to the descendants of Spaniards who were born in the American continent and who had a lower social status than Spaniards from the homeland. As time went on, the Creoles stopped being “the conquered.” They became “the conquerors” and grabbed the reins of the neocolonial projects of independence. This Creole class mediated the external dominance that sought to impose centers of industrial capitalism in Latin America: England and France in the nineteenth century and the United States starting in 1900. See Enrique

in the historical (mainline) denominations of the United States and is made up of immigrants with slightly higher levels of education than the previous groups, and they are the product of Anglo-Saxon outreach to Latinos in an attempt at assimilation. Over a few decades, however, in many of these denominations a kind of Latina “Creolism” has been developing through the growing awareness of Latin American roots. This has been accomplished thanks largely to the efforts of Latina leaders who, in addition to being well formed theologically, have managed to penetrate the denominational structures to a certain point. Their influence has opened up the possibility of transforming Latino departments and programs initiated by Anglo-American churches into autonomous Latina churches. The price for producing such churches has been high because of the racial and cultural tensions between the criollo leadership and the Anglo-American structures that have resented Latino autonomy and delinking from the methods, programs, and church models imposed by the Anglo-American religious establishment. In many cases there is no complete rupture for two reasons: 1) faithfulness to missionary roots and/or 2) economic dependence. Here, the role of the church is seen as that of affirming Latino ethnic roots and promoting the historic Protestant legacy. The curtain falls.

The Question of Evangelical Success and Transformational Mission

These three portraits hardly represent the complexity within Latina religiosity. We have not mentioned experimental Latino hybrid churches that are multilingual and multiethnic groups with Hispanic, English, Portuguese or Korean roots.

Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of “the Other” and the Myth of Modernity* (New York: Continuum, 1995), 120. It is precisely because of this characteristic “mediating” with external Western interests that we dare to call this type of Protestant a “Creole Latino Protestant community.” Its connotation is simultaneously negative and positive.

We also would need to take a look at the explosion of popular (syncretic) alternative faiths⁴⁸ such as Holy Death, Santería, Spiritualism, Shamanism, various sects, and Tibetan-Asian faiths that are growing in many spheres of Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Latino diaspora.

It is worth referring to a well-known thesis of historian and philosopher Enrique Dussel regarding indigenous Latin American popular religiosity. In reference to the colonial Roman Catholic project, he concludes that a significant portion of the indigenous population in the Americas continues to “await their complete evangelization,” for which the natives of the Americas “complement” official Catholicism with popular indigenous religiosities.⁴⁹

There are two ways to interpret this reality. One is that the Spanish missionary movement did not do a good job, based on the fact that their interests leaned in another direction and the double standard of living betrayed them. However, Montesinos, Las Casas, and other missionaries seem to disprove the purity of this hypothesis. Another and more convincing hypothesis is that the missionaries were not able to penetrate all the layers of knowledge that made up the worldview of the originating cultures. They failed, first, because they could not fully understand them and represent them accurately due to the Eurocentric categories of knowledge to which they adhered; and, second, because the natives of the continent resisted them too strongly.⁵⁰

48 Given the controversy that surrounds the word “syncretic,” we need to clarify that in the context of this work the word refers to spiritual or religious expressions that do not self-identify as derivations of Christianity or as Christian denominations, whether these be Catholic, Protestant, or evangelical.

49 See Enrique D. Dussel, *A History of the Church in Latin America: Colonialism to Liberation (1492–1979)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981).

50 I deal with this topic in Oscar García-Johnson, “Rethologizing Las Américas:

Popular religion and alternative religious expressions can be understood as a form of epistemic and existential resistance. Perhaps the explosion of alternative religious expressions in our continent and in the diaspora, more than a problem in itself, should be seen as a symptom of a failed Westernizing attempt by the Western missionary enterprise that has met resistance at multiple levels.

All of the above leads us to ask ourselves to what degree we can affirm that the predominant Latino church in the United States (and throughout the Americas) is truly transforming its context in a holistic way. I start from the premise that an articulation of a biblical and theological mission does exist, but is sporadic and reductionist. There are some outstanding efforts on the part of several churches that are living out an impressive transformational witness in urban settings, but they show up as independent and sporadic projects in the public arena. The majority of evangelical Latina leadership continues to be submerged in an alarming missional and transformational lethargy.⁵¹ This lethargy occurs throughout the entire Latino continent, including the United States, the Caribbean, and Canada.

We evangelical Latinos tend to speak with a certain attitude of pride when we refer to the phenomenal growth of

A Transoccidental Approach,” *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology* 19, no. 2 (2014).

51 This has already been discussed by respected evangelical scholars such as René Padilla, Samuel Escobar, Justo González, and Juan Martínez, among others. See C. René Padilla, *Misión integral: ensayos sobre el reino de Dios y la iglesia* (Buenos Aires: Kairos, 2012); José Míguez Bonino, *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 1997); Juan Francisco Martínez, *Los Protestantes: An Introduction to Latino Protestantism in the United States* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2011); Justo L. González, “In Quest of a Protestant Hispanic Ecclesiology,” in *Teología en Conjunto: A Collaborative Hispanic Protestant Theology*, ed. José David Rodríguez and Loida I. Martell-Otero (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1997); Samuel Escobar, *En busca de Cristo en América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Kairos, 2013).

Christianity in Latin America and within the Anglo-American and European denominations. However, when we measure the success of the church against the challenges evident in the very same context that produces this growth, we are left with dropped jaws. Several examples come to mind. Many church sanctuaries and stadiums are filled with crowds, yet jails in the surrounding areas barely have room for all the new criminals. Today more chronic poverty exists than ever before in the Americas: more rich people have even greater wealth, and the poor are poorer than ever. On the bright side, more and more religious leaders are getting involved in politics. On the down side, many do so with no theological or political preparation and no missional commitment.

In this regard, a new religious culture with political power is currently arising in Latin America. This is not a bad thing, if it occurs with the necessary educational process and missional commitment. But here is the problem: leaders are not adequately prepared either theologically or politically. As if this were not enough, there have been a number of cases in which Christian politicians prove to be more committed to their support networks than to the kingdom of God. That is, when some of these leaders achieve a position of power, they favor their evangelical followers over the interests of the general public, leaving a very dubious political witness. The risk is to give the public throughout the Americas the impression that evangelicalism is one instrument among many for popular success, a tool for acquiring greater political power with the purpose of favoring a “privileged evangelical class.”

If, in effect, the majority of the pastoral community and the evangelical church continue in an alarming missional

and transformational lethargy, what are the factors that have brought us to this place of transformational impotence? What is stopping us from embracing our religious, cultural, social, political, and economic protagonism without compromising the values of the kingdom of God? Below I will identify four factors that, in my opinion, have altered the missional DNA of the Latina church and leadership in the Americas. These factors constitute what I call the anti-transformational paradigms of the Latina church.

1. A Colonizing Theology

Since the birth of the Christian faith in Latin America, there has been an asymmetrical relationship between Western Europe and all that is native to the Americas.⁵² This asymmetry that places Latin Americans in a position of inferiority to their Northern and Western brothers and sisters has had fatal ramifications for the holistic development of good thinking, good ministry, and good living for Latin Americans and the diaspora throughout the world, keeping them from being agents of holistic transformation.

The European conquest came armed with ideological and theological weaponry. The Greco-Roman Renaissance revival was at its peak during the time of the conquest of the “West Indies.” All knowledge derived its authority from the classical texts of political philosophy, metaphysics, cosmology, and nat-

52 Examples of this asymmetry are numerous. Suffice it to name the debate between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda regarding the humanity of indigenous people (Lewis Hanke, *All Mankind is One: A Study of the Disputation Between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda on the Religious Intellectual Capacity of the American Indians* [DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois UP, 1974]; José de Acosta, *The Natural and Moral History of the Indies* [1894, <https://archive.org/details/historianatural02acosrich>]; or Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *The General and Natural History of the Indies* [1851, <https://archive.org/details/generalynatural01fernrich>]).

ural sciences generated in Greece and Rome. Any other text or knowledge, especially from unknown places such as the pre-Columbian Americas, was outclassed and dismissed as inferior by the Renaissance snobbery of the time.

Having said this, we should add two other factors: the Catholicism that arrived in the Americas was Counter-Reformation and Spain had just finished a nearly nine-centuries-long battle with the Moors.⁵³ In this moment marking the birth of the Americas, a hermeneutical principle was constructed that determined the lines of biblical, theological, anthropological, and political interpretation that have held firm up until the current day. It reads like this:

*If the Amerindians were not equally human and equal in value to the Europeans, then the violent colonial processes such as deicide (the assassination of their gods), ethnocide (the assassination of their ethnic value), and genocide (massacres) are fully justified. Such sacrifices are a necessary part of the process of “civilizing” the people. Let it be understood that it is the Western Europeans who civilize and the natives of the Americas who are being civilized, because in the eyes of the European, they have no civilization.*⁵⁴

53 Dussel argues that the Iberian Catholicism that arrived in the “New World” was Counter-Reformation, given that Latin American Catholicism became a reactionary religious fruit against the Protestant movement of the sixteenth century. See Enrique Dussel, “Historia del fenómeno religioso en América Latina,” Universidad Autónoma de México, <http://www.enrique-dussel.com/DVD%20Obras%20Enrique%20Dussel/Textos/c/302.1998/articulo.pdf>.

54 Once again, see the writings of Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (“Demócratas Secundos”), Fray Juan de Torquemada (*Monarquía Indiana*), and José de Acosta

The birth of Latin America and its church is intimately linked to the proclamation of the cross of Jesus Christ as the banner of the Spanish and Portuguese imperial project. The use of the crucifix as the authoritative signature of God served to legitimize the Iberian campaigns of invasion, cultural devastation, appropriation of land, colonization, massacre, and evangelization of the Americas.⁵⁵ Let us recall the acquisitive practice of Christopher Columbus upon arriving to the lands of the “West Indies”: “In all the countries visited by your Highnesses’ ships, I have caused a high cross to be fixed upon every headland.”⁵⁶ In this way, says Luis Rivera Pagán, “As a symbol of the expropriation, Columbus placed crosses in strategic sites on the islands he visited.”⁵⁷

Violence, invasion, and faith were brought together under the sign of the cross, which in the Americas, according to Rivera Pagán, came to represent a territory that was taken for the church and the Catholic king and queen. “Hidden behind the evangelizing cross,” concludes Rivera Pagán, “faintly veiled, was the conquering sword.”⁵⁸ This historical reality had an enor-

(*Historia natural y moral de las Indias*), among others, which show this marked tendency to “civilize” the indigenous peoples.

55 This colonizing theology not only took root in Latin American (and today, Latino) minds but also was reborn in different Catholic objects of worship such as the worship of the conquering virgin. In Santa Fe, New Mexico, there is a statue of the virgin called “The Conqueror.” Georges Casalis writes on the topic: “This is Cortes’ ‘Queen of Heaven,’ who accompanied him on his pilgrimage to our lands. With her at his side, he came from Spain in the name of God to conquer Mexico — putting into place the greatest bloodbath in American history.” See Georges Casalis, “Jesus: Neither Abject Lord nor Heavenly Monarch,” in *Faces of Jesus: Latin American Christologies*, ed. José Míguez Bonino, trans. Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1984), 74.

56 Christopher Columbus, *Select Letters of Christopher Columbus, with Other Original Documents*, trans. R. H. Major (London: Hakluyt Society, 1870), 147.

57 Luis Rivera Pagán, *A Violent Evangelism: The Political and Religious Conquest of the Americas* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 8.

58 *Ibid.*, 9.

mous impact on the cultural and religious imagination of Latin America and strengthened the great hegemonic power of the West that gave way to the modern colonialist logic that has stayed in place for five centuries, partially dismembering the way of thinking and practice of autonomous life on the continent.

The combination of cross and sword as the pillars of conquest and evangelization of the Americas gave birth to three infamous beliefs —the “colonial wound” as Walter Mignolo puts it⁵⁹— in the Latin American psyche, which still inform our vision of being a people, living life, and transforming the world:

A. Latin American suffering is a historical reality determined by God, as illustrated by the success of the European conquest. In order to conquer the natives, they must be converted, and to convert them, their gods must be subjugated and killed; if, after all that, the natives are still not sufficiently assimilated into Western religious culture, they must be sacrificed through massacres. In his lucid essay “Jesus: Neither Abject Lord nor Heavenly Monarch,” Georges Casalis poignantly articulates how fatalism is a hermeneutical element of Latin American history:

All discover a reason for resigning themselves to their lot, for accepting their destiny as a defeated and beaten people. The essence of such a religion is passivity in the face of misfortune and evil—acceptance of life as it is.⁶⁰

59 See Walter Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America*, Blackwell Manifestos (Malden, Oxford: Blackwell, 2005).

60 Georges Casalis, “Jesus: Neither Abject Lord nor Heavenly Monarch,” in

B. Christ is the representation of tragedy and invites us to contemplate suffering (and almost worship it) in daily life. Casalis again offers us an impressive theological-cultural interpretation:

Indeed this Abject Jesus is nothing but the image of the conquered Amerindian, the poorest of the poor, for whom nothing has changed since Cortes, the miserable denizen of the immense barrios that fringe the great cities, where subhuman conditions defy word or concept—but viewed from afar they seem the gateway to salvation for all the exploited and starving of the countryside.⁶¹

C. God blesses the foreigner-in-power and tolerates the use of imperial violence to accomplish his purposes in our lands and with our people. In the words of Mexican intellectual and Nobel prizewinner in literature, Octavio Paz, “Spain was the defender of the Faith and her soldiers were soldiers of Christ.”⁶²

In conclusion, this trilogy of fatalism and historic tragedy has theologically defined the colonial mentality (the colonial wound) of the Americas until current times. From this fount of beliefs flowed various practices and ways of thinking that were personified by a virulent list of tyrants, dictators, totalitarian re-

Faces of Jesus: Latin American Christologies, ed. José Míguez Bonino, trans. Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1984), 73.

61 Ibid. See also the critique of John A. Mackay, *The Other Spanish Christ: A Study in the Spiritual History of Spain and South America* (New York: Macmillan, 1933); and Urs Bitterli, *Cultures in Conflict: Encounters between European and non-European Cultures, 1492–1800* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1989).

62 Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (New York: Grove, 1985), 97.

gimes, power structures (either rightist or leftist), and Christian mega-leaders. From our discussion of a theology of conquest, a colonizing theology, we now turn to the second factor in the anti-transformational paradigms of the Latino church.

2. Autocratic Leadership

A colonizing theology naturally leads to an identity crisis for Latin Americans/Latinos when confronted with the use of “power.” Postcolonial studies explain this problem through binary colonial logic. That is, those who have been violently colonized have been symbolically conquered: their mentality and identity are not their own.⁶³ They have learned to see themselves through the colonizer’s mirror and from their colonial condition (wound), which always appears in pairs: conqueror-conquered, colonizer-colonized, master-servant, good-bad, saved-lost, rich-poor, black-white, conservative-liberal, church-world, etc. Latin Americans/Latinas to this day have not resolved their identity crisis and continue slipping around in a vicious cycle of ideological and political dependence with a violent rejection of the same. Octavio Paz, the great interpreter of Latina culture in the Americas, personifies this reality through several of his characters in *The Labyrinth of Solitude*:

Doña Marina becomes a figure representing the Indian women who were fascinated, violated or seduced by the Spaniards....

The Mexican does not want to be either an Indian or a Spaniard. Nor does he want to be descended from them. He denies them. And he does not affirm

⁶³ See Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London, New York: Verso, 1991).

himself as a mixture, but rather as an abstraction: he is a man. He becomes the son of Nothingness. His beginnings are in his own self....

We still suffer from that wound. That is why the feeling of “orphanhood” is the constant background of our political endeavors and our personal conflicts.⁶⁴

In short, we despised the conqueror/colonizer, yet to free ourselves from this odious character, we created another, no less violent nor less hateful, whom we call *caudillo*, or “chieftain”: the autocratic leader. And who is the *caudillo*? Who is Sarmiento’s “Facundo”?⁶⁵ He is one of us, one strong-willed enough to push us around and control us, and who, because of his warlike spirit, has been recruited by the imperialistic powers that be to rule over us. Furthermore, the ruling powers have equipped him for the task with weapons and propaganda that project imperial power as something necessary and good for public order. Who better than a native with a colonial mindset to control the other natives? Mexico saw this leader, for instance, in the person of Porfirio Díaz, the greatest Francophile (*afrancesador*) in the nation’s history.

This warlike character who has been trained to control us, the one we call our *caudillo* or chieftain, is little by little exalted to the point of rebellion against colonial power. We make the *caudillo* our leader and expect him to guide us toward victory, toward independence from the imperial power. Here I have briefly described, in broad strokes, the struggle for independence of Latin American nations in the nineteenth century.

⁶⁴ Paz, *Labyrinth*, 86–88.

⁶⁵ Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Facundo, or, Civilization and Barbarism* (New York: Penguin, 1998).

At this point, a paradoxical phenomenon occurs in the imagination of the Latina leadership. Once in power, the *caudillo* stops being “of the people.” He is no longer one of us, a flesh-and-bone man who has been held up as a popular national symbol. Now the leader distances himself from his followers, since they have become his subjects and therefore his potential enemies. Obviously, the chieftain leader identifies potential local chieftain leaders for one of two reasons: he either makes them part of his escort and government to protect him and inform him of possible insurrections, or he makes them disappear. The sad part about this process is that the *caudillo* as leader and the people have managed to free themselves from the political power of the foreign empire, but not from its symbolic and spiritual power. The chieftain leader has been transformed into the other-colonizer, whom today we call “dictator.”

The figure of the dictator has been a central theme in numerous Latin American novels: *Amalia* (1851) by José Mármol, *The Slaughteryard* (1871) by Esteban Echeverría, *The President* (1946) by Miguel Ángel Asturias, *La sombra del caudillo* (1929 [The shadow of the caudillo]) by Martín Luis Guzmán, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* (1976) by Gabriel García Márquez, and *The Feast of the Goat* (2000) by Mario Vargas Llosa, among others. The image of the dictator as a cruel, vulgar, explosive, and dominant being appears again and again in Latin American literature. Enrique Lafourcade, in his work *King Ahab's Feast*, revives the Dominican Republic dictator Rafael Leonidas Trujillo as follows:

“I’m the boss,” Carrillo howled, smashing a crystal glass against the wall. “I can do what I please. What I please!” He wiped off the perspiration... “This is my house,” he added weaving back and forth, his

legs spread apart. "I own my country, and if I take a notion to," he waved his hand, "I'll wipe them out. Do you hear me? I'll wipe them out like vermin, all of them. I'll wipe them all out!"⁶⁶

The political, religious, and economic leadership of Latin Americans rests on a pendular movement (with binary coding) that swings from the role of colonizer to the role of caudillo. We must ask ourselves the following questions: Are these roles of colonizer and chieftain truly Latin American? Or are they rather masks of "orphanhood" that hide our trauma, crisis, fear, and solitude (Octavio Paz)? It seems to me that the foreign colonizer continues to govern our nations, structures, families, and churches in the form of a colonized Latina mentality that seeks the submission of the rebellious locals.

In conclusion, the task of leaders as described herein is not to serve nor to transform their context in a peaceful, democratic, or kenotic way (Phil 2:1–11), but rather to exercise power on the basis of chieftaincy (through insurrection) or from the seat of imperial power (a boss-style caudillista leadership, presidency, pastorate). The leader with a colonial mentality will seek to move up the ranks, to subdue and control situations and people for the longest amount of time possible. This lamentable political-cultural dynamic goes beyond the leader and infects the rest of the populace. Again, the evil does not reside in the leader alone; this way of exercising power is exactly what the people expect from their leader. If they do not see it happening, the masses tend to rebel and seek another caudillo who will represent them in the struggle for their identity. The evil is nested in the Latina colonial mentality, in our colonial wound. How does this impact the Latina evan-

⁶⁶ Enrique Lafourcade, *King Ahab's Feast* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1963), 196.

gical church? We shall discuss this in the next section.

3. A Reductionist Ecclesiology

Nothing would please me more than to suggest that the arrival of Protestantism in Latin America profoundly changed the colonial mentality of Latin American leaders and the church. But such a statement would be another mask, another instrument used to perpetuate a myth that is useful for the ruling class, nation, or race to the detriment of the entire continent. Let us recall that the two greatest events for Latin America in the nineteenth century were the political independence of Latin American nations and the arrival of Protestantism. Independence certainly diminished the influence of Iberian Catholicism on the political and civic life of the new continent, but the incursion of Protestantism served to build the bridges over which would cross the new cultural, religious, political, and economic master of Latin America: the United States of America.

The arrival of Protestantism in Latin America occurred during a crucial overlapping of imperial powers in the continent: the Spanish and Portuguese crowns, together with the British, North American, and French empires. This superposition takes us from one dream of conquest to another: from the Iberian dream of colonization to the U.S. American dream of expansion and development. In this historical juncture, the North American Protestant missions were used to promote and idealize the culture of the United States' version of "America." They were used in this regard first by the Latin American elite in power who sought to free themselves from Iberian Catholicism. The Protestant option appeared extremely convenient for the independence-seeking Latin American spirit, because for two centuries in Europe, *being*

Protestant had been synonymous with *being anti-Catholic*.⁶⁷ Second, the Protestant option favored the U.S. monopolies that had begun to acquire land and impose foreign economies in many Latin American countries.

Despite their indirect connection to the programs of Latin American Westernization, Protestant missions began their evangelistic and theological work with great efficiency, planting many churches and building schools and centers of theological education. The problem lay in that the generation of Protestant missionaries who most heavily influenced the bases of Latin American Protestantism also brought a series of political, theological, and cultural upheavals. Many of these missionaries were compelled by the *Western myth* of historical exclusivism that led the first colonists in North America to found the Republic of the United States, conceived at the time as the new Israel, a *manifest destiny*.⁶⁸ Josiah Strong vividly summarizes this Anglo-Saxon way of thinking as “the great missionary race.”⁶⁹

It is chiefly to the English and American peoples
that we must look for the evangelization of the
world..., that all men may be lifted up into the light

⁶⁷ Likewise, and as mentioned earlier, Catholicism from the sixteenth century onward became an anti-Protestant movement of self-defense. Thus arose the spread of the “anti-Lutheran” crusades of the greatest Spanish Inquisitor, Tomás de Torquemada.

⁶⁸ The concept of “manifest destiny” results in an entwining of politics and religion that is associated with the idea that providence has bestowed upon the United States of America dominion over other countries. This ideology “represents one of the principal nuclei around which North Americans have absorbed a cultural-religious viewpoint of their nation’s place in history,” unleashing a cultural imperialism that has, in most cases, accompanied North American missionary organizations in their evangelistic trips around the world, especially in Latin America. See Rubén Lores, “El destino manifiesto y la empresa misionera,” *Vida y Pensamiento* 7, no. 1 and 2 (1987).

⁶⁹ Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and its Present Crisis* (New York: Baker & Taylor, 1885), 160.

of the highest Christian civilization.... Add to this the fact of his [the Anglo-Saxon's] rapidly increasing strength in modern times, and we have well nigh a demonstration of his destiny.... Does it not look as if God were not only preparing in our Anglo-Saxon civilization the die with which to stamp the peoples of the earth, but as if he were also massing behind that die the mighty power with which to press it?⁷⁰

Another upheaval was the U.S. theological divisionism of *fundamentalists vs. modernists* of the 1920s, which greatly fueled the missionary passion of those who evangelized Latin America.⁷¹ The more conservative missionaries (those with roots in Pentecostalism and holiness movements) brought with them the “full gospel,” but it was preached “completely” in dispensationalist vocabulary. This led to a separatist vision in Latin America regarding *church and culture and church and politics*.⁷² From that point on, the bulk of evangelical Christianity in Latin America manifested a Christian culture that was apolitical, pseudo monastic, escapist, and apocalyptic.

70 Ibid., 161–65.

71 This separatist movement was described by David O. Moberg as “the great reversal” [David O. Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism Versus Social Concern* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1972)] of the evangelical social conscience, as it unleashed a spirituality that was unconcerned with social commitment, a theological conservatism that created the stereotype of a “closed, belligerent, and separatist” mentality, and an ethic of separation from the world, accompanied by legalistic rigidity. See Fernando Bullón, *El pensamiento social protestante y el debate latinoamericano sobre el desarrollo* (Grand Rapids: Libros Desafío, 2013), 120–21.

72 However, Rubén Lores’ thesis is that this “apolitical” conceptualization of the North American missions in Latin America appears somewhat incongruent, as the movement of people between countries brought with it significant political implications (for example, the fact that many missionaries were invited by local governments which believed that their arrival would favor the political environment and make it more attractive). Therefore, the true significance of “apolitical” missions was that one would become a defender of the status quo, to the delight of the government in power. For a deeper analysis of this perspective, see Rubén Lores, “El destino manifiesto y la empresa misionera,” *Vida y Pensamiento* 7, no. 1 and 2 (1987): 217–18.

Today we know that we have not inherited an understanding of the incarnational gospel to transform our surroundings, and this lack is genetically imprinted on the DNA of Latino Christianity throughout the Americas. It is not an overstatement to say that while the missionary endeavors did teach us the message of Jesus Christ, they failed, nonetheless, in a crucial point, in the *incarnational* practices of Jesus Christ. It is helpful to understand that our religious institutions have been born with the genetic defect of a truncated, reductionist Christology.

Focusing on the individual as the key for social transformation has been a common assumption among evangelicals in the mission field. The notion is that collective transformation would be achieved by the sum of individual transformations. This understanding helps explain the fact that holistic ministries within our Latina evangelical contexts are hard to find (both in Latin America and among its worldwide diaspora). In other words, the bulk of our Latin American continental Christianity suffers from a truncated Christology burdened with U.S. *evangelicalism* that limps due to its individualistic ethic. Consequently, today in our beloved continent and the Latino diaspora, we sustain a whole generation of handicapped churches and ministries whose individualistic ethic makes them incapable of responding to the challenges of what it means to live in a postcolonial globalized context; in a context in which the globalizing forces of the West have fabricated a civilization of spectacle, consumerism, technocracy, informational capitalism, migration, displacement, etc., hence generating new disparities, peripheries, and levels of poverty and injustice in our communities where the church ministers.

More than ever we need a lively consciousness of the world

and a critical theological vision that is comprehensive and multitudinous enough to weave together social and public life. However, the subliminal logic that prevails within our ecclesiastical structures sounds like this: *a non-incarnational Christology joined to an individualistic ethic produces a non-incarnational church with non-transformational social behavior.*

4. A Two-World Vision of Ministry

Because Latinos in the Americas live stuck in a Western neo-colonial/neoliberal world system, the church and its leaders find themselves trapped between two fictitious worlds that have kept them separated from the transformational processes that are needed for oWur context and people.

In the first world, the church is conformed to the status quo, a product of the social, political, and religious determinism that fits with the dominant Western culture, in which the standard for relevancy and success is the Anglo-American church. As a consequence, the social and ethical muscles of the Latina church atrophy due to disuse. In the end, in this scenario the “adult” Western church is the one responsible for social transformation, not the “daughter” church.

In the second world, we find a “triumphalist” church, a product of the North American messianism that is now being surpassed by the new Latin American evangelical messianism of global character. The foremost models of this are usually the mega-ministries and mega-leaders from the global South who have taken on a kind of *Latin American manifest destiny*. This means that the Latina church and community in the United States are in the sights of the evangelistic projects of several Latin American mega-ministries. The proposal is attractive:

“Now it is the Latin American and Latino churches’ turn.” Here the imagination of the US Latino evangelical church dreams of being as triumphant, successful, and massive as her Latin American sister churches, who with no Anglo-American help have managed to not only survive, but also to thrive to the point of spreading their international visions to the cities, nations, and cultures of the world.

Let us observe that in this second imagined scenario the Latin American church comes forward as God’s new chosen people, called to bring revival and transformation to the entire world. I need not relate the popular pilgrimages of U.S. Latino pastors and leaders who constantly travel to the Latin American “Mecca” to visit several megachurches that show off their great accomplishments; they go to learn to be successful leaders who bring in massive crowds. For the U.S. Latina church, thus, a triumphant *new utopia* arises with the goal of becoming as “successful” as her Latin American sisters. The price, however, seems to be another kind of servitude: a *subjugation of context* in which life in the diaspora must be ignored (*diasporicide*).

The main problem is that the new Latin American evangelicalism has not solved the preexisting problems (colonial mentality, chieftain-style autocratic leadership, reductionist ecclesiology, and two-world vision). In spite of this, there are ministerial, ecclesiastical and economic demands on the part of influential Latin American mega-ministries when the time comes to share their visions with the U.S. Latina churches. In order to be one of them and attain the same level of quantitative spiritual success, they require U.S. Latino churches to be branded as carbon copies of themselves. Once the U.S. Latino evangelical churches have met these demands, the only thing left in order to achieve success is to have enough faith. “Because,” the Latin American mega-ministries

affirm, “the God of the Latin American church is the same God of the Latina church!”

Conclusions

1. Inherent to the makeup of the evangelical Latino church and its leaders in the Americas is a series of beliefs stemming from conquest and neocolonialism that prevent them from being autonomous and independent in thought and practice in most dimensions of life, particularly religious. Both the church and the leaders must learn to live their own Christianity as an incarnational gift of the kingdom for the Americas. Consequently, they must find ways to be freed from the matrix of modern Western dependency and its colonial wound.
2. The image of leadership must become de-colonialized and move beyond the colonial dichotomy of colonizer-*caudillo*. This requires experimenting with *post-imperial* biblical alternatives that seek to recover a Trinitarian understanding of Christ and the Spirit as incarnational agents of the kingdom of God, who act as communitarian agents of holistic transformation, and who model nonviolent ways for governance and development. This is a needed model in the Americas.
3. The church must also become de-colonialized and fully fleshed out in its context. It must come to know itself as part of the social and cultural body it is called to serve. The church does not have the option of being *conqueror of the world* or *colonizer of society*; rather, it must be an agent

of transformation within the world and its context in correlation to the Holy Trinity. To do so, it must learn to be the church of its people and to resume the narratives denied by Western Christianity: its pre-Columbian roots, its African heritage, the poor, the indigenous, women, children, the environment, etc. It must learn to be a Latina church in the broad, multicultural sense of the word, not a church with a colonial mentality, Europeanized or North-Americanized, homogenized, or assimilated to the point of denying the value of its many identities. The church must be, as observed from Acts 2 through Revelation, ever polyphonic, polyglot, multiform, mixed, and multicultural. The church of Jesus Christ will never be the daughter of only one race, culture, nation, ethnic origin, or geography. She will always be a multicultural mother who affirms and loves her children from every culture, a mother who helps them find, through the Holy Trinity, ways of living in harmony with mutual respect, care, justice, and compassion.

4. All of the above indicates that we are in great need of a deep theological rewriting and re-socialization of Latino Christianity in the Americas (and in the world). We greatly need the Spirit of the Triune God to guide us down a path that is de-colonializing, conscience-raising, liberating, and transformational. As a church we need to transform our surroundings, as the Spirit transforms us, becoming the incarnation of the

redemptive social and cultural message of Jesus
Christ in *our context, our America, our world.* /

CHAPTER 7

Spirituality and Mental Health in the Hispanic Community **Dr. Pablo Polischuk**

Introduction

In recent decades, the relationship between spiritual health and mental health has been a subject of investigation (e.g., Larson, 1986; Koenig, 1998; Larson, Swyers & McCullough, 1998; Chamberlain & Hall, 2000; Plante & Sherman, 2001; Hill & Pargament, 2003). The American Psychological Association (APA) has given impetus to the movement that correlates religion, spirituality and health, giving special room for this subject in studies and in therapeutic practice (American Psychologist, January, 2003). Hispanic/Latino researchers have contributed with their findings, adding pertinent data for groups that reach out for mental health services (e.g., De La Cancela, 1985; Baez & Hernandez, 2001; Falicov, 2009). The results of such investigations have demonstrated certain consistencies in the findings, leading to understand that there is a positive relationship between spirituality and mental health.

The studies conducted with regard to religion, spirituality and mental health have employed correlated methodology, which does not imply causation. Having positive or negative results in the surveys does not prove that a causative mecha-

nism has been found or defined through such a measure. The why and how of mental health, or the aberrations of certain practices need more sophisticated study based on better elaborated paradigms. Consequently, it is necessary to construct models that can be evaluated and verified scientifically. Presently, qualitative aspects and testimonials of personal experiences dominate the field, as well as comparative studies correlating the variables. Nevertheless, given that the correlation is continually repeated, in this writer's opinion it can obviously be determined that spirituality is related to mental health in defined ways, as demonstrated through demographic data and innumerable experiences as expressed in pastoral reports, denominational assemblies and organizational reports related to the growth of the evangelical Hispanic-Latino church.

The problem in evaluating spirituality and its relationship to mental health

One problem tied to the spiritual-religious considerations with regard to mental health is the confusion that exists in the definition of terms used toward that end. Within the Anglo-Saxon Christian population there are instruments for measuring spiritual levels in order to assess the state of a person seeking therapy. Such measures are not found in the writings of evangelical Hispanic authors or researchers. Among Anglos, ten instruments for a quick assessment have been identified and subjected to review for validity and reliability in obtaining accurate measures of spirituality (Greggo and Lawrence, 2012). The problem with such instruments is the lack of follow-up with regard to an evaluation of the significance of the responses. The basis and reasoning behind the questions in the surveys is not always defined. The spiritual background

history of respondents has not been delineated or placed in normative categories. In addition, particular beliefs, normative behavior and kairotic (transcendental, extraordinary) experiences have not been associated to the results. In general, no background is provided of the particular situations that would lead to an understanding of the use of spiritual resources in the church or community. No universally applicable norms have been established in a global way to the population groups studied, nor to the relationship between the findings obtained through such instruments.

Another problem observed with these measures is that the interpretations of the responses in the diversity of instruments has been relegated to the criteria of the researchers, to the point that there is no model or baseline measure that can be applied in an equivalent manner to all studies. Adding to these difficulties mentioned, Hispanic-Latino Christianity is not a homogeneous entity, rather lacking in coherence, which makes it more difficult to define the nature and levels of spirituality in an empirical fashion.

In summary, in defining “spirituality” we are simply creating a phenomenological impression of the situation, and such impressions do not necessarily represent a convincing or precise label of reality. Nevertheless, it can be noted that the majority of the social definitions are on target. In speaking about Hispanic evangelical spirituality, we do so in an experiential, global manner, based on observations during the undeniable growth and development of faith communities as evidenced in demographic terms and as reported by untold numbers of observers, including pastors, administrators, annual congregational reports, denominational institutions and organizations.

Among the generalizations that can be derived from the observations, surveys and conjectures regarding the role of spirituality in mental health, we can point to several which are presented as follows.

The nature of Latino evangelical spirituality

The importance of religiosity and spirituality has been emphasized since the beginning of the movement dedicated to community mental health among Hispanics, especially among the Mexican, Puerto Rican and Cuban populations residing in the U.S.A. Spirituality has been treated as a diffuse, syncretical and utilitarian entity, emphasizing the use of native spiritual means in therapeutic treatment and service. Among these means are shamanism, ancestral rites, spiritualism and “sante-ria” (e.g., Miranda, 1976; Santi, 1997; Friedson, 1970; Rogler, 1998; Falicov, 1999; Sue & Sue, 1990; Comas-Díaz, 2006; Koss-Chioino, 2013). In this chapter, spirituality is defined in precise, to-the-point terms, since, in general, to the average evangelical Christian it is not “some quality” that is added or tacked onto oneself artificially. Spirituality is not an outward religious covering, a religious mantle to be worn on Sundays.

Hispanic/Latino authors have given their interpretations with regard to a definition of spirituality. Beyond being a private experience, spirituality is the shared social experience of what is sacred, or simply stated, the response of individuals to the demands of life (Lara Braud, 2000). Spirituality is manifest in the struggle and search to be reconciled, accepted, embraced and validated by the grace of God in an integral way (García, 2000). These definitions, in the author’s opinion, employ relational - with God and others - as well as personal ideas, expressed through intrinsic and experiential termi-

nology, and put into practice as a spirituality “demonstrated” through one’s character and conduct.

The psycho-spiritual dimension of a person is considered a primordial, ontological factor, expressed in dimensions such as approach, inclination toward and communion with God (a personal relationship), with phenomenological sensations and cognitive-emotive affirmations of the presence of God in one’s daily life. Notions of personal transcendence, expressed in disconcerted service toward others, and the sense of belonging to a spiritual community (considered the family of faith), are some definitive aspects of such spirituality (compare with the writings of Hall & Pargament, 2003; Lawrence, 1997; Sorenson, 1994; Hall & Edwards, 2002).

The presence of God and his guidance are important spiritual dimensions, and such factors relate more closely to mental health than the general terms that are denoted with allusions to religiosity. In sum, ontological-relational spirituality is manifest, realized, actualized and exemplified in character and daily life, intertwined and ingrained in intimate human relationships: conjugal, familial and communal (as members of a family of faith, the living, local Body of Christ). In cases in which the relationship between religiosity and mental health have been negative, the situations (considered nominal, utilitarian, aberrant or distortional) have caused more harm than good through the belief in a punishing God subject to the demands of mankind, and the employment of religion as a utilitarian means or as a manifestation such as hyper-religion or that practiced by cults (e.g., Chamberlain & Hall, 2000; Larson & Larson, 2003).

The beliefs expressed and the conduct exemplified by the evangelical community in general allows for an emerging definition of spirituality derived from the following factors:

- ✦ For the Hispanic-Latino, God is real, alive and active, one God - the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; not a force or an influence, but a Trinity that works together acting in a saving, redeeming, healing and liberating way, filling with power and granting gifts to the members of the church.
- ✦ The significance of life that faith provides. A significant meta-narrative that includes basic beliefs (in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; the church as a family of faith, marriage as a pact before God, etc.) which in turn affect global beliefs (justice, equity, reciprocity, respect, mutuality, honor, dignity, etc.) that are expressed in themes that underscore the ideals, the goals and a life style with
- ✦ Such systems of significance are the lenses through which individuals orient their existence.
- ✦ The local church is a living expression of the Body of Christ, a community built together as a family of faith, in which people in many cases (especially from disrupted, dysfunctional families, devoid of fresh, actualized spirituality) are associated more closely even than systems based on natural family ties.
- ✦ People attend church weekly (often more than once, given the emphasis on various ministries to specific focus groups - women, men, children, etc.) in addition to special

meetings of an educational, social or evangelistic nature.

- ✦ For the most part, the believers maintain that the Bible is God's revealed Word, an infallible guide for faith and conduct. Regular reading of the Bible is practiced, with memorization, public reading that includes passing allusions to various texts, intertwined with choruses and hymns during the extensive congregational time given to group worship.
- ✦ Prayer is considered to be real conversation, a dialog with God; the content gives way to confession, acts of thanksgiving, requests, worship, laments, etc. Daily prayer is a characteristic of the people and, apart from the regular personal dedication to prayer, there is an emphasis on communal prayer. In many congregations, weekly meetings are held just for this purpose, as well as time of prayer "at the altar" (defined as the area at the front of the meeting area, close to the platform where the pulpit is generally located). At such times, there is prayer for the sick, those that are troubled as well as for vicissitudes and situations in which people are living. In charismatic or Pentecostal congregations, the laying on of hands by spiritual leaders is generally practiced, often with anointing of oil accompanied by the prayer of faith (a way to objectify the power of the Holy Spirit

imparted in a concrete manner to the person in need, serving as human expressions of a healing God). There is also intercession for family members and friends (considered and presented as “absent yet present” before God). In many ways, such “kairotic” moments provide relief from hardships, leading to a cathartic, mental liberation, relief from stress and emotional support.

- ✦ An emphasis on conversion. Data supplied demonstrate that 51% of Hispanic-Latinos are converted and 43% have been Catholic prior to the change (Pew Hispanic Research Trends Project, 2012). The conversion of a person to Christ is something that in turn motivates a change of mind and heart, of belief and practice, from religion to a personal relationship. It involves not only the abandonment of a religion that according to him or her has been considered non-functional, characterized by ritual expressions, formal ceremonies devoid of power to transform a life of sin, but also the challenge to grow again, having been socialized by the Word of God and by the Holy Spirit, through ministers to teach and disciple.
- ✦ For the most part, Hispanic-Latino evangelicals identify themselves with the belief in a God that performs miracles. Such extraordinary acts by God can occur in the present,

and it is expected that God will intervene supernaturally in the lives of believers in need of healing, be it physical or mental. Given this affirmation, the presence of illness is seen as the result of a lack of faith, or punishment by God for some sin. Even so, depending on the level of sophistication or doctrinal flexibility, room is given for the possibility that there is no direct explanation for the purpose or the presence of the evil (of cause and effect) and the illness is accepted as an instructive measure, for correction or for glorifying God (suffering can be redefined as something that one puts up with for the cause of Christ).

- ✦ Belief in the Second Coming of Christ for his church is a reminder to the believers for the need to “watch and pray” in order to be ready for that event. This eschatological view conditions and stimulates the full conscience, becoming a variable that intervenes in all of life’s daily circumstances that are incumbent on a life that emphasizes holiness (abandonment of sinful acts and thought, dedication to service for God in cleanliness, honesty and diligence), responsibility in the treatment of others, in business conduct, etc.

From such beliefs and practice a definition of spirituality is derived that is personal, intrinsic and central to the human life, framed in a context of community. Pew surveys reveal that 82% of converted evangelical Hispanic-Latinos alluded to the desire

of having a direct and personal relationship with God as the cause of their new faith. Such faith is considered fundamental, personal and fresh, reflected in practical daily ways that develop specifically into essential, selfless service, in full conscience – first of all to God – and characterized by the passionate experience that goes beyond rituals, robotic customs and so-called religious ceremonies. Then, to others, considered as brothers and sisters in a family of faith, dedicated to serve those who still do not belong to the community (considered unbelievers, non-converts) with the goal of proselytizing them to the “true path”.

From a Pauline theology, the definition of spirituality is derived from his expression to the Corinthians (1 Cor 3:1) where he calls them “*sarkikos*” (carnal beings, or under the control of their natural, sinful state) as opposed to his expectation and desire to define them as “*peumatikos*” (“spiritual beings” in subjection to, or living under the authority and power of the Holy Spirit in their daily lives and relations). Those “*pneumatikos*” that live “according to the Spirit” (Rom 8:5) align their intentions, their lifestyles, and conduct in accordance with the principles established and provided by God, being led by the Spirit in their understanding and actions (Rom 8:12-14). In the author’s opinion, such factors are spiritual dimensions that are most closely related to a person’s mental health than external measures of religiosity.

To summarize, spirituality is the ontological part of the self in the process of development, a “property” that emerges as an amalgamation of personality traits that emerges from the essential, inner sub-structures of the self. Spirituality is a construct that denotes the synthesis of structures, processes and events birthed by the Spirit in participation with the

human spirit (in the inner being, as expressed by the terms mind, heart and will); the characteristic traits of such a spirituality are outpourings of the self, something intrinsic, tacit and personal that is observable, demonstrated as visible fruit, applied in terms of ethical and moral character, and personal, interpersonal and social conduct.

Factors that are Considered as Agents of Mental Health

The factors the author considers that come into play in the development of mental health in the Hispanic evangelical community are not isolated elements, nor defined in simply religious terms. These are existential elements interwoven into the lives of individuals, couples or families that comprise the community. Such agents should be considered with relation to the basic premise that establishes the need for a personal conversion to Jesus Christ, with evidences of a radically changed life that involves the abandonment of the old life (in terms of what is considered negative) and the development of a life based on Scriptural principles. Those that are born into evangelical homes, from early childhood grow within said framework with the expectation that they will follow the same path. With this established assumption, the healthy factors that correspond to such persons can be categorized as follows:

1. *The relational factor.* In the secular world during the past three decades, the relational factor has been emphasized with regard to the psychoanalytic (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983), as well as the relation to the theory of attachment, with an emphasis on the internal manifestations that emerge in the child and the progenitors (e.g., Fonagy, 2001; Main, Kaplan & Cassidy, 1985). The interpersonal bonds that emerge and are

consolidated as a result of family experiences have replaced the Freudian emphasis on the individual. In its place, the relation between objects (persons) has been stressed. Hall (2004) has postulated a theory regarding implicit interpersonal representations, considered basic to human development in its social context. Hall states that people are primarily motivated and develop within a significant relational context. Evangelical Hispanics/Latinos have given much weight to this factor in innate, yet culturally syntonic ways.

The author believes that the role of the father involves giving direction, providing spiritual leadership, protection, security, character and conduct formation to his children, as well as being a selfless, loving husband, and faithful companion to his wife. At the same time, the elevated role a mother plays in the development of a child within a Hispanic context is undeniable. It should be pointed out that a person's development has been emphasized with relation to the mother's function, who much like a "mirror", provides the infant with constant perceptive feedback through his or her observations, giving form to the acquisition of a personal identity, or definition of being. Research in the area of interpersonal neurobiology over recent decades has stressed the function of "neuron mirrors" in the human brain, which allow mutual resonance and emotional alignment between persons that are in a constant, close and intimate relationship (Beebe & Lachmann, 2002; Stern, 1985; Schore, 1994; Siegel, 1999). The primary interactive emotions affect the pre-verbal development of the child, and are codified automatically by the pre-conscious organic evaluative system, to later be consolidated in memory in a conscious, verbalized way (Bucci, 1997).

Interpersonal neurobiology has cast much light on the role that positive interactions between human beings plays in the development of the brain, its structure and functions, in light of the effects measured at a basic level - advancing neural circuits that much like a “mirror” reflect interiorly the external reality the infant is processing. Many parallel processes with various functions come into play, way beyond cognitive or rational perceptions. Seeing that such processes take place and give form to the dendritic connections that form the neural circuits, without the being in development having awareness of what is occurring in his or her “inner consciousness”, it is of note that even when the person cannot explain what is happening, and how such a process is taking place, the result is the same: a person is affected in the mind (brain) through constant, interpersonal interactions.

This notion allows us to reinforce the advantage of emphasizing a redefined and renewed systemic culture, in which the paternal effect of both father and mother is necessary with regard to the continuous expression of positive emotions and the care demonstrated in reinforcing the affiliations that characterize the ideal of evangelical Hispanic families in raising their children “in the Lord”. It goes without saying that, in spite of this not being necessarily sophisticated in a scientific aspect, the humble Hispanic-Latino evangelical families, guided intuitively or spiritually, do what is necessary and required with regard to the formation of lives with healthy character and conduct based on the Scriptures, love of God and for other community members.

2. *The Hispanic evangelical family: a spiritual base.* The Hispanic evangelical family attempts to adhere to the fact that it is defined by God and is firmly rooted in Scripture. Spirituality

born in such thinking promotes mental health in human relationships - marriage, family, friends. Hispanic-Latino cultures, in spite of their idiosyncrasies, have many ideals in common: an emphasis on respect, honor and dignity toward the elderly, the care and protection of children, and the fomenting of fellowship of the family within the community of believers. In general, the members of such communities are motivated to be and act within the context of significant relationships. Marriage partners and members of a family are encouraged by church leaders to be imitators of God as beloved children, seeking to conduct their lives in accordance with Scriptural standards. Just as God has dealt with mankind in a unilateral, unconditional, proactive way, full of grace, mercy, forgiveness and forgetfulness of wrongdoings, investing with power and renewing his covenant, so also couples, women, fathers and children should follow in His steps. Such dimensions serve as qualifiers of the spiritual and interpersonal practice applicable to relationships and the resolution of marital and familial conflicts. In spite of lives biblically based on ethical and moral values, the reality of having to struggle with people that make mistakes often demands certain measures: repentance, remorse, the weight of having committed mistakes, confession, restitution, the reestablishment of wedding vows, etc. Such factors are seen as possibilities, framed in emotional-spiritual terms, for pastoral emphasis in Hispanic evangelical communities.

Within the frame of reference of the Hispanic-Latin American culture in the USA, the evangelical community has been functional in redefining the role of men as fathers and husbands, pointing to the ideal prototype, Jesus Christ, and the Father as the giver of a New Covenant, with the instruction to be imitators of God as beloved children, and to walk in

love. A command has been given to the man to love his wife as Christ loved the church (that is, unilaterally, unconditionally, proactive, full of grace and mercy, conferring power, inviting to intimacy and continually renewing the commitment) and gave his life for her. Raising children in the Lord and being an example in character and conduct underscores the responsibility of a man to be the person that God, not the current popular culture, commands him to be. This dimension is a very essential and important factor in the Latino evangelical culture, and as such promotes family mental health based on Scriptures, dependent on the Holy Spirit, living in accordance with principles of the New Covenant and the ability to establish and reinforce a new sub-culture, redefined in its foundations and familial interactions.

3. *A new definition of being.* A spiritual being is a redefined entity whose significance goes beyond that of the Hispanic culture in the USA. The “new” self-image, the esteem and the personal empowerment is found as defined by God. A being that was formed by God, deformed by sin, has been reformed and experiences the process of being transformed in participation with the Holy Spirit, ultimately coming to be conformed to the image of Christ. To become rooted in God is considered the most solid base from which all other considerations regarding one’s nature, dignity, liberty, positions, gifts, relations, etc. Such a base provides the necessary ingredients to elaborate the best possible definition of a Hispanic person: “in Christ” as a child of God, heir to his kingdom; more than just part of his culture, socio-economic status, sophistication, possessions or accomplishments. To appeal to such an area of existence is considered the fundamental foundation for one’s spiritual, emotional and physical health. Being “born-again”

through a conversion toward God allows “growing again”. The forging of character and conduct based on the Scriptures, invested with power through the Holy Spirit, is assisted through discipleship under the ministry of pastors, teacher and leaders that provide counseling, guidance, direction, and intervention in personal as well as interpersonal problems between couples, families and friends.

With regard to personality, spirituality promotes a positive image – to be made in the image of God and to experience his presence in the here and now; secures self esteem – to be accepted and given worth, to belong to a healthy community; and provides personal empowerment – to have opportunities to put to use your talents, gifts and efforts in good works. Spirituality also establishes the proper boundaries (delineations of one’s self, defined in cultural terms but also “in Christ”) and reinforces one’s assertiveness (provides positive guidelines for speaking the truth in love, giving one the power to affirm, define, argue, etc. on firm and healthy bases).

The effects of conversion, that is, a radical change of mind and heart, encourage the restructuring of a person in ontological, processing (cognitive-emotive-motivational) and conductive levels. Re-socialization that occurs within a community based on biblical principles provides a frame of reference (limits, lines of demarcation and definitions); it is a redefining of the image, esteem and personal empowerment of both men and women. The liberating Spirit that encourages the mental health of both is worth mentioning. In the Hispanic-Latino culture, a man (be he father or husband) is given a “delegated” authority (by God and by the current culture), often “projected” (as having authority, though not necessarily having or

showing it) without necessarily claiming an “earned” authority obtained or achieved through exemplary character and conduct. A lot of concessions have been made to make one’s own will to be something innate, natural and expected. In the evangelical communities, the “machista” stereotype is redefined toward an image that includes definitions of being and doing that are subordinate to the Holy Spirit, who promotes the development of character and conduct characterized by love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). Such qualities are factors that limit or prevent the development of situations leading to neglect, abuse or domestic violence.

The qualities of character and conduct mentioned do not necessarily diminish one’s manhood or ability to protect, support and guide the family. On the contrary, they increase the capacity to demonstrate the biblical model. Becoming like Jesus in his various baseline points of reference is considered the greatest goal that encourages a man in his human relationships - marital, familial and communal. The biblical models become examples worthy of imitation: the strong father, loving, caring and protecting; the elder brother that never abandons his younger siblings; the obedient son that pleases the Father; the faithful husband that gives his life for his wife and provides for her well-being and happiness. Such aspects form mental health.

On the other hand, a woman that as a person is fully alive, with drive, abilities and assets, is entrusted to put into practice her potential as heiress of the kingdom of God, with the provision of the gifts of the Spirit entrusted in order to practice her freedom in concrete ways. The Hispanic culture has

traditionally emphasized the role of a mother as that of spiritual guide, a teacher of ethical and moral norms, selfless in her dedication and efforts toward her children, tolerant of her “machista” husband, ready and resigned to suffer. She is vicariously defined as the family redeemer. In sum, the traditional culture has emphasized the woman’s role as an earthly imitation of the Virgin Mary. The postmodern culture has struck down many of these ideas with the liberation of women to reclaim their rights and liberties. On the contrary, the evangelical communities have emphasized the liberation of women “in Christ” with positive tones, without diminishing the role of the man. The woman is also given the opportunity to satisfy her goals through the many means within her reach - in academics, as a professional and in ministry.

The woman in the Hispanic-Latino evangelical community experiences a wide range of possibilities, given the variety of current sub-cultural expressions, from the traditional to the postmodern, or from the hierarchical contexts that still reduce a woman to secondary roles to those that provide social and spiritual parity. There exist many opportunities in the communities of faith for a woman to prepare herself for and to exercise ministry, serving God and her community in most convincing ways. Receiving the same Spirit and participating actively in church services, exercising ministerial and administrative responsibilities, participating together with her husband in achieving concrete, spiritual objectives within the community are factors that promote, sustain and bolster mental health. Such factors elevate an individual’s image, esteem and personal empowerment, providing a better basis for confronting aspects of daily life that affect many Latin American women in the USA, such as depression, anxiety, traumatic stress reaction.

4. *The Hispanic evangelical's spirituality is not impersonal, nor esoteric, but rather is based on dependency on the Holy Spirit, not as an impersonal force, but as a person, a member of the Trinity, present and realizing personal health. The Spirit is defined as the Parclate, one called to be along our side to help at all times. The Spirit gives gifts for serving and produces character fruit in the life of a believer; gives power to overcome temptations and to live a life free from addictions, evil actions and sin. The Spirit renews the mind and the heart of the believer so that the cognitive processes (thinking, reasoning, attaching meaning to reality, learning, memory, etc.) as well as emotive ones (sensibility, affection, empathy) can be aligned with the will of God, acquiring knowledge, insight, understanding and wisdom in order to live a life that is pleasing to God. The motivation and desire to serve God as well as one's neighbor is strengthened by the Spirit, who provides fervor, zeal and passion to live above the level of mediocrity. It is fitting that such an agent of emotional health is perceived, captured and understood at different levels by the community, with various results that would seem to be related to the level of understanding, wisdom, conscious dedication and fulfillment of potential through a divine-human co-participation.*

To "pray in the Spirit" (a means of conscious abandonment, leaving aside one's own efforts and "surrendering" oneself to the Paraclete, who can translate human expressions in a more adequate, pronounced and resonant way before the Father) promotes personal faith. In this case, one gives a kind of "leap of faith", trusting that the intercessor has a closer connection that somehow will surpass one's own understanding and rational scrutiny (without being irrational, but rather supra-rational) bringing a response that is discerned by faith, to later rest upon such a base

trusting completely in the person, the process and the results. Existentially, to see oneself relating to God from a more elevated, momentary plane provides a temporary perspective to the vicissitudes, details, problems or difficulties people experience in their daily lives. It is not a matter of creating an illusion, fiction or auto-suggestion, but faith in a real God who answers prayer. Such a moment is much like an injection of power, enabling individuals to face life after having experienced such spiritual empowerment.

5. *The church as a healing community.* To belong to a community is an important factor. In this case, it is the church in which individuals are identified as a spiritual family, with limits, roles, services, support and a positive context for developing and maintaining spiritual and emotional health. The interaction within a familial environment of the congregational meetings encourages faith, hope, charity, good works, the alignment of life in accordance with ethical and moral principles, along with providing counseling, correction and positive reinforcement, as well as the desire to grow and improve. This is sanctification, seen as a gradual process that involves the transformation of a person “born again” and becoming conformed to a greater standard, that is, Jesus Christ, the model for mankind.

An individual’s mental health receives support and strength through intact, intimate relationships within a family that is, hopefully, functional. The onslaughts to which marriages and families have been, and continue to be, exposed affect their interaction systems and carry with them any number of problems, such as lack of attachment, single parent homes, lack of parental models, neglect, spousal abuses and lack of marital stability.

People that belong to a congregation attend the services first of all to worship God. They also commit themselves to

serve the community and participate in social activities; they develop more and better healthy and significant relationships. Participation in the services and group activities provides a context in which a person can have a positive social experience, receive support and encouragement that consolidates mental health. The support group, that is, the assembly, or community of those with like faith and shared values, functions as a frame of reference for supporting, encouraging and challenging in a way that validates and gives an individual a sense of belonging and security. Sharing each other's burdens is an inherent part of New Testament theology (the phrase "one another" appears 52 times in the New Testament), and is reflected in the Hispanic evangelical community of faith.

Just as people can make others sick, people are needed to bring back health. The Hispanic culture by nature has viewed and relied on the importance of the family with regard to positive contact, attachment, and the attention and affection given to the children, in spite of not having sophisticated resources available, nor even being overly conscious of the process. The implicit organizing principles in self development within a secure attachment form a base for a psychological-spiritual function. It is postulated that a new beginning can take place in cases involving detours, distortions, aberrations and abuses that have fomented some form of pathological mental illness. The Hispanic evangelical community emphasizes conversion through repentance (metanoia = a radical change in thinking, in the cognitive-emotive and motivational processes), leading to the development of a new lifestyle.

A new socialization comes into play through the attention, the care and dedication of "change agents" (ministers, servants)

that teach a new way, a new direction and flow in life. It is to be expected that discipleship is performed through an exemplary ministry that allows for conscious and thorough learning through a model that uses the Bible wisely and properly in order to provide lifestyle norms with regard to character and conduct. Emotional healing is related to a new lifestyle, achieved under the maximum tutor, the Holy Spirit, who is presented as the agent that can provide energy and power, who empowers one's cognitive, emotional and volitional functions and acts from an ontological, intrinsic posture to promote those regulatory and modulating processes that promote one's self-control.

6. *Spirituality based on the Scriptures.* Hispanic evangelical spirituality, in essence, is not based on some mystic introspection, nor on an auto-suggestive solipsism (self-absorption), but rather is derived from an understanding of and obedience to the Scriptures as a guide, with a dependency on the Holy Spirit to make that a reality. The Scriptures are essential for the community. The Bible is taken to be the source of health, strength, as well as a guide and frame of reference for a healthy lifestyle. Even more, the Bible is considered to be an agent of spiritual health and positive change. A human being has received from God everything that is necessary for spiritual and emotional development. The Scriptures provide guidelines and understanding of the divine design by which the person that believes is defined, from conversion to the eternal encounter with God. Such a road map places one in a healthy frame of reference. God imparts to him the Holy Spirit and gives the Scriptural guidelines with regard to who he is, what he should do and how to relate to others within that superlative frame of reference. These are life norms that are designed for living an abundant life. Spirituality is considered kinship with the creator,

redeemer and sustainer God, who is near to every believer that approaches with faith to dedicate him or herself to fully do his will, in return for the promise of abundant life. It is expected that such an abundant life be reflected in one's mental health.

7. *The Hispanic evangelical spirituality is a call for prayer to be a dialog.* Such a dialog is personal as well as communal. The author has offered a paradigm of the self as a being in dialog, capable of relating to God, one's neighbor and with one's self (Polischuk, 1996). Rather than relying on repetitive prayers, the Hispanic evangelical employs a direct dialog with God, utilizing prayer in all of its various dimensions, including worship, thanksgiving, confession, intercession, petition and lament, as a response to many adverse personal and family circumstances (Harris, et al., 2005). Prayer is also considered to be a positive expression in recognition of God's help and power. In their responses to surveys conducted with regard to people less acculturated in the U.S., many Spanish speaking women stated that religious practices are very important, associated with the need to manage stress and their dealing with immigration challenges (Arredondo, et al. 2005).

8. *Social concerns: Orientation and focus on others.* Spirituality fosters and validates mental health by reducing egocentric postures and through the development of a sense of belonging to a group, to a community. The person recognizes and accepts the challenge of self-denial and for attaining a sense of connection with God and one's peers. Gratitude is expressed for being redeemed – forgiven, free, invested with faith and hope – and this new relationship with God is demonstrated through positive attitudes and conduct. It is not about independence (a quality that would seem to describe the predominant U.S. culture), nor about co-dependency (often

a derogatory tag ascribed to individuals considered too attached to family, thus reinforcing dysfunctional alliances). It is about inter-dependency, a kind of *pericoresis* (*peri-coresis*: a choreography, or group dance, played out within a specific, delineated area) similar to the relationship within the framework of the Trinity. Spirituality is manifested in concrete ways, with attention and concern for people with needs. The self-denial of a believer turns into the ability “to be there” voluntarily to help meet the needs of others. Hispanic-Latino evangelicals report that they are more willing to participate in social services than their Catholic counterparts (Pew Hispanic Research Trends, 2012). In their responses to questions regarding having provided assistance, 56% reported that the help was given to people within their church, 29% toward schools in their community and 35% toward the general community. The act of giving more than seeking to receive is a way to evaluate levels of positive mental health, manifest through attitudes and conduct of self-denial.

9. *The Hispanic evangelical spirituality empowers one with abilities to meet struggles.* Spiritual persons that practice devotion, meditation and prayer, reinforced by a close-knit community, are continually nourished and strengthened in their ability to practice the presence of God through faith in their daily challenges. In addition, they tend to have a better ability to confront, endure and overcome challenging, impacting or devastating situations. In some metacognitive way, they are able to view their lives in a greater context, of a higher purpose, remaining in contact with God, who is in control of all circumstances, and the knowledge that all things exist under his will. To confront the events of life with such a perspective enables people to “not drown in a glass of water”, but rather to have a better understanding of God’s care. Having a sense of belonging to God

provides a greater perspective which enables one to better handle stress, and confront trials, illnesses and afflictions. People that have faith, pray and wait on God tend to recover more quickly in their convalescence, as demonstrated by a number of studies (e.g., George, Ellison, & Larson, 2002; Powell, Shahabi & Thoresen, 2003; Oman, & Thoresen, 2005). Spirituality expressed in terms of faith, hope, optimism and trust can be seen as a factor in establishing new positive cognitive-emotive structures and processes. One's thoughts, reasoning, attributions of significance, perceptions, judgments, voluntary decisions, control, and modulation of emotions can be modulated, regulated and framed in a positive context, all of which lays a foundation for the development of healthy attitudes and personality.

10. *The Hispanic evangelical spirituality promotes healthy habits.* The emphasis in clean living, with a clear conscience before God, is an undeniable element in the Hispanic evangelical community. Holiness as a goal underlines the renouncing of vices, infidelity, abuse and other sins that can ruin one's character, conduct and relationships. On the other hand, holiness encourages the acquisition of good habits; stimulates growth in faith, empathy and love; and promotes service to God and others. In sum, the congregational expectations encourage a lifestyle that promotes, supports and reinforces healthy habits, avoidance or at least minimizing the use of addictive substances (alcohol, tobacco, drugs) or the penchant for games of chance, infidelities and sexual addictions (Mahoney, Carels, et al., 2005). Holiness of the body, considered the temple of the Holy Spirit, focuses on the care, maintenance and respect for one's physical dimension as an expression of the self in concrete, relational ways (Dull and Skokan, 1995; Pargament and Mahoney 2005). The rejection of all that is that is harmful, toxic, addictive or destructive is the norm among the believers, a times enshrined in

legalistic tones. To balance the negative side of this aspect, the positive aspects should also be emphasized: physical exercise, nutrition, personal hygiene, bodily relaxation, and recreation.

10. *The Hispanic evangelical spirituality promotes an eschatological perspective.* The majority of Hispanic evangelicals believe that Jesus Christ will return soon to earth. The “rapture” (the faithful Christians will be “caught up” before God’s judgment upon the earth) is a fundamental doctrine among many groups. In these cases, the future conditions the present, as evident by the emphasis given to the “Second Coming” through preaching and teaching that underscores it as the goal, or the final “omega point”, and destination of our existence. Keeping in mind that each believer will have to give an accounting of his earthly stewardship results in individuals behaving with more care, responsibility and good conscience with regard to their lifestyle. The attention on that future encounter gives focus, direction and flow in one’s daily walk under the sun. Such conviction helps to maintain faith and hope in difficult times. Temporary conditions, such as depression, anxiety or traumatic events attain significance in relation to the final redemption. The faith that is placed in God with regard to the past, present and future enables prayer with faith for assistance, help, healing or liberation. This prayer is based on a kind of realized eschatology, bringing future benefits into the “here and now”, experienced existentially in the present, in light of what God has done in the past and will do in the future. If all human conduct is encompassed in a framework that envisions such a final point, the fostering of a life that is pleasing to God has healthy repercussions and results. In addition, events, sufferings or difficulties through which people pass will be ultimately eliminated in light of the promise of eternal life with greater conditions and rewards than those obtained in the present world.

The following illustrative figure can help to give light to the relation of such factors to mental health.

Fig.1: Factors related to mental health Mental health among Hispanics in the U.S. in relation to mental problems

<p>Intrinsic Spirituality, Actualized; sub structural system (essential) with ontological significance</p>	<p>Communion with God The Holy Spirit and Scriptures Metanarratives: beliefs, values motives Goal: to be conformed to the image of Christ</p>
<p>Global avenues to mental health (Fundamental principles in action)</p>	<p>A sense of purpose and mean- ing in life (the will of God: A transformed being - renewal of the mind A belonging to a community of faith Bodily-mental sanctification Full conscience: Focus on health Positive attitudes: Faith, hope, love</p>
<p>Discrete avenues to mental health (Concrete actualizing means...???) Mental Health</p>	<p>Habits/spiritual disciplines: Prayer, Meditation, devotion Worship, praise, thanksgiving Positive corporal habits: Getting rid of vices, toxicity Exercise, relaxation, nutrition, recreation Marital, family, community life Friendships, meeting of social needs</p>

An underlying theology of mental health: Among Hispanic-Latino evangelicals, many Pentecostal and charismatic communities have relegated therapeutic services to a secondary level, considering these to be enemies of the faith, based on secular thought that has rejected the Bible, the Spirit, exorcism and the prayer of faith as resources for mental health. The exclusive emphasis on these resources has caused many of the followers in these communities to minimize the value of psychology and other existing resources in the field of mental health. Only in extreme, desperate case (psychosis, need for hospitalization) have they turned to such means, and in doing so, manifest a sense of guilt or failure for not having been able to solve the problem in a more spiritual manner. On occasions, when it has been deemed that a program has a certain spiritual validity with a Christian base, Hispanic-Latino evangelical communities have embraced it, as demonstrated in dedicated efforts in intervention with drug addicts, programs adapted from the Teen Challenge Centers founded in the 60s by David Wilkerson, an Assemblies of God minister. The institutional help through the treatment and rehabilitation programs, such as *Desafio Juvenil*, follow Anglo-Saxon norms, although they would seem to be more personalized, taking into account the spiritual beliefs of the participants in the program. Dependency on the intervention of the Holy Spirit is emphasized in order to overcome the addictions, with re-socialization organized and based on biblical principles. On the other hand, the excessive emphasis on such means would seem to negate, avoid or reduce the presence of the effects experienced by many of the pathological conditions that affect the Hispanic-Latino community in the U.S, such as depression, anxiety, nervous attacks, post-traumatic stress or psychosis.

How one sees God in control of his or her mental health can be affected positively or negatively. On the positive side, the healthy evidence has been evaluated by various studies (e.g., Emmons and McCullough 2004; Carver and Scheier 2002; Snyder 2000; Steffen and Masters 2005). On occasions, a fatalism seen in the present-day Hispanic culture can also affect the evangelical community. A fatalistic view regarding God being in control of mental health could result in someone giving in to a fatalistic position (“God knows”, or “It is in God’s hands”). Such attitudes with regard to mental health were corroborated in studies among Anglo-Americans by Jackson and Coursey (1988), and McIntosh and Spilka (1990). On the other hand, negative attitudes (e.g., questioning the love or power of God, a sense of abandonment by/to God, seeing mental illness as punishment from God) generally are counter productive (Exline and Rose, 2005) and result in conjectures, reflections, a sense of being defrauded, leading to questioning the love and care of God. (Gall and Grant 2005).

Negative aspects in need of attention. One cannot deny the possibility of results related to the existence, expression or manifestation of spiritual problems affecting negatively the Hispanic-Latino evangelical communities. Such factors underscore the beliefs and practices of believers, with a propensity toward a worldview that would appear to diminish, abate, or negate the existence of emotional problems that could affect a person of faith. The affirmation of salvation, healing and liberation does not give much room for the possibility of suffering a mental illness among believers that read the Bible, pray, believe in miracles and confess their liberty in spite of existing circumstances. When negative experiences such as anxiety, depression, bipolar or other psychotic mental disorders challenge idealistic expectations, such circumstances are generally denied, and attributed to lack of faith or the activity of spiritual, demonic forces.

Many demographic factors have been mentioned in secular studies with reference to the mental health of Hispanics or Latinos in the U.S. Certainly, many demographic and eco-systemical circumstances have affected the development of the self-image, the self-esteem and personal empowerment of many members of the communities. Poverty, lack of educational opportunities, break-ups of the ideal, traditional family (one third of the population is comprised of single mothers as head of broken homes), juvenile delinquency including gang activity, addictions, AIDS, among other factors, are major problems in many urban communities. The high percentage of Hispanics in U.S. prisons underscores this reality. Believing converts from such circumstances that now enjoy the benefits of a better life are not immune to the vicissitudes of their former life, but are permanently surrounded by concentric social groups that exercise a constant influence.

Hispanic society and its national groups in general, apart from the present American culture, also exercise an influence and interacts with the evangelical community, through the family members that are not part of the communities of faith and its life style. The problems that are encountered in relation to problems with family members outside of the church results in innumerable requests for prayer among the members of the churches for the unsaved.

The stigma of having some form of mental difficulty, or being typecast as “crazy”, has led many people in need of psychological attention to deny the reality of their condition and their need for help. Those that encounter critical situations due to certain infirmities (anxiety, depression, stress, bipolar disorder, psychosis, etc.) do not seek specialized professionals or insti-

tutions that offer assistance. If they do ask for help, it would be mainly of their pastors or community leaders that are not necessarily trained academically nor clinically to respond to these conditions. Even more, such ministers might reinforce or use the same defense mechanisms that the individuals in need demonstrated in reaction to their problems. Among the defenses often evident are denial of the problems, rationalization of the same, or suppression or repression of the symptoms, justification for the suffering, and even projection toward demonic forces. Tending to increase the problem is adopting the position of victim, martyr, or even considering that the suffering being experienced is in reality a measure of discipline on the part of God (who punishes as sin the lack of faith for healing. These defensive postures become impediments to emotional freedom and mental health for many suffering individuals, adding guilt, shame and self castigation to their pain.

Theological factors come into play, such as a cultural interpretation of the doctrine of expiation, the vicarious sacrifice and sufferings of Christ for the Church. In many instances the sufferings of Jesus have been misinterpreted in relation to situations involving domestic violence. With respect to the Hispanic pastoral ministry, and without diminishing their challenging and arduous work, the author has dealt with many cases in which psychotherapy was needed after having experienced unfruitful pastoral counseling sessions. On many occasions, the counsel offered to women who have suffered abuse by their husbands has been based on the example of the Christ's vicarious suffering, applied in such cases with the objective of a vicarious salvation of the husband through conduct that is exemplary, silent and without complaints. This kind of counseling stresses that the wife needs to endure the husband's indiscretions and insults "the same way Jesus did", with

resignation, silence, patience and long-suffering. The stability of conjugal satisfaction at all cost is emphasized, with the demand to remain faithful, together, despite the abuses, in the light of eternal rewards. Such counseling has contributed in a number of ways to the breakdown of mental health in many individuals, locking them in a difficult to break mold. In such situations, the cultural mold is reinforced through pastoral practices based on particular doctrinal interpretations, with negative results.

On occasions, the attention and counsel given to those that have been sexually abused by a family member has not been applied adequately. The pastoral desire to help resolve the problems that are a result of these acts (be it through divine intervention, by a miracle, or by dogmatic use of selected Scriptures) would seem to miss the mark. The search and expectation for immediate solutions, such as forgiving the abuser of the act, quoting Scripture verses without processing them, without taking into account the abused sufferer, on many occasions has victimized the person even more, by adding more burdens that affect mental health.

A project that has been of help to pastors that attend the needs of individuals that have been physically and/or sexually abused (The RAVE Project) was born out of surveys that indicated challenging results: only 8% of Anglo-Saxon and other non-Hispanic ministers have any idea of how to deal with such cases, much less received any training in that regard. The book *Refuge from Abuse: Healing and Hope for Abused Christian Women* (Nancy Nason-Clark, 2005) is a good place to start with regard to a web based training that is available to all pastors, especially adapted to the Hispanic-Latino evangelical culture. For further reference, visit www.theraveproject.org.

The *potential* energy of the Holy Spirit is presented as the emanation, or covering, of a being that is present, not only in oneself, but also among the people of the community of faith, available to everyone. However, the *kinetic* energy, in action and evident by an “abundant” life, is not often evident in concrete ways in the reality of daily life. Form often surpasses substance, as in cases in which the Spirit would appear to be objectified and systematized. There are those who would seem to be “manipulating” the Spirit, even with claims of renovation, by defining the Spirit in idiosyncratic terms, failing to capture, co-participate or obtain the potential benefits of the person, presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the community. In general, however, the Holy Spirit would seem to operate, not just through, but in spite of human beings, with grace and mercy.

Functional and utilitarian means. Among Hispanics, the phrase “better to prevent than to heal” has been a traditional expression. With regard to preventive measures, it could be said that the believing evangelical community has provided safeguards, barriers and defenses against many discomforting mental problems. Quite often legalistic prohibitions have characterized communities with direct instructions and expectations that need to be fulfilled in order to remain a part of the community of faith. Even so, while the codification of the details of daily life looks something like the 613 rabbinical laws that govern Orthodox Jewish communities, such norms have fulfilled a protective, guiding function for a healthy lifestyle.

Depending on the intellectual level, maturity and sophistication of both parts, ministers and congregation, the author considers four rhetorical styles through which ministers persuade the people to do good: 1) they simply *tell* the people what

they need to do; 2) they *attempt to convince* the people with arguments regarding right actions; 3) they intervene in the lives of people and interact more *democratically*, placing on the shoulders and the conscience of each believer the responsibility to do what is right; and 4) *encourage, entrust, praise and reinforce* people in their decisions because they know and trust the believers to have the maturity, disposition and ability to do what is right.

Among the prohibitive factors (to a certain point considered “legalistic”), the avoidance of vices such as drugs and alcohol, not entertaining undue thoughts or actions (such as adultery, fornication, sexual addictions), committing oneself to work ethically and morally (to be aware that one is doing so before an overseeing God), among other demands, prevent more than heal such conducts, leading to greater consequences and discomforts. Prohibitive ordinances rarely promote holiness; rather, they evoke reactions that incite a desire to transgress such laws. On the one hand, positive psychology (Seligman, 2006) would seem to support “positive” sermons and teachings that serve to lift up people’s spirit and reinforce positive aspects as opposed to inordinate introspection, conjectures, or gossip. On the other side, it provides a kind of “injection” against stress, preparing the believer to see the possibility of being attacked by the forces of evil, or being conformed the ways of thinking of this age. In sum, it provides a proactive, metacognitive perspective with regard to daily challenges. The believer is prepared for a spiritual warfare, but also gives thanks beforehand for the care, divine protection and provision on a foundational platform of faith from which a person can adhere to the promises of God with regard to health, well-being and abundant living.

A redefinition of mental problems. The perceptions that evangelical communities have toward the causes of mental illness have been centered on demonic influence, or the presence of past sins resulting in negative consequences. In some way, there has been given place to the notion that the sins of others (abusers, alcoholics, addicts, etc.) have affected the mental health of the one that is suffering, as well as obvious genetic causes (intellectually disabled). Even though demonic influences or sin consequences cannot be denied, not every problematic condition can be placed into these causal categories. There are physical, biological, genetic, social and situational causes that produce mental and emotional disorders. The need in the evangelical community for the consideration of a wider range of possible causes of such disorders remains as a challenge to deep-rooted beliefs. A consideration is necessary for the possibility that such conditions would be helped or resolved through the use of proper pharmacotherapeutics, psychiatric or psychological assessment without diminishing or devaluating the pastoral, spiritual and community help.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can affirm that Hispanic evangelical spirituality is an essential, important and stimulating factor of mental health in the community. Such a premise allows for recognizing and reinforcing the need for ministerial assessment among leaders that work in Hispanic communities with regard to matters pertaining to mental health, and the importance of the context of a healing community. These ministers are the gateway for the services that provide spiritual and emotional help in the community. Pastors that are open to be assessed in these matters can examine and evaluate their capabilities,

as well as limitations, knowing when, why and on whom they should rely, or to whom they can refer such cases, counting on the friendship and collegiality of persons trained in the area of mental health (psychologists, psychiatrists or social workers).

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CHAPTER 8

The Social Context in the United States and the Hispanic Families Dr. Huberto Pimentel

What do immigrant families face when they arrive in the U.S.?

Families that immigrate to the United States of America from Latin America, the Caribbean and from Mexico in search of better economic opportunities and education for their families generally struggle with culture shock. They need to learn how to raise their children in two different cultures, finding themselves immersed in a clash of values. They discover that the values they bring from their cultures differ from American values. At work and in the course of social life, they are confronted with a racism of rejection and devaluation. Even though the immigration reform has gone through decades of the lottery, the current American society continues to view them as part of another culture.

Citizenship in itself does not guarantee acceptance by the American society. Those without proper documentation are treated as illegals who are violating immigration laws. As a consequence, immigrants are reluctant to assimilate culturally. In the first place, due to the contiguous border between Mexico and the U.S., crossing from one side to the other makes the Mexicans the most persistent in holding onto their culture

and customs. For them, crossing the border is part of the dynamic of survival. Secondly, it has become increasingly more difficult to gain U.S. citizenship, which forces them to live in transition until they can save enough money to return to their country of origin.

M. Daniel Carroll R., in his book *“Christians at the Border”*, emphasized the fact that in the state of California “Cal-Mex” is spoken, indicating the input the Mexican culture has had on American culture.¹ California is a multicultural state which facilitates the expression of identities in their various cultures.

Working condition are not the best for many of the undocumented immigrants, since they have to often work two jobs to maintain their families as well as send money back to their countries of origin. The tension of having to work and knowing that at any given moment immigration officials (“La Migra”) are making their rounds looking for those without documents, processing them and sending them back to their country of origin is so real that it threatens the mental health of many, especially that of mothers. It is here that the injustice of separating parents from children becomes more evident each day. Many immigrants work hard to sustain and support their families.

Dr. Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, in her bi-lingual book *Listen to the Children: Conversations with Immigrant Families (Escuchemos a los niños: Conversaciones con Familias Inmigrantes)*, discusses the decision of parents to immigrate to the U.S. and the impact the resulting tensions and emotions have on their children. In addition, she talks about the benefit of being reunited with family following a deportation.² This book is an excellent educational resource for pastors in the U.S.

The Evangelical Immigration Table [La Mesa Evangélica de Inmigración] recently produced a 45-minute documentary video “The Stranger”, in which an appeal is made to the evangelical community to accept the immigrant as a biblical mandate, in addition to being a good appeal to the government for just solution for immigration reform.³

One important, yet complex aspect is the process of identity in the Latino community in the U.S. Hispanics who have been living in the States for many years perceive that they are not from here, but neither from over there. They live in two different worlds. en la comunidad latina en los E.U. The third generation of youth that is developing speak more English, but at the same time see themselves as Latinos. They remain apart, affirming their identity, yet see themselves connected to the culture in which they live. This process is known as differentiation, which is the creative activity of apart but “holding onto”, resulting in a lifestyle of mutual interdependency. Hispanics need to create this sacred space of separation in order to enrich their identity. At the same time, the need to establish creative ties with society in general where the mixture of cultures and lifestyles, living together in mutual respect, creates a much richer community in its diversity. Sociologist and theologian Miroslav Volf develops this concepts of differentiation in his book *Exclusion and Embrace*.⁴

How are immigrant families affected?

Looking for work opportunities or following the American dream in the changing society in which we live is a challenge that threatens the nuclear family. The flow of change is drastic and rapid. For example, the traditional family of an intact marriage with father working outside the home and the moth-

er at home, with at least two children, has diminished by 10% in all families. Economic inflation and the high cost of living are factors the influence this change.

Marriages are affected in the same way. For example, those who marry have less of a probability of remaining married until “death do them part”. Divorces and separations end the relationships. There is an increase in numbers of those that are raising children as single parents. Divorced couples are listening to the courts assign custody of the children to one of them. A large percentage of those that divorce become remarried, and they marry people that have been divorced and enter into relationships as step mothers and step fathers. Inflation forces both marriage partners to work, so they must develop skills for negotiating the use of family time and resources. Sadly, this situation is a great limitation for family time.

Domestic violence, a reality for both undocumented and documented

Domestic violence encompasses a variety of abusive behavior, threats out of control of the victimizer and the emotional destruction of the victim. This problem crosses all religious, cultural and national boundaries.

There are various types of domestic violence: physical, sexual and psychological. The most common is physical, in which there is shoving, punching, kicking, choking, and the use of objects and/or weapons that result in threats and inflict harm to a spouse, the children, relatives and friends. Generally, the victim is abused and remains in the cycle out of fear, due to economic dependency, on occasion for immigration purposes, “for the children”, or for lack of help. There are marital situa-

tions in which the woman is undocumented, married to a U.S. citizen or a legal resident, and becomes a victim of domestic violence, even receiving threats from the husband of reporting her to Immigration Services. Pastors need to be informed of new laws that protect women independently of their immigration status. An excellent resource is the Center for Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence in Seattle, Washington.⁵

Other realities in the social context

Single mothers who have to raise their children without a partner becomes an arduous task. They need a secure and confidential support group. The church would do a great service to these single mothers by providing a good program.

A significant number of couples marry partners from other ethnic groups, countries, or other religions, adding new dimensions to their relationship as well as to the extended families. Unemployment undermines the self-esteem and the parental authority, leading to a disconnect with the children, the family, with society condemning the elderly to a dependency that exposes them to solitude. High energy and fuel costs put in danger the health of children and family when there has to be a choice between paying the utility bills or a medical plan.

The Hispanic families that enter this flux of changes, facing cultural shock, and changing moral values see themselves in tense situations in which once again have demonstrated that the home can be a refuge and a place for support in the midst of this storm. For the Hispanic community, family values need to be affirmed but adapted to this context of rapid socio-economic changes. For example, Hispanics have discovered the

extraordinary capacity to handle two jobs. In the same way, they have developed analytical skills for resolving conflicts that often surprise me. It is a pleasure to see the intelligence and the ability to carry their burdens and tensions, and at the same time keep a good spirit in the middle of their struggles.

Understanding the families in order to discover healthy ways to raise children

Hispanics bring with them their cultural values, and a religion that has been instilled in their hearts through the family. In our experience with Hispanic families we have seen some progress with regard to cultural shock, values and racism. Dr. Elizabeth Conde-Frazier prepared a valuable resource for helping parents deal with culture shock.⁶ In her personal study she explained the process as various stages:

The first encounters – As individuals encounter a dominant world, they begin to compare it with their own world. They feel that their world is very small and are ashamed of it. Now they seek, little by little, to assimilate to the dominant world.

Denial – The next step in the process is when people deny that their culture is important for relating to the dominant world, particularly when experiencing racism and cultural rejection.

New encounters – Individuals face events that create the experience of what it feels like to be being identified by others as part of a minority ethnic group. They begin to realize that no matter how hard an attempt is made to assimilate, there will never be a complete acceptance as part of the dominant group.

Immersion – There is a desire for people to return to their original culture, utilizing symbols and other items that iden-

tify the country of origin. There is avoidance with anything that would identify them with the dominant culture. There is a tendency to glorify what belongs to them and feel anger towards the dominant culture. The focus of their energy becomes their own cultural group.

Internalización – In this stage, one begins to open up and becomes less defensive with those of the dominant culture. There is an openness for building relationships with people of the dominant culture, while maintaining keeping connected with one's own culture. This would seem to be a very important stage since we live in a global community.

Commitment – An identification with one's cultural group is manifest through a plan of action, or commitment to bring justice for one's community. This is evident by the massive protests of immigrants demanding immigrations reform that is just and with merit.

Implications for ministry to all kinds of families

The various and diverse ways that families, even among Hispanics, work together, play together, support, discipline and claim their family history defies the ability to classify them according to any established set of criterion. Not all family styles are born out of happiness. Some are the result of suffering, mourning, alienation, abandonment or tragedy. This is where the church can present the powerful act of redemption and resurrection as a reality that families can apply in their own lives.

Church leaders are becoming aware that in this atmosphere of rapid changes and diverse cultures, they cannot just transfer the religious experiences from their countries of origin to the U.S. This does mean that they are denying them, but rather

placing them in the context in which Hispanic families live and struggle. Historian and theologian Dr. Justo González, in his book “Santa Biblia,” *The Bible Through Hispanic Eyes*, presents five paradigms to help understand the Bible in a Hispanic context.⁷

In our current climate of moral crisis, it is easy for people to go to the Bible and interpret apocalyptic literature, such as the book of Revelation, to isolate themselves from the community. Rather than form creative communities of affirmation and comfort, become communities disconnected from the world that surrounds them. (For an intelligent reading of the book of Revelation, old Testament scholar Dr. Samuel Pagán has contributed a serious study in his book *El Tiempo está Cerca*, [The Time is Near] in which he presents each of the schools of interpretation along with their strong and weak points.⁸)

Hispanics and the moral crisis of immigration

The subject of immigration is complex, since it involves legal, economic, moral and spiritual areas. The immigrant without documentation is faced every day with a cultural system that de-humanizes them. Treatment in workplaces is cruel and tiresome. There are long hours without the basic benefits of vacation, sick leave and retirement.

The Chicano leader César Chaves pointed out that in California the owners of vineyards grow grapes and make slaves. For him, immigrants have come to be the new slaves in America. Frederick John Dalton, in his book *The Moral Vision of César Chávez*, writes about “The Great Cause”, in which he elaborates: “The editorial “El Malcriado” [The spoiled brat] exhorts its readers to action, and defines action in terms of ser-

vice for the good of dignity and respect, justifying such action in the name of God, as the source of rights for farmworkers in search of a better life.”⁹ Chávez would say “There is nothing more shameful and perhaps more perverse than the person that offers work at low wages. To be cheap in giving low wages is a crime against human decency. Work is something sacred, and the same is true for wages. Each human being is gifted with dignity. The job and the work each person does deserve just wages.”

Aviva Chomsky, professor of History and coordinator of Latin American Studies at State University in Salem, Massachusetts, states: “The exclusion of citizenship has allowed the United States to maintain the illusion of equal rights, while at the same time insuring that employers have the same right to workers without rights.”¹⁰ The current proposals for immigration reform do nothing to expand the rights of the undocumented immigrants; in fact, it does just the opposite. The political game is to manipulate public opinion so that the parties in power can be seen to be interested in immigration rights while at the same time border patrol personnel is increasing and barriers and walls that separate one from the other are strengthened.

The United States has had a history of slavery, exclusion and conquest. The rules were different for Europeans than it was for African-Americans, Asians, Native Americans and now the Hispanic immigrants. In accordance with the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, “the term illegal migrant should not be used, inasmuch as it contracts the the spirit and violates the literal words of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 6 that states: ‘Everyone has the

right to be recognized everywhere as a person before the law". So we prefer to use the term "undocumented immigrant".

The shape of America is changing. This is evident in businesses that have signs in Spanish. More and more Mexican, Salvadoran and Peruvian restaurant are opening in the United States. George López, the comedian of Mexican descent, said in a documentary that brown is the new color in the United States.

In the United States, legal citizens break the law in many ways and manner. One could say that just about every day. However, when it is about an immigrant, it is accentuated and exaggerated as if it were something intentional in order to justify deportation as the only solution for immigration.

The evangelical churches and the Roman Catholic Church are ready to defend the rights of immigrants as a mandate from God for hospitality through the eyes of justice and compassion. Daniel G. Groody, priest of the Congregation of the Cross, and assistant professor of theology and Director of the Institute of Latinos studies at the University of Notre Dame makes a correct comment about the border: "Ironically, just as the walls of Berlin came down, a stronger wall of separation, much more dangerous was being built along the 1,952 miles between the United States and Mexico. Although it is not made of cement, it is a separation between the citizens of the United States and the poor from Latin America. While the doors are open for those who want to escape from the tyranny of Communism, the doors are being closed for those that want to escape the tyranny of economic and political tyranny and the social structures of their own countries."¹¹

Immigrants struggle daily between a hunger for liberty and the persecution by a wall of separation. They cross the border

with a broken heart, only to find a de-humanizing border that creates in them a hurting heart. The ministry of the church of Jesus Christ is to open the arms with a radical hospitality with effective programs the rehabilitate, encourage, restore and cause to bloom broken hearts.

Eldin Villafañe, Distinguished Professor of Hispanic Christianity, Ethics and Urban Ministries, critiques the church for its absence in the poor communities and city suburbs, while at the same time raising funds for luxurious structures and buildings far from the reality of the Hispanic people.¹² Dr. Villafañe's call is for a church actively involved in a community, praying for Shalom, the peace and well-being of the city.

The United States should open its doors to each and every citizen of the world fleeing oppressive system to a liberty of life that allows them human rights and recognizes the courage and dignity they bring from their countries of origin. The experience of having received a great majority of its citizens from Europe has made this nation one in which the diversity has enriched and strengthened it. Rather than weakening the language and culture through non-assimilation, it has been proven and it is evident that the integration, mutual respect and dignity that each person of this global world brings with them contributes to a greater richness of coexistence without exercising control or imposing political, economic or social pressure the privileged over second class citizens.

The church service in the religious life of the Hispanic people

The church services should be a place for meeting others and joyous expressions. They should be places for support and affirmation. The time and frequency of the services should controlled, since many Hispanics work nearly every day of the

week and have to get up early to go to work. Nonetheless, the service provides a place where Hispanics can worship in their own language. They can shout, pray and present their needs before God. The service is a sacred time that gives liberty and dignity for all.

It is important for pastors and Christian ministry in general to grow in tune with the needs of Hispanics. There are at least three areas that should be developed and affirmed in the life of the the church. The first is Worship. The service, prayer and worship are important. In the same way, the choruses should have a message with deep meaning. People do not learn much from sermons, but they learn more when they sing and verbalize in the service important aspects of their faith. Pastors and church leaders should therefore give themselves the task of reviewing what it is they are singing to make sure it is teaching and not just entertaining, or worse, alienating people from their crises.

A second need is Teaching. Teaching should be given a very high priority in the life of the church. Sermons should teach and Bible studies should be relevant to life experiences. The pastor should be the resident theologian of the local church. These times require a pastor that is trained and capable of brining hope and guidance for people. The whole gospel needs to be preached, and not just the texts that are pleasant for us.

The third aspect is Social Action. The church needs to incorporate as part of its program a time for orienting Hispanics with regard to available assistance programs from the government, English classes, how to prepare resumes for job interviews, after-school mentoring programs to helps students with their assignments, etc.

The church should be aware of the needs and intentional in providing a varied program that will contribute to healthy members in a creative, constructive community. There are at least eight areas of focus: spiritual, social, financial, emotions, environment, intellectual, physical and vocational. When all of these are developed and integrated, then there will be a healthy community in formation. It is unfortunate that the church limits itself to the spiritual area and does not integrate into its program the other significant area of each person's life.

A definition of a healthy community would be the following: Healthy communities are those in which people can gather for fellowship in order that together a better community can be attained for the whole world, through collaboration, a sense of belonging, approaches that are long-term inclusive, and a positive commitment. This definition was the result of a poll taken with a good population sample from healthy communities.

The family: a complex, yet vital social reality

Being a family today is much more complicated and difficult than it was for our parents and grandparents. Families all over the world are facing a series of tensions that they did not even know about. The social phenomena of our day has drastically modified the family life.

To a certain extent, these changes have affected the family in that we have gone from a society of production to one of consumerism. The family has to compete with school, the neighborhood, television and gangs when it comes to transmitting values to the children. Nonetheless, it is admirable to see that Hispanic families have a surprising ability to adapt to the new demands of our times.

In spite of the alarming predictions of some social scientists in the middle of the 20th century, the family continues. When governments reduce the resources and funds for family public health, the family resorts to taking care of their own. In this sense, the Bible states that if we do not take care of our own, we are not fulfilling our ministry. It is for this reason that pastors need to maintain an open dialogue based on Christian positions with regard to racism, human devaluation, human trafficking, rampant “machismo” and domestic violence.

In spite of the changes that have had emotional effects on thousands around the world, the family has proven itself to be the most effective agency for survival. Not just the family as such, but rather the Hispanic Christian family. The values of faith, love, compassion and mercy have their roots in the early years of family life. *The Hispanic Christian families* are enriched through interaction with other families, in the life of the church and the social surrounding in which they live in order to contribute in a relevant way “to see if they can make a difference”.

The characteristics of healthy families

The medical world has forced us to think about the family in terms of faults, dysfunctions, problems and needs. Doctors, psychologists, social workers and even the church has fallen into this type of thinking. However, a theological reading of human beings in general, and of the family in particular, allows us in a more balanced perspective. Biblical anthropology informs us that even in man’s limited, imperfect and finite condition, the image of God in mankind has not been cancelled; it has only been stained, distorted, and, in many cases, corrupted.¹³

Healthy families live and transmit spiritual values. Psychotherapy has for too long stayed away from spiritual values. Today, however, many professionals are changing their thinking. For example, the word resilience describes the elasticity of objects “that have the power, or the ability to return to its original shape or position after having been bent, compressed or stretched.” This concept is now applied to individuals and families that demonstrate the capacity to overcome the challenges of life, bouncing back from the crises in their lives, and the persistent stress, able to recover from sickness and adversity.¹⁴ In my country, Puerto Rico, we find an example of resiliency in nature. There is a small plant that is called “Morivivir” that when touched appears to die, but in moments it begins to raise up its leaves.

Resiliency, therefore, is the result of spiritual values based on the promises of God that accompany us and give us strength. We can face any situation, because at all times we rely on Christ, who strengthens us. Faith and our beliefs are at the center of who we are and how we make sense of our experiences. As believers, we are guided by the values of the kingdom of God: love, peace, justice, solidarity, hope, faithfulness, partnership, kindness and self-discipline. For two millennia these values have formed an integral part of the communities of faith that have diligently followed Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit according to the teachings of the Holy Scriptures. The apostle Paul speaks of the well-known trilogy found in 1 Corinthians 13.13: “And now these three remain: faith hope and love...”

Healthy families maintain structures that are consistent, yet flexible. Families should structure their lives and relationship

in order to carry out essential tasks for their mutual growth and benefit. Families need to know who is in charge, what are the rules and boundaries, who provides, educates and disciplines the children, who takes care of the handicapped, the elderly and the sick. These defined elements are of special value in moments of transition, vulnerability and crisis. Families continuously face two simultaneous and apparently contradictory forces: stability and change. What enables families to stay healthy are the structures that provide stability, yet at the same time are sufficiently flexible to accommodate new and constant changes.

*In the family structure there is the sense of **belonging**.* Belonging to a family network, to a particular ethnic group, to a specific cultural heritage and to a community of faith creates a sense of direction and stability. The health of these support networks of family, community, including the family of faith, are a kind of life lines in times of tension, adversity and crisis.

In healthy families, communication is clear and direct. Good communication is essential for good family function. Good communication involves skill in not only speaking but also listening. Our families of origin teach us ways to communicate, sometimes in a functional way and sometimes in a dysfunctional manner. Experts point out at least three keys for healthy communication within the family: clarity, freedom to express feelings, and collaboration in the resolution of problems.¹⁵ In addition, affection is expressed liberally and regularly.

Healthy families allow emotions to be expressed, not repressed. Family members have mutual respect when they speak and listen. For that, a series of skills need to be developed related to respect and concern for the feelings of others, speaking for

oneself and not for others, and not least, the ability to open up and assume responsibility for one's own feelings and actions.

Healthy families have the ability to resolve their problems together. For that, they have developed tolerance to the point that they can dissent openly in finding solution. The following seven steps are necessary: 1) they identify the problem, 2) they communicate with the right persons regarding the problem, 3) they develop together the possible solutions or alternatives, 4) they decide on one of the alternative, 5) they execute the necessary actions required by the alternative, 6) they confirm that the actions have been completed, and 7) they evaluate the effectiveness of the problem solution process.¹⁶

Healthy families provide an adequate climate for growth. In healthy families an atmosphere is created in which people genuinely care for each other and enjoy themselves. It is interesting how the story found in Luke 2:41-52 ends. The story describes the incident in which Jesus, at the age of 12, becomes lost in Jerusalem during the Passover Feast. His parents found him three days later, and in middle of the tension and anguish, verse 52 says that "Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man". This family was healthy even where there was a tense situation, resulting in a good family atmosphere in mental, physical, social and spiritual areas.

Good humor reduces tension and creates a better atmosphere for continuing to struggle when there is a crisis. In addition, there must be forgiveness, an action that is necessary to keep the ties that bind the family together. Forgiveness is the willingness to abandon the right to be bitter, to judge wrongly and to be indifferent toward someone that has hurt you wrongly. At the same time, it involves an inclination to-

ward the virtues of compassion, generosity and love toward the person that has done wrong. Forgiveness is a change of mind and heart.¹⁷

Since there is no such thing as a perfect family, forgiveness is essential for the healthy development of each family member. False forgiveness is a game to win power over others. When we forgive from the heart those that have hurt us, we extend a welcome the community of humans and we treat them with dignity and respect.

Forgiveness is not the same as reconciliation. It is possible to forgive without reconciling (that is, without meeting together in love and friendship,) but it is not possible to truly reconcile without first forgiving. Forgiveness is the process that enables the one that forgives to continue in life without being affected by the pain caused by the hurt, the deception or disloyalty. True forgiveness cannot be confused with sentimentalism or sympathy at the expense of justice and dignity. One can forgive and at the same time limit, or even terminate a relationship. Forgiveness could require restitution on the part of the one that has done wrong. Nonetheless, forgiveness is not an exchange of favors. The one who forgives does it as a gift. Who is forgiven does not assume any obligation to the forgiver as a condition for the forgiveness.

The family

Each and every one of us come from a place of origin called "My parents home". There we were born, socialized, nurtured and received our first hugs, punishments, and learned the family rules of the game. Remember those rules? There are fond childhood memories as well as those that are less pleasant. In

a sense, much that we learned about being adults we learned in the “My parents’ home”. This was the first significant school in which to learn from our parents “the wisdom” they in turn learned (received) from their parents.¹⁸

Clearly, not everything is rosy, and not everything that has been transmitted to us is what we could call good wisdom. Not everything that our parents learned and experienced was good, but that was the school in which they learned and were formed. Consciously or unconsciously, our parents are the result of their parents’ home; a heritage passed on from generation to generation. As a child, or even as an adult, have you not asked: “why was Dad the way he was, or why did Mom keep silent when Dad abused me.”¹⁹

Many adults still live with the childhood traumas, questions, pain, frustration and anger frozen in their memories. This is the product of living together in “My parents’ home”. Others are able to relieve positive experiences, significant words and proverbial expressions for daily living.

What is a family?

There are certain distinguishing characteristics of a healthy family.

It all begins with an emotional attachment, or bond, between a man and a woman, a relationship that is understood to be stable and exclusive. In our culture this is what is called a marriage.

When children arrive, either through natural childbirth or adoption, a parent-child relationship is formed. The children of this man and woman belong to them in a unique sense and as parents are specifically responsible for raising and caring for them.

The first task, so to speak, for children is to form an emotional bond with a figure that will make their home a world that is safe and reliable place. Most often, this mother is the figure, but the father also plays a very important role. This is a very natural process. We can say that a healthy family is one that provides a loving environment in which the children begin to learn the meaning of trust. More importantly, the child receives love and trust in a figure that offers security and confidence.

The second task for children in life is to see themselves as unique, separate individuals bathed in a context of love and trust. Psychologists refer to this as the process of “individuation”, of discovering what makes someone the person they are. This occurs in the environment of love and security that we experienced in the early process of emotional attachment with our parents.

The unconditional love we receive from our parents is the basis for who we become as adults. A healthy family, then, is one where space is provided in which unconditional love is felt, providing security and freedom for the children to successfully become autonomous individuals.

The family as a covenant

Covenant is a word that comes from ancient times, particularly in the relationship between God and the people of Israel. A covenant is a relationship in which both parties commit themselves mutually and totally to faithfulness.

In many human relations there are contracts and agreements in which each party feels bound to the relationship only as long as the conditions are being met. For example, if one party fails to comply with the agreement, then the other party has an excuse to decide what they want to do. In other words, there is no longer a feeling of obligation to the relationship.

A covenant, however, is more than just a contract or agreement. In a covenant relationship, each side has certain responsibilities and obligations that are required to be fulfilled, even when the other side fails on their part. The family can thus be seen as the intersection of two covenants: a horizontal covenant between husband and wife, and a vertical covenant between parents and children.

It is important to recognize that the existence of a covenant is no guarantee that there will be no disagreements or discord in the relationship. Quite the opposite is true. In every interpersonal human relationship there will be trials, ups and downs, fights and disagreements. The great difference lies in the fact that both sides are committed to work through the difficulties in order to attempt to resolve them. The bonds of the covenant will be put to the test. They may be broken, but they can be restored.

A dysfunction family is by definition one in which in some circumstance the covenant bonds of unconditional love, especially between parents and children, have been broken or expressed in negative, hurtful ways.

The family as a system

We shall attempt to present a definition of what we mean when we refer to the family as a system. A family is more than a group of individuals who share a common direction and family name. Many of the enigmas or questions, such as “Why I am the way I am,” can be revealed or discovered when we look at the family as a system of relationships and interpersonal dynamics.

The family as a system is much like an organism. There are many factors in play for an organism to behave the way it does.

The representation of the family as a system began when a psychiatrist discovered that the family played an important role in both health and mental illness of its members. For example, he saw that when schizophrenic patients were discharged to return to their families, they returned to the clinic showing signs of the same prior symptoms. He further observed that when dominant mothers of patients visited them in the clinic, the behavior of the patients worsened.

“Much of patient behavior can be seen as perfectly reasonable and in order within the context of the family. In these instance, it is the family, and not just the individual that is dysfunctional.” To see the individual as the problem is to miss the mark.

“The family is an organism in which the attitudes, values and actions of each member interact with each and every one of the other members.” Many behavioral patterns, healthy as well as non-healthy, are the result of the role we occupy in one’s particular family system.

Interactive thinking as opposed to linear thinking

Linear thinking is arriving at cause and effect conclusions. Each cause has an effect. Every action has a possible reaction. For example, Rosa is very sociable and extroverted. Her husband Luis is quiet, withdrawn, have weak relational skills and is not interested in developing them. Rosa then develops a plan to change her husband, forcing him to attend certain Bible studies in which there will not only be the study, but also in which the group socialized in many kind of activities. Luis retreats into his shell every time his wife nags him for not wanting to participate. Rosa insists that she is only doing this to break him from his firm insistence to stay at home alone.

Rosa – Nags – Insists – Fights	Luis – Withdraws
Cause	Effect

Luis – withdraws	Rosa – Nags – Fights
Cause	Effect

Imagine Rosa and Luis in counseling. She says: “He started it.” He replies: “She keeps nagging.” This kind of thinking goes nowhere. Rosa needs to stop trying to change Luis. Also, in the counseling session she learns more of Luis’ history. He was raised in a chaotic family life. His father was an alcoholic and his mother was constantly scolding. Luis learned to adapt to the chaos by withdrawing from the scene, into himself, staying out of the situations as much as possible.

Putting the problem into linear perspective:

	Rosa fights	
Luis withdraws		Luis withdraws
	Rosa fights	

What we can learn from this systemic diagram is that each side can change the situation by changing one’s personal behavior.

Dysfunctional families RESIST CHANGE. This is what is known as *HOMEOSTASIS*, that is, leave things as they are – do not change them.

Another trait of dysfunctional families is that the KEEP SECRETS. It could be a current secret or something from the past; something everyone knows about, but no one speaks about it. Some people tell their counselors family matters or kept in

the family and never shared with outsiders. This attitude only keeps them blind to the problems and closed to any significant changes with regard to the well-being of the family.

One more characteristic of a dysfunctional family is THE FAMILY MYTHS. A family myth could be something completely different from what is said. For example, a person might say: Our family supports us in everything, or our family is very close with each other, when the reality is just the opposite

When one understands the family as a system in constant interaction, one can then understand the reason why families are emotionally interconnected, irrespective of geographic distances. The study of one's "genogram" (family genealogical tree) will help understand why, along with our children, the behaviors and attitudes that we learned in "Our Parents' Home" are repeated. When one begins the process of differentiation, then one starts to be one's self without succumbing to pressure from the family of origin. Understanding the "Family Systems Approach" can make one a better leader in the family, church and community without stressful living.²⁰

The Bible as a history of families with problems just like ours

In the book *Aún en las mejores familias* [Even in the Best of Families], Dr. Jorge Maldonado describes how even in the best families there can be shows of favoritism, lies and strong disagreements.²¹ A reading of this book will lead one to read the Bible with a new perspective for seeing how families really live. The Bible presents a variety of surprising family configurations. The patriarchs had multiple wives. There are the lives of widows, orphans and people in crisis.

In Jesus' own family, his mother was pregnant without being married. Since Joseph was afraid of accepting this situation, God had to intervene in order to reveal the divine plan and purpose for which the child would be born. Mary along with Joseph experienced firsthand what it meant to be a couple in transition, becoming refugees that could find "no room in the inn". This same family even lost their son, the savior, at one of the most attended feasts. Later, Jesus himself entered into conversation with a Samaritan woman that had had five husbands, and was in another relationship. Nevertheless, the encounter led to a liberation and an opportunity for the Samaritan woman.

What is interesting in all of the Bible narratives and stories about family events, both positive and negative, is that God can be seen intervening in the history of these families through individuals. In all of the life's tragedies or victories, we should be asking what is God's purpose for mankind, society and the world. This is why pastors need to be intentional in reading all of God's Word in order to find the counsel of God for married couples and families. We should be intentionally finding in the Scriptures what God himself established as the foundation for the family.

The biblical and theological foundations for the Christian family

A book written about the family begins with a brash statement, somewhat pessimistic, yet very true with regard to marriage: "Out of twelve marriages, four will crash against the rocks of divorce; six will remain afloat, but without joy or love, out of consideration for the children, career, the family or the church; only two will raise up to reach the heights of a happy marriage."

God's purpose for the Christian family is to be happy, even in these times of moral and social crises. The Judeo-Christian principles have been fundamental in the establishment and sustaining of the family for over two millennia. This era of post-Christianity has set a new moral tolerance that is changing and minimizing the bases of family and society. Where can one find a point of reference, a guiding compass, if not in the early history that begins with the genesis of all creation?

A theological base for marriage in the Old Testament.

There are basically three narratives that interpret the reason for a union between a man and a woman.²²

A. Genesis 1:27-28 – (Known as the Priestly code) It is characterized by the expression, “male and female he created them”.

B. Genesis 2:18-24 – (Known as the Yahweh code) The passage emphasized the fact that man was created first and then woman.

C. Genesis 5:1-2– (Also the Priestly code) Again the text says “He created them male and female and blessed them. And he named them “Mankind” (Adam).

Genesis presents a simple plan that becomes the basic structure of all marriages.²³

1. Genesis demonstrates that God, the Creator, is also the author of marriage and the family. This is important since family is generally understood from a sociological perspective. The family, how-

ever, is more than a sociological dimension; it is a divine institution.

2. The family is a project for a good and righteous life; a structure that God loves and to which he gives blessing and divine imprint (Genesis 1:28).
3. The family (matrimony), thus, is seen by God as a gift for all of mankind.
4. The woman, as a companion to man, is a gift from the living God: "I will make a helper suitable for him" (Genesis 2:18).
5. Adam, the man (*îysh*), chooses Eve, the woman (*ishshâh*): "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23). The implications of this phrase are:
 - a. Only the woman (among all of creation) is by nature at the same level of equality with man.
 - b. Only she can serve a companion to him, sharing the same dignity of life.
 - c. Man and woman are on the same level and are precisely the beginning of the family.
1. The phrase "one flesh" is one of the richest expressions in the Old Testament with regard to marriage. Following are some of the inferences:

- a. The idea of a physical union is a part of the marriage that encompasses the whole being (“bâsâr” Heb., flesh, implies the the complete man, the self in bodily form).
- b. One flesh implies a relationship of deep friendship, unity in diversity, a relationship of dialog and companionship toward specific purposes based on mutual respect.
- c. One flesh implies living together with love that is erotic, filial and agape; in sum conjugal love.

The biblical principles for the Christian family are:²⁴

1. Reflect the image of God. When spouses see themselves reflected in the image of God, there is no place for superiority, but rather solidarity.
2. To be stewards of God with regard to his creations, including his project of the family.
3. To be part of the family of God. When for biological reasons the couple cannot have children, they can continue being the family of God.
4. To be a couple (Genesis 2:24-25):
 - a. For companionship based on deep friendship.
 - b. To provide mutual support. Marriage is a team effort.
 - c. To enjoy intimacy on spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical levels..

The theology of marriage in the New Testament

It would be impossible to condense all of rich biblical teaching with moral content on marriage. Some of the more important narratives can be found in the following passages:

- A. Ephesians 5:21-6:4
- B. 1 Corinthians 7:1-40
- C. 1 Peter 3:1-7
- D. Matthew 19:1-12
- E. Colossians 3:18-4:1

The Christian family

We shall limit this discussion to the rich content in the book of Ephesians. The apostle Paul describes how in the drama of life any relationship with God has its beginning through faith.

There are three goals presented in Ephesians that are in God's plan for the church as well as for the Christian family:

- 1. **Peace** – Ephesians 2:13-15
- 2. **Love** – Ephesians 4:1-16
- 3. **Unity** – Ephesians 4:20-5:20

It is within this context that instructions are given for the church as well as for the family.

- 1. **Christians –submit.** Submission is not just to God, but also to one another. (Ephesians 5:21)

2. **Couples – submission and respect.** Submission means to recognize God's interest in this matter of authority. The man is the head of the home. God has said how this authority should be exercised, that is, "as Christ is the head of the church" (Ephesians 5:21). If men would study more carefully the manner in which Christ is the head of the church, fewer women would have an issue on the matter of submission. A second requirement for women is that they respect their husbands. One of the most profound psychological needs of a man is to be esteemed by his wife. The concept that a wife has of her husband will become the concept he has of himself.
3. **Husbands – love.** The command of God is a husband to love his wife (Ephesians 5:25, 28 and 33). God understand the a wife needs her husband's love. The concept of love, however, needs to include actions as well as sentiments. Husbands need to love as Christ love the church and gave himself for it. This kind of love requires sacrifice; it involves the complete giving of a husband to his wife. When a wife receives this love, she feels confidant and secure. It would be possible to say that it would be easier for the wife to submit and show respect if she is receiving this kind of love from her husband. The opposite would be true for the husband.
4. **Children – obey and honor.** God's instruction for children is to obey: "Children, obey your par-

ents in the Lord, for this is right". But obedience is not enough if it is not accompanied with honor (Ephesians 6:1, 2). Obedience with honor is and external demonstration that results in an internal desire to respect the authority of the parents. The promise is "That is may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth" (Ephesians 6:3. See also Proverbs 23:24-25).

5. **Parents – loving discipline.** God's command for parents is in a negative form: "do not exasperate your children" (Ephesians 6:4a). Paternal/maternal authority should be exercised with love, not in an authoritarian tone. Children should obey not just because a parent "says so", but because the instruction is give tenderly, with love. The child is more inclined to obey with honor when the parents live out the gospel (model for the children a high example of Christian life and testimony).

Basic considerations for the Christian family

When a couple decides to marry, they should understand the purposes for which God has established marriage and the Christian:²⁵

1. "That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh". (Genesis 2:24)
 - a. The couple should be willing to break their dependence on their parents. In other word, the umbilical cord needs to be broken with regard to emotions. Maturity is

demonstrated when, combined with God's wisdom, there is an emotional and spiritual ability to live alone and make one's own decisions.

b. The couple should be willing to live in their own house. Living with parents under the same roof does not work. When couple come to me that want to get married, I always ask: Do you have stable work. Where are you going to live. The couple should have the economic ability to establish their own home.

2. "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate". (Matthew 19:6)

a. The couple should understand that marriage is a life-long commitment.

b. The couple should not marry just to see if they are compatible. The couple marries because they have already established a mature and responsible relationship over time, getting to know each other with the understanding that they marry so that the relationship is God's life-long purpose for them.'

3. "Submit to one another out of reverence for God." (Ephesians 5:21-6:4)

a. The couple needs to understand clearly that the only guarantee for their marriage

lies in the fact that both have a reverence for God. A spiritual life and church participation is crucial to a married life.

b. The couple should always be willing to: serving each other, submitting to each other, mutual sacrificial love and mutual respect.

Marriage is not just an economic, psychological or sexual relationship; it is, rather, a life in complete communion, covering all areas of human existence resulting in profound transformations (“and the two will be on flesh”, Ephesian 5:31).

A commentary with regard to family relationship in Colossians 3:18-4:1²⁶

The apostle Paul speaks of three kind of relationships:

1. Between wives and husbands
2. Between children and parents
3. Between servants, or slaves, and masters.

All of these relationships are in a sense unequal. What Paul is telling the weaker ones is practically the same as what society expected: subjection and obedience. However, what Paul asked of the ones in a position power in the relationship was revolutionary: husbands need to love their wives with gentleness, parents should not exasperate their children, and masters should be fair and just with their slaves or servant, remembering the they themselves have a superior Master.

The pre-eminence of Christ and his peace begin in the home (Col. 3:15). The command is to do all things in the

name of the Lord applies to the home (Col. 3:17). The spiritual life is not disconnected from family obligations. It is in the family where the virtues of compassion, kindness, benevolence, patience, forgiveness and expressions of love are put to the test. Each and every one of us is responsible before God to demonstrate growth in Christ through personal relationships.

The social context of today is different from that of two thousand years ago. These passages from Colossians do not describe a sense of hierarchy nor do they support patriarchal systems or slavery, but rather attitudes that should govern the personal relationships of a believer within the family.

Rights do not all fall on one side and obligations on the other. There is equality, reciprocity and dignity. In the gospel there is no longer Greek or Gentile, slave or free, man or woman. Each person is recognized as a complete life, concerned with the rights of others.

Domination of others is forbidden. Each family member is a receptor of God's grace, which changes them into an integral part of God's family. The proper use of power by the believer will not tolerate injustice, exploitation or bad treatment of others.

We can say that Colossians affirms what the book of Proverbs states: the primary place for moral formation and teaching social responsibility is the home, not the church. Before the surrounding society that accepts and promotes immorality, the home should be the center for the Christian education of children. It is not so much a question of who has power and authority to lead the family, but rather that the home is where faith is established and experienced.

The marriage ceremony, or the wedding as an event, is only the beginning of a life-long adventure. The marriage vows should be understood in terms of a covenant relationship and not as a contract between two parties. I do it, you do it. If you do it, I will do it. That is why at the conclusion of the ceremony is the powerful phrase: “for better for worse... in sickness and in health, until death do us part.”²⁷

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- 3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xalJMYLckwY> - “The Stranger” is a 45-minute documentary film commissioned by the Evangelical Immigration Table and produced by Emmy-award winning producer Linda Midgett. The Stranger profiles three immigrant stories and includes interviews with local and national Christian leaders. By highlighting biblical teaching related to immigrants, sharing compelling stories of immigrants who are also evangelical Christians, and addressing some common economic and political misconceptions, The Stranger seeks to mobilize evangelical Christians to respond to immigrants and to immigration policy in ways that are consistent with biblical principles. The film will be released on June 4, 2014.
- 4 *Exclusion and Embrace*, Miroslav Volf, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1996, pages 64-68
- 5 El Instituto de Fe y Confianza es un gran recurso y programa.

Pueden ir a: www.cpsdv.org. Hemos utilizado un documental en video llamado: "Promesas Quebrantadas", donde se enfrenta la situación de la violencia domestica en la vida de la iglesia.

6 Centro Hispano de Estudios Teológicos (CHET) – www.chet.org , En un taller auspiciado por la Asociación para el avance de la Educación Teológica (AETH) y (CHET) bajo el tema: "Criando a nuestros hijos en dos culturas.

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9 *The Moral Vision of César Chávez*, Frederick John Dalton, Orbitz Books, Maryknoll, NY, 2003, p. 97.

10 *They Take our Jobs*, Aviva Chomsky, Beacon Press, Boston, 1992, pag.26.

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CHAPTER 9

Hispanics and the Interpretation of Scripture Dr. Miguel Álvarez

The purpose of this essay is to reason with regard to the way in which Hispanics read and interpret the biblical text. In effect, I am proposing an integrative method that interprets the process by which Hispanics study Scripture. This discussion will include historical roots, theological references as well as practical aspects and elements related to Hispanic identity. The study is focused on three Christian traditions that are traditionally recognized as having the greatest influence in Latin America — Catholic, Evangelical and Pentecostal.

This study makes no attempt to combine points of view, ideas or academic assessments of differing Christian views that assume a certain compatibility when combined coherently, such as eclecticism.⁷³ Rather this is an attempt to conciliate diverse theories and thoughts, taking from each what is most important in order to break existing contradictions.

⁷³ Eclecticism is a conceptual focus that does not hold rigidly to a paradigm or set of suppositions. It is based, rather, on multiple theories, styles, ideas to obtain complementary information on a topic, or simply applied different theories in specific cases. It also attempts to reconcile different theories and existing thoughts, taking from each one what is most acceptably important in order to break existing contradictions.

More specifically, this document proposes a dialogue over points of view with regard to biblical interpretation, taking into account the three sources of interpretation most recognized among Hispanics. Historically, the majority of Latinos have lived with a religious background of Roman Catholicism. Even though some have left the Catholic church to join evangelical or Pentecostal groups, their principles, as well as cultural, educational, familial, social and religious values continue to be Catholic, as an *antonomasia* figure of speech. The reasons are clear since for more than 500 years Roman Catholicism has prevailed over Hispanic culture and society.⁷⁴

This study aims to present a portrait of the Hispanic reality with regard to its connection to and integration in the Christian faith. Over the years, the Hispanic community has received teachings from Catholic, Evangelical and Pentecostal churches, to mention the movements of greatest influence. Thus, to carry out a study such as this it has been necessary to review some works by Catholic, Evangelical as well as Pentecostal authors. As a result of the methodology employed, the reader will observe that in the Hispanic community there are multiple theological combinations, which can also be seen in the field of biblical interpretation.

1. Historical roots

With regard to Protestantism and its more significant ramifications among Hispanics, these movements have perhaps 100 years of historic activity.⁷⁵ With regard to time, the Catholic church reached the Hispanics 400 years before the Evangelical

⁷⁴ See the satirical work by Eduardo del Río, *500 Años Fregados Pero Cristianos*, México, DF: Editorial Grijalbo, 1992), 42. The author relates myths, traditions and historical details that can only be expressed through the art of caricature.

⁷⁵ Angelina Pollak-Eltz and Yolanda Salas de Lecuna, eds. *El Pentecostalismo en América Latina entre Tradición y Globalización* (Quito, Ecuador: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1998), 7

and Pentecostal movements, which is significant with regard to the influence of the Christian traditions on Latin American soil. This important historical framework allows to better understand the Christian Hispanic profile. In the context of this study it is possible to state that Hispanics can be Evangelical or Pentecostal, but in general they will reflect the Catholic background of the culture, society, education and family, something that distinguishes them as different from other Christian contexts.

On the other hand, in this presentation we will differentiate between Evangelicals and Pentecostals, for two reasons: First, they are two separate movements, with some doctrinal differences, and second, because of the different manner of relating to the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Although this discussion does not enter into the field of Pneumatology, it is important to mention, since among Hispanics in general these differences are not taken into account. Nevertheless, they are evident in the implementation of doctrinal teachings and ministerial practices in the congregations. It is also important to note that some Pentecostals, particularly the more traditionalists, insist on being identified as Evangelical, whereas the neo-Pentecostals are not interested in that traditional identification, precisely for their new way to interpret the church, Scriptures and the manner in which they exercise their ministry.

With the rise of Pentecostalism in the 20th Century, the Hispanic community experienced a significant shift in its appreciation of Christianity.⁷⁶ As an example, the Pentecostals stressed a more militant spiritual experience in living out the Christian faith,⁷⁷ and in their re-encounter with the biblical text made

⁷⁶ See, for example, Pablo Aberto Deiros, *Historia del Cristianismo en América Latina*, (Quito, Ecuador: Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana, 1992), 775.

⁷⁷ See the point of view of Manuel Antonio Garretón, ed. *América Latina: Un Espacio Cultural en el Mundo Globalizado* (Bogotá, Colombia: Convenio Andrés Bello, 2002), 238.

the written Word come to life in the life of the believers and the community itself. In addition to the authority of the sacred text and the revelation of the Holy Spirit, the Hispanic Pentecostals also included historical precedents of the Christian tradition and the community of faith in the interpretation of Scripture. The result is a dynamic interpretation, seen as a process that ultimately leads to a discernment of God's will for His people in a determined historical context.

Historically, the Evangelical and Pentecostal missionary movements brought to the Hispanic communities a North American evangelical and cultural perspective. The American missionaries arrived with a historic evangelical background that was birthed in Great Britain, but developed in the United States. Upon entering the Hispanic world, with its dominant Roman Catholic religious and cultural influence, the American Evangelical and Pentecostal encountered significant theological contradictions.⁷⁸ Of course, the backdrop of the contradiction were the new Evangelical and Pentecostal "converts", the result of evangelization among the Latino Catholics.

To best understand this phenomenon, we employ a dialectical perspective⁷⁹ in which the following contradictions are presented: Hispanics generally come from a Roman Catholic background (thesis). On their part, the Americans come from an Evangelical background (antithesis). The current Hispanic community has incorporated hermeneutical principles from both backgrounds (synthesis). For the purposes of this discus-

⁷⁸ See, for example, José Ignacion Saranyana and Carmen José Alejos-Grau, eds.

Teología en América Latina: De las Guerras de Independencia hasta finales del Siglo XIX: (1910-1899) Vol. 2. 2 (Madrid, España: Editorial Iberoamericana, 2008), 294. This collection offers theological and political views from a Catholic perspective.

⁷⁹ A good resource for understanding how to employ the dialectical method is found in Raúl Rojas Soriano's book, *Investigación Social: Teoría y Praxis* (México, DF: Plaza y Valdés, 2002), 162

sion, I should state that my intent is not to promote one extreme or the other. Rather, my objective is to explain what is distinct about Latin American Evangelical and Pentecostal movements. The geographical and historical context places them in a position that provides a different perspective with regard to the Christian life. In this framework, one can imagine in Latin America a combination that could be Catholic/Evangelical, Catholic/Pentecostal. In some cases, it could even be tripartite, that is Catholic/Evangelical/Pentecostal, which would come to be the synthesis of a dialectic confrontation between the most prominent Christian faith movements in the Hispanic community.

THEOLOGICAL CONTRADICTIONS (Dialectic Method)		
Thesis	Hispanic Evangelicals and Pentecostals	Roman Catholicism. Culture, education, society, religion.
Antithesis	American Evangelicals and Pentecostals	American Evangelicals and Pentecostals. New spiritual experience.
Synthesis	Convergence of Opposing Theological Positions	Different Evangelicals and Pentecostals. Incorporate principles from both backgrounds.

Table No. 1

The previous discussion requires the finding a point of convergence that would explain theologically the Evangelical and Pentecostal movements that arose among Hispanics after the dialectical encounter between both currents of modern

Christianity in Latin America. After the incursion of classical Pentecostalism in Latin America, in the 1960s new currents began to develop that combined Pentecostal and Catholic principles in church life, and particularly with regard to the interpretation of the biblical text. One example of these currents was the Charismatic Movement that was evident not only in the Protestant and Evangelical churches, but also in the Catholic church itself. In this case, and for reason of space, we will center our study on the interpretation of Scripture, a new paradigm for the the traditional hermeneutic that is crucial to an understanding of the new generation of Evangelical and Pentecostal Hispanics. As we have explained, these movements have characteristics that are very typical of their background and historical context, and as such need to be taken into account when studying the biblical text.

2. Methodology

Traditionally, Hispanics have studied Scripture either through the methods used by the Catholic church, or by those historically taught by the Evangelicals and Pentecostals.⁸⁰ For reasons of space, this document will not treat the historical, traditional methods, but rather will focus on describing those elements that form part of a methodology that can be seen in the new generation of Hispanic Evangelicals and Pentecostals. These elements form part of a method we have chosen to call integrative interpretation. Following we offer the more noticeable elements that form part of this integrative method and

⁸⁰ An autor that refers to the differences in biblical interpretaton between Catholics and Protestants is Juan Driver, in *La Fe en la Periferia de la Historia. Una Historia del Pueblo Cristiano desde la Perspectiva de los Movimientos de Restauración y Reforma Radical* (Guatemala, Guatemala: Ediciones Semilla, 1997). Another important work in this field is the book by David Suazo Jiménez, *La Función Profética de la Educación Teológica en América Latina* (Viladecavalls, España: Editorial CLIE, 2012)

that area concomitant with the lives, the teaching and preaching of the Hispanic community in general.

3. An integrative method

In the book *El Rostro Hispano de Jesús*, I describe in more detail what I call the integrative interpretation method. This needs to be understood a process of interpretation that (1) integrates systematically the particular functions of the written revelation of the Word of God; (2) includes as well the active participation of the Holy Spirit with regard to understanding, illumination and wise decisions that are in agreement with Scripture; (3) the interpreter studies the testimony of the history and the influence of tradition in the interpretation of the biblical text; and finally, (4) the interpreter submits to the spiritual authority of the community of faith, whose function is to ensure that all interpretation, or action derived from such, does not contradict nor negate the truth and efficacy of the written Word.⁸¹ The integration of these four elements confirm the legitimacy of an interpretation that is complete and accessible to a diverse community, such as the Hispanic one.

This method integrates divine and human activity.⁸² For any interpretation to be accepted or confirmed it should pass through this process of rigorous examination, which will indelibly legitimize or invalidate the interpretation of the a text. There is no room for error when the elements of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, in addition to the history, tradition and authority of the community of faith are dynamically integrated.⁸³ The interpreters

81 This information is more widely discussed in my article “Hacia Una Hermenéutica Esperanzadora,” in *El Rostro Hispano de Jesús*, Raúl Zaldívar, Miguel Álvarez y David Ramírez (Barcelona, España: Editorial CLIE, 2014), pp.

82 John Calvin discussed at length the integration of the human and the divine. See, for example, the analysis by Darren Sumner, “Calvin on Jesus’ Divine-Human Activity,” in *Out of Bounds. Theology in the Far Country*. <http://theologyoutofbounds.wordpress.com/2012/04/24/calvin-on-jesus-divine-human-activity/> Accessed 11 June 2014.

83 Kevin L. Spawn and Archie T. Wright, *Exploring a Pneumatic Hermeneutics* (Blooms-

may disagree with regard to strategy, emphasis and even on the implementation of revelation, but when it comes to an order of hierarchical importance, the Scriptures are supreme and over all other elements. Then comes the revelation of the Holy Spirit that confirms Scripture. Historical precedents and tradition legitimize the impact, while the spiritual authority and the judgment of the community of faith approve or disapprove of the practical application of the interpretation.

4. Intervening agents in the integrative method

The integrative method is similar to the pneumatic, which in its dynamic includes the Word, the Holy Spirit and the community of faith.⁸⁴ The difference between the two is that the integrative method includes historical testimony and the influence of tradition in the dynamic process of interpreting the text. In the Hispanic community, the inclusion of tradition is vital, precisely due to the Catholic influence in its theology. In the Catholic Church, the study of history and tradition is necessary to understand the interpretive exercise of God's people throughout time. This is per-

burry, UK: T&T Clark, 2012). This book considers the academic treatment of biblical interpretation within the classical Pentecostal movement, which has demonstrated great numerical growth. The first part gives a historical summary of biblical interpretation in the Pentecostal tradition. In the second part, six Pentecostal scholars analyze the future of biblical interpretation in said tradition. The authors discuss several key questions. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in biblical interpretation? What are the presuppositions, methods and goals of Pentecostal biblical interpretation? In the third part, three non-Pentecostal theologians (Craig G. Bartholomew, James D.G. Dunn, R. Walter L. Moberly) analyze the propositions described by the Pentecostal theologians. These critical responses expand the study of biblical hermeneutics and encourages other theologians toward further study on the subject. The final chapter evaluates the objectives of the discussion in a futuristic light.

84 See Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic: Spirit, Scripture and Community* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2009). The author presents a detailed and comprehensive analysis of Pentecostal hermeneutics. He identifies the hermeneutical filter through which the Pentecostal story and identity is understood. Archer gives attention to the narrative and to the convictions of the community of faith. This model builds on the significance of the Bible text, the community of faith and the role of the Holy Spirit.

haps one of the areas of concern among Evangelical and Pentecostal interpreters, whose understanding of historical continuity may be influenced by denominational differences, particularly due to the historical interest. The challenge here is to connect objectively the process of textual interpretation with the history of the Christian church and with the history of textual interpretation itself. The latter should be taken into account by interpreters of the Scriptures in order to study the historical evidences in a hermeneutical proposition that could affect all of Christendom and not just one segment.

In order for the process of interpretation to be objective, it is necessary that all interpreters remove their denominational hats and begin to see the church as one body, with different members and different functions, but all contributing to the well-being of the same. I believe this is what was in the mind of the Holy Spirit as he guided Paul to write to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 12). For this to happen, the integrative method proposes the four previously mentioned agents. This method is inclusive and involves a dynamic activity that represents the agents the are part of the compositions and interpretation of Scripture.

HISPANIC INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE		
Integrative Method	Agents that participate in the Interpretation	Historical Source
	The Holy Spirit	The Trinity (GOD)
	The Holy Scriptures	The Biblical Text
	History and Tradition	Catholic/Hispanic Tradition
	The Community of Faith	Classical Pentecostalism

Table 2

In the case of Hispanics, a large majority come from a Roman Catholic background in which tradition has been fundamental for understanding the church. A method that ignores the value of history or tradition would have difficulty in being accepted by the Hispanic community. The same could happen with other historic Christian entities. Of course, the diversity of theological and doctrinal positions among movements and denominations is obvious, and for that reason generalization is not recommended in this case. Nevertheless, the study of tradition and the history of the thinking of God's people has an invaluable benefit in the formation an idea with regard to the origin of doctrine and theology.

In our contemporary world, many decisions of a judicial, social and spiritual nature are based on historical antecedents to strengthen their conclusions, especially those that are of a normative nature. In order to recommend a method that would be representative of Hispanic theologies, the same should include a complete evaluation of the traditions and the role of history in interpretation. In light of this, the dynamic of the elements that are part of the action of the integrative method are presented as follows.

4.1 The Word of God

The Word of God is the revelation of God to mankind. God communicates through Scriptures, which is inspired and revealed through the Holy Spirit.⁸⁵ The Word of God has both a divine and human nature. It is divinely inspired by God through a series of individuals subject to human limitations.⁸⁶ In this way, the omnipotent God intervenes in human history and reveals himself as the divine Word documented by men,

85 Carlos Tomás Knott, *Libro Divino, Amada Palabra* (Tarrassa, España, Editorial CLIE, 1997), 70. The author emphasized that when the Word is illuminated, the Holy Spirit enables the reader to understand what has been revealed and inspired in order to believe and obey God.

86 Knott, *Libro Divino*, 62.

not through robotic dictation by God, but rather as persons that wrote about particular situations with regard to specific human issues, but while doing so, were documenting the Word of God.

4.1.1 Scripture is the verbal revelation of God

The unity between Jesus Christ and the Word is mystery understood through the revelatory activity of the Holy Spirit. The Word became flesh incarnate in Jesus. In this way, the Word is divine and it is human, functioning in an integral manner. In Hebrews 4:12 there is a complete explanation of the activity of the Word: “For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”

Jesus Christ is the origin and the fulfillment of the Word. In the person of Jesus Christ the fullness of the deity is incarnated in human nature subject to the limitations of the human world.

4.1.2 The integration of human and divine natures

Just as in Jesus Christ both the human and divine natures were combined, in the same way Scripture combines both of these natures. This is how God makes himself accessible to humanity in order to make his purpose and his mission understood.⁸⁷ The fact the Scripture is both divine and human facilitates communication between God and man. In the person of Jesus Christ, who is

⁸⁷ Es muy significativo que este tema aún no haya sido académicamente discutido a profundidad en los círculos evangélicos y pentecostales hispanos. Curiosamente uno de los más cercanos en español, se encuentra en la literatura teológica católica. Tal es el caso de la obra de Ignacio Arellano, *Autos Sacramentales Completos: Estructuras Dramáticas y Alegóricas de Calderón* (Pamplona, España: Universidad de Navarra, 2001), 76.

the incarnation of Scripture, God the Father makes himself know to man within the human reality. Milton Jordán Chiqua argues:

The Scriptures, by being inspired, are in truth the Word of God. Regardless of its human presentation, Scripture does not cease to have a divine language, in which the human language is wrapped in the divine Word, or better said, it becomes the expression of divine languages. The human language, without ceasing to be so, has been assumed by God until it also is transformed into divine.⁸⁸

As Milton Jordán describes, when a Hispanic converts conclusions are assumed regarding the idea that there is no Word of God without human word. God is in every part of the inspired texts, even in the most minute details.⁸⁹ One of the reasons why the Hispanic believer venerates and makes holy certain activities and traditions is the belief that these elements involve divine activity. In the same manner, the Church and Scripture are both totally divine and totally human.

4.2 The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. He is the source of all knowledge, understanding and wisdom. His objective for mankind, clearly revealed in Scripture, is to guide man to the final destination of redemption offered by the Father in his Son, Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit reveals Christ in the Word, leading man to understand the gospel and to accept the plan of redemption by God through faith. The Holy spirit builds and encourages faith, opening the understanding of the believer to ultimately know God in the person of Jesus Christ.

⁸⁸ Milton Jordán Chiqua, *Introducción General a la Sagrada Scripture* (Bogotá, Colombia: San Pablo, 2011), 166.

⁸⁹ Jordán, *Introducción General a la Sagrada Scripture*, 166.

With the Pentecostal movement, the person and mission of the Holy Spirit achieves an integrative scope.⁹⁰ The Pentecostals recover the charismatic action of the Holy Spirit and complete the integral circle of the mission of the Trinity, in which the Father sends the Son, and the Holy Spirit reveals and glorifies the Son in his divine and human fullness for the redemption of mankind.⁹¹

4.2.1 The illumination of the Spirit is necessary to understand Scripture

The faith that understand the plan of redemption originates in the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit. It is he that awakens a need for God and who makes the Word accessible to the understanding of an individual in need of salvation. The Holy Spirit make Scripture relevant and gives life to specific situations and contexts, as long as the revelation has the purpose of glorifying Jesus Christ and confirming the truth of God's revealed Word.

4.2.2 The role of illumination in interpretation

Of course, the process of interpretation of Scripture requires illumination as well as the direction and revelation of the Holy Spirit. The "depth of the riches of God" (Romans 11:33) can be available to the person whose motivation is conducive to understanding the truths of Scripture. The Holy Spirit⁹² convicts man of sin and

90 Alexis Riaud, *La Acción del Holy Spirit en la Almas* (Madrid, España: Ediciones Palabra, 2005), 163. Este clásico, católico, expone las nociones esenciales sobre el papel que le corresponde al Holy Spirit en la obra de la santificación. Curiosamente mucha de la teología Neo-Pentecostal utilizada entre los hispanos está saturada de estos conceptos católicos sobre la misión del Holy Spirit. En el caso particular de este autor, su obra apunta hacia la doctrina de la santificación, con lo cual se demuestra que no solamente el movimiento wesleyano evangélico ha influenciado al pentecostalismo hispano.

91 Hay un artículo publicado recientemente que trata sobre esta área particular del pentecostalismo. Ver, Elizabeth Salazar-Sanzana, "Pentecostalism in Latin America: A Look at its Current challenges." in *The Many Faces of Pentecostalism*. Editors, Harold D. Hunter and Neil Ormerod (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2013), pp. 114-125.

92 Lucas Buch Rodríguez, *El Papel del Holy Spirit en la Obra Reveladora de Dios*,

leads him to repentance (John 16:8). Through faith, a person accepts the offer of salvation and becomes a disciple of Christ to live according to the values, teachings and purposes of the Word.⁹³

SOURCES THAT ORIGINATE IN A HISPANIC HERMENEUTIC HISPANA			
	Traditions	Distinctive	Challenges
The Integrative method of interpretation takes into account the most influential traditions in the Hispanic world	Catholic	History: Doctrine, theology, continuity, tradition	Revitalization of holiness and the spiritual life
	Evangelical	Holiness: Order in the church, missio dei, discipline	Connecting to the charismatic activity of the Holy Spirit
	Pentecostal	Revitalization de la activity of the Holy Spirit in the church: Creativity, new possibilities	Order in the church and finding its place in the historical continuity of the Christian faith

Table No. 3

4.2.3 The revelation of Jesus Christ in Scripture

The truth about the person, mission and purpose of Jesus Christ is revealed in the Word of God. This revelation occurs under the influence of the Holy Spirit on man's understanding. The Holy

(Roma, Italia: Edizioni Santa Croce, 2013), 203. Este autor afirma que "el desarrollo de la tradición 'tiene en el Holy Spirit su principio activo primario.'" ⁹³ Gregory J. Ogden, *Manual del Discipulado: Creciendo y Ayudando a Otros a Crecer* (Viladecavalls, España: Editorial CLIE, 2006), 37-45. This work on Christian discipleship forms part of a theological collection published in Australia. Fortunately, it has been translated into Spanish, but this kind of literature is not common in Hispanic Evangelical theological circles. I refer to noted academic works.

Spirit also fills the believers and equips them for effective service through spiritual gifts.⁹⁴ This has been a profound legacy from the American classical Pentecostalism to the Hispanic community.

4.3 The Testimony of History and the Influence of Tradition

The value of the testimony of history and the influence of tradition on the interpretation of Scriptures can be appreciated in the doctrinal and theological formation of Christian communities over time. Upon reviewing the dogmas, doctrines and theological positions of the church, the interpreter of Scripture comes to see the importance of tradition in the history of thought of the people of God.⁹⁵ Tradition could have a positive as well as a negative side. The positive aspect encourages a healthy growth that allow the believer to understand Scripture in relation to his world. The negative side is that which holds back revelation and remains fixed on the static traditions of the past, which were relevant to previous generations, but with time have become irrelevant and of no value for the generations that followed.⁹⁶ The study of tradition should include the analysis of both positive and negative past traditions for the benefit of the present generation.

This agent also takes into consideration the methodology that has been utilized historically in the interpretation of sacred

94 A very significant source in this area is the book by Don Little, *The Way to Follow the Way* (Bloomington, IN: West Bow Press, 2012). However, prior to quoting Little, I did a search in the Spanish literature giving specific attention to the subject of signs following the believers, and I found none that was academically solid. There are some teachings and sermons on the subject, but most are translations from English to Spanish. Due to its very nature the challenge is more evident for Pentecostals, since they are the ones that refer to the subject; the Pentecostals live by this, and so they have no excuse.

95 Juan Jesús García Morales, *La Inspiración Bíblica a la Luz del Principio Católico de la Tradición* (Roma, Italia: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2012), 173-179.

96 This subject is more widely discussed by Daniel Orlando Álvarez in *Towards a Pneumatological Hibridez: An Exploration of Mestizaje Through the Experience of Undocumented Immigration* (Doctoral Dissertation, Regent University, 2014), 176-187.

Scriptures. The historical-critical method, grammatical-historical method, the inductive and others have been implemented particularly in biblical exegesis.⁹⁷ The integrative method relies on these methods for support and also to test the validity of the treatment given to the biblical text. In doing so, the integrative method recognizes the importance and value of the historical methods of interpreting the Word of God. With regard to exegesis itself, the integrative method employs the traditional methods, although interpretation utilized in expository preaching is primarily based on the inductive method.

4.3.1 The doctrinal foundation

The historical impact of Scripture on human history can be appreciated most through the doctrinal foundations and the theology that has been developed by the people of God over time.⁹⁸ The Nicene Creed, for example, has served as a doctrinal foundation for many centuries and has remained immovable as a testimony of the doctrinal development of the church. The study of ecclesial and theological currents of the church throughout history help the interpreter understand the doctrinal foundation and the historical thought of Christianity.

4.3.2 The history of the people of God

In the history of the influence of Scripture on God's people, a great amount of truths, dogmas, principles and symbols have

⁹⁷ Regarding this subject, see the book by Bernhard Grom and José Ramón Guerrero, *El Anuncio del Dios Cristiano* (Salamanca, España: Ediciones Secretariado Trinitario, 1979), 161.

⁹⁸ Amerindia, *Contruyendo Puentes entre Teologías y Culturas* (Bogotá, Colombia: Casa San Pablo, 2011) 177. This work presents the historic challenges facing the world, the church and theology in the past 50 years. It also discusses some of the historical, social and political processes occurring in Latin America in recent years.

been preserved through traditions.⁹⁹ Obviously, tradition seen from a purely human perspective, is framed in a diverse context of actions and decisions taken in different generations. To understand it, tradition must be analyzed in the context in which it developed.

4.3.3 The history of Christian thought

In an objective interpretation of Scripture, it is necessary to study the history of the traditions and the historical thought of God's people. There are truths that were discovered a long time ago which cannot be ignored by the interpreter of today. The symbols and meanings found in the past have great value for those seeking historical evidence of the faith.¹⁰⁰ The balance between historical interpretation of tradition and the revelation of today leads to revealed truth in a healthy way for the needs in a contemporary reality.

4.4 The authority of the community of faith in the interpretation of Scripture

This element in the integrative method is based on the experience and counsel of the church. A healthy interpretation of

⁹⁹ John Barton, *La Interpretación Bíblica Hoy* (Barcelona, España: Editorial Sal Terrae, 2001), 25. The author presents the relation between the "critical" study of the Bible and the "pre-critical" and "post-critical" foci. He also analyzes the role of history in the study of the Bible, the relationship between Christian and Jewish investigation and the recent history in the Bible as literature. See also the work by Eduardo Arens, *Los Evangelios Ayer y Hoy: Una Introducción Hermenéutica* (Bogotá, Colombia: EEP, 2006), 205.

¹⁰⁰ José Saramago wrote a very polemic novel that makes a literary criticism of the manner in which some Christian values and beliefs have been traditionally assumed. Saramago not only won the Nobel Prize for Literature with this novel, but also stirred an interest in a more objective study of the traditional religious values, especially the historical Catholic teachings, this being the reason for including this editorial information in this article. José Saramago, *O Evangelho Segundo Jesus Cristo* (Lisboa, Portugal: Editorial Caminho SA, 1991).

Scripture will necessarily recognize the value of spiritual authority in the community of faith, the assembly of believer, or the congregation itself.¹⁰¹ The church has a clearly established order which believers have a duty to honor. This helps maintain healthy relationships and permits the members to find their place in the congregation that the Holy Spirit has indicated.

4.4.1 The testing by the believers

The community of believers has the authority to evaluate the revelation that has been presented by a group or by one of the members of the community. The group wisdom establishes a balance with all of the previous proposed elements and decides if the interpretation is correct or not. This was the procedure established by the apostle Paul in order to avoid disorder and disobedience in the congregations (1 Corinthians 14:29). The testing by the community of faith is necessary to maintain order and health in the church.¹⁰²

4.4.2 The approval of the church

In the same way that Jesus Christ and Scripture are one, the church also has a divine as well as a human nature. Contrary

101 With regard to the spiritual authority of the community of faith in hermeneutics, see the classic work by David Paul Henry, *The Early Development of the Hermeneutic of Karl Barth as Evidenced by His appropriation of Romans 5:12-21* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985), 1-4.

102 The academic resources on the subject of congregational participation in textual interpretation, in Spanish, are found in Catholic literature. The Hispanic community tends to look to them for the process of interpretation. The closest the Hispanic community has come is found in American Pentecostal textbooks that have appeared in recent years. From an Evangelical perspective, a book that could serve as a reference is Patrick R. Keifert's *Testing the Spirits: How Theology Informs the Study of Congregations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 114. This book provides information with regard to congregational participation in the process of Scriptural interpretation. It emphasized the function of church members in the making of decisions that affect the life of the congregation.

to what dualism teaches, these natures are a constant in the revelation of God to mankind. It is God himself who chooses to intervene in human society, making himself available through Scriptures, visible in Jesus Christ, as well as revealed and understood through the Holy Spirit.¹⁰³ The church, therefore, has the mind of the Holy Spirit, who guides into all truth (John 16:13) and is able to decide in conformity with the mind of Christ in matters related to the interpretation and application of Scripture in the community of faith.

4.4.3 Obedience and submission to spiritual authority

Obedience and submission to governing authority of the community of faith is indispensable in the application of the integrative method. The concept of membership is vital in order to cultivate an attitude of submission and group health.¹⁰⁴ Hispanic communities emphasize the importance of submitting every matter to the counsel of the community of faith in order to find balance in everything that affects the group or an individual member.

An example of the dynamic interaction in the interpretation Scripture utilizing the four agents is found in Act of the Apostles chapter 15. Following is a description of the action taken by the New Testament church.

¹⁰³ María del Carmen Aparicio Valls, *La Plenitud del Ser Humano en Cristo* (Roma, Italia: Iura Editionis, 1996), 184. The author reflects on the accessibility of God to mankind in the person of Christ, who is revealed to the human mind by the Holy Spirit. This position is similar to that manifested by biblical scholars in the Hispanic community.

¹⁰⁴ Ver por ejemplo, el libro de W. T. Conner, *Doctrina Cristiana: las Doctrinas Fundamentales de la Fe Cristiana Expuestas con Claridad Bíblica* (El Paso, TX: Casa Bautista de Publicaciones, 2001), 55. Este un manual de doctrina evangélica clásica escrito desde muy temprano en el Siglo XX y ha sido utilizado por diferentes generaciones evangélicas. Dicho manual contiene doctrinas evangélicas norteamericanas que se enfrentaron por muchos años a las doctrinas fundamentales de la tradición católica en America Latina. A estas alturas ya es necesario estudiar cuál ha sido el resultado de esa confrontación dialéctica, según el plan de este documento

5. *The practice of the integrative method in Scripture*

During the council at Jerusalem,¹⁰⁵ the believers gathered to resolve the fundamental theological matter of salvation by works, or by faith alone. Chapter 15 of the book of Acts served as a model for the church to employ an interpretation that includes the four basic elements of the integrative method: (1) The leading of the Holy Spirit, (2) the authority of Scripture, (3) the historical testimony of tradition, and (4) the consensus of the community of faith. That meeting resulted in the decision of the council as a corporal, integral response to the matter of whether or not Gentiles could be admitted with full communion in the church. As a result, James could declare with reliability “it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us” (v. 28). The participants of the council at Jerusalem were certain of the direction and the authority of the Holy Spirit in their decisions. This is what also determines the central activity of the Holy Spirit in the hermeneutical task and all of the church life in general.

During that meeting, the council appealed to the centrality of the Scriptures, the leading of the Holy Spirit in the experience of the faith, the testimony of tradition and the history of the people of God, as well as the reasoned consensus of the community of believers. James declared with full certainty that the Scriptures were in agreement with the missionary report and the argument by Peter, and that all the prophets, in particular Amos, included the Gentiles in the family of the church in accordance with God’s eternal purpose (vv. 14-18: cf. Amos 9:11-12).

For their part, Paul and Barnabas also presented a field report and related the missionary experience in preaching the

¹⁰⁵ Otra obra clásica muy utilizada por la comunidad evangélica ha sido el libro de Arnold B. Rhodes, *The Mighty Acts of God* (Louisville, KY: Geneva Press, 2000), 318-319. Es muy interesante la presentación que hace sobre el Concilio de Jerusalén, según Hechos 15.

gospel among the Gentiles (v.12). Peter reminded the members of the council about his calling to preach to the Gentiles, particularly with regard to what happened with he visited Cornelius and his friends (vv. 7-11). It should also be noted here that James also appealed and made use of traditional testimony when he asked the Gentiles to at least observe four prohibitions from the law (vv. 20-21; cf. Lev. 17:8, 10-12, 13; 18:6-23). Peter added that the Gentiles should be accepted into the church as a result of sanctification by faith and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that they had also experienced (vv 8-11). James then argued on the basis of the law and tradition that the Gentiles should not be required to undergo the practice of circumcision (vv. 13-21). It is obvious that under the direction of the Holy Spirit the council came to an agreement with was a positive resolution for the church.

It is clear that the method that worked in Scripture was integrative. It included the Word of God with the direction of the Holy Spirit, the testimony of history and tradition and the confirmation by the community of faith. This same integrative method of interpretation can be applied today in all Christian communities, particularly in the Hispanic, where said methodology could function adequately and serve as a bridge for the diversity of theological positions among Hispanics.

6. The integrative method in practice

Practical examples of the integrative method of interpretation can be seen regularly in a great number of contemporary churches. In general, every matter, be it doctrinal, spiritual, ethical or of a congregational nature, is submitted, through prayer under the leading of the Holy Spirit, first of all to the examining authority of the Word. This is followed by consultation with the elders

of the church to ensure that the interpretation of the Scripture, and the statutes — doctrine, regulations, tradition — are observed in the practical life of the church, that everything is in its place and in order.¹⁰⁶ This helps to maintain a healthy balance in all of the areas, be they spiritual, organizational, ethical, social, or simply matters that have to do with good communication.

In difficult cases, the believers generally seek the leading of the Holy Spirit before proceeding. This action creates a spiritual awareness that is manifested in a spirit of reverence and humility. Then the matter is studied in the light of the Word of God to see if it is any way confirmed or contrary to Scriptural principles. In both steps there is a seeking for wisdom and the admonition of those that preside over the congregation. These determine if the judgment is correct or incorrect, if it contradicts or not the spiritual, biblical and ecclesial order. Each congregation has its base in the denominational statutes that have been established in order to maintain order in the church. In some cases, it is necessary to resort to a historical investigation or prior antecedents to see how the matter, or similar situations, was best handled by previous generations. This dynamic allows for the matter to be handled correctly and consistently so that in the end all involved parties are satisfied with the congregational decisions. This method is integrative because it involves all the necessary agents that contribute to complete and balance interpretation.

As a matter of clarification, this integrative method in reality is not new in the practical life of the church. It has been

106 Carolina Rivera Farfán and Elizabeth Juárez Cerdi, eds., *Más Allá del Espíritu: Actores, Acciones y Prácticas en Iglesias Pentecostales* (México, DF: CIESAS, 2007), 165. This work emphasizes the internal and social changes between the Protestant and Pentecostal movements in Latin America. Within that framework there is a Catholic hermeneutical base that serves as a foundation for biblical interpretation of contemporary currents within both movements.

practiced empirically, especially in those ecclesiastic circles in which biblical interpretation has not been so strict or rigorous. So this methodological concept is not new. What I have done here, rather, is to organize methodologically what has been in practice from a long time ago. For example, the Pentecostal interpreters of the 20th century introduced formally the pneumatic method into the field of hermeneutics. From that platform, the pneumatic method became the most useful tool of contemporary churches for the interpretation of the Scriptures. Nonetheless, they failed to take into account the value of the testimony offered through historic precedents of interpretation and the traditions historically observed by the people of God. To compensate for this deficiency, some contemporary interpreters, in addition to using the pneumatic method, have relied on the inductive method for their preaching. They have also used, empirically, the resources of history and tradition to confirm the certainty of their interpretations. This is how the need has arisen for the integrative method which is necessary to justify the adequate use of all the agents that form part of a responsible treatment of the biblical text.

CHAPTER 10

And the Word became flesh: Homiletics and Evangelical Preaching in Hispanic Churches Dr. Pablo A. Jiménez

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1.14 (NKJV)

The Word became Latino

The miracle of incarnation is the fundamental event of the Christian faith.

The main point of our faith is that God, motivated by his immense love for the world and toward humanity, became flesh and dwelt among us (see John 3.16). But even more, the affirmation that God identified himself so much with sinful mankind that he chose to reveal himself through the historical person of Jesus Christ is the most scandalous declaration of Christian theology. It is so scandalous that it prompted the

religious leaders of Jesus' time to persecute, not only the Galilean Teacher, but also the people that followed him, accusing them of blasphemy.

The incarnation scandal becomes part of the cross scandal, in which Jesus, the Son of God, is subjected to the cruelest of all deaths. The innocent par excellence is tried by summary justice and is executed by the foreign occupying army, in spite of having committed no crime whatsoever. Whereas the religious leaders accused him of blasphemy, the political leaders accused him of sedition.

These theological declarations have serious sociological consequences. Why? Because both the miracle of the incarnation and the historical reality of the cross teach us that the gospel has a very close connection to culture and history.

Galatians 4.1 to 7 (NKJV) is one of the biblical passages that reinforce said relationship between the gospel and culture. The text says:

Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born[a] of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of[b] God through Christ.

When we read carefully this biblical passage, several points call attention to this theological affirmation. The first thing that comes to mind is the phrase “fullness of time”. This confirms that God fulfilled the promise of sending a Messiah to save mankind. The birth of Jesus marks the fulfillment of that promise in the *kairós*, that is, at the proper time, or the opportune moment in history. This phrase reveals the apocalyptic tone of Pauline theology. Jesus was born in “the fullness of time” which marks the end of the old malignant era and ushers in a new way of relating to God (see Galatians 1.3-5), turning into reality the long-awaited promise.

Second, Jesus is born of a woman. This declaration has several theological implications. On the one hand, the text reaffirms the complete humanity of Jesus. He that was born of a woman is 100% human. Jesus wasn't some kind of ghost or disembodied spirit, but rather a human being that could identify fully with our passions, our struggles and our needs. Jesus, therefore, is 100% man and 100% God.

On the other hand, the text emphasizes the importance of culture. Jesus was born of a Jewish woman, which in the first century made him a Jewish man. The text illustrates this point by saying that Jesus was “born^{of} of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law.” That is, Jesus was a Jewish man whose ministry was first of all to seek for the redemption of the Jewish people, who were also under the Law.

Third, through the work of the Son, people that form specific cultures now have the opportunity to become adopted as sons and daughters of God. The Spirit of the Son, who is the Holy Spirit of God, transforms the human heart and causes it to cry out: “¡Abba, Father!” In this way those with faith can

become adopted as children of God. Nevertheless, it remains clear the the individual leaves his own culture, but from it establishes a relationship with God.

In fourth place, we find the theme of the liberation of mankind through the filial relationship the gospel establishes with God. The text describes the human condition as slavery to the “elements of the world”, that is the spiritual forces of evil. This statement is similar to that found in Ephesians 6.12 that states: “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”

The importance of this biblical passage with regard to the art of Christian preaching is evident. It states that the evangelical message is incarnated in our cultures for the purpose of liberating people from sin and its consequences, leading to a relationship with God. Seen from a Hispanic and Latino perspective, we can state that the evangelical message is incarnated in our bicultural and bilingual culture for the purpose of liberating the Hispanic community from the effects and consequences of sin that enslave us to the spiritual forces of evil.

I would like to stress that the expression gospel in our — Spanish, English “Spanglish”— is much more than just the semantic aspect. Language is the expression of a culture, that becomes the context in which the gospel is received, is practiced and is live out. As such, all who want to do theology in a pertinent and responsible fashion are obligated to study their respective cultures. The study of culture requires the use of investigative tools. These tools for analysis make possible the elaboration of new theological perspectives known as “mediations”.

Clodovis Boff states that theology employs three primary mediations: socio-analytic, which considers the world from the point of view of the people served as the starting point for our theology; hermeneutics, which searches for answers to the pain of the people in the Holy Scriptures; and the application, which seeks to discover, propose and implement effective strategies to improve the oppressive state in which the people live. These strategies allow for a better understanding of the conditions, looking for the causes of the oppression and the changes that will lead the people out of it.

It is imperative, therefore, that those interested in doing theology from and for the Hispanic contest study our culture, our history and our actual socio-economic condition. Thus we will be able to do theology that is incarnational and promotes liberation of the Latino people.

Community and theology in our context

How many people with Hispanic background live in our context? In the United States, in accordance with the 2012 National Census Bureau, the Hispanic population was approximately 53 million, the equivalent of 17% of the entire population. Of course, this not include those undocumented individuals that have refused to respond to census workers out of fear of deportation.

The above number also excludes the population of Puerto Rico, which is counted separately. In accordance with the Census statistics for 2010, the population of Puerto Rico is approximately 4 million (3,979,000) people. In Canada, the number of “Canadian Latinos” was estimated to be 381,280 in 2011, representing 1.2% of the population. We can therefore con-

clude that in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico, there are more than 57 million people of Hispanic or Latino origin.

Focusing on the United States, the Census Bureau estimates that one fourth of the Latino population lives under the poverty level (13.24 million). Unfortunately, the greatest poverty is among women, affecting 27% of women and 23% of men. A subject related to poverty is immigration. The Department of Homeland Security estimates that in January 2012 there were 11.4 million undocumented persons in the United States, of which 9.6% were of Hispanic or Latinos origin. It is possible to infer that the vast majority of those without documents to work legally in the country live in poverty, which increases the number of poor Latinos to over 20 million.

I believe that these brief observations are sufficiently significant to support the fact that a large number of Hispanics in the United States live in indefensible conditions of poverty. To this we can add the dimension of racism, which allows the dominant Anglo-European community to legitimize its position of power and privilege over other ethnic-racial groups in general, and over the Hispanic or Latinos community in particular.

All of this leads me to reiterate a phrase that I have quoted in my other writings. I refer to the statement by José David Rodríguez, Puerto Rican theologian and professor of systematic theology who wrote:

...our theology, as a result of a difficult encounter between the Word of God and the marginalized experience in our communities, will necessarily be a reflection of the marginality to which that expe-

rience is encountered in the context of the social structure.

With this convincing statement, Rodríguez proposes a hermeneutical model with a starting point from the conditions in which the Latino people live in the United States. He believes that our theological thinking should be based on the conditions of the Hispanic community, taking into account both the religious experience as well as the state of marginalization.

The problem, then, is that the Hispanic community is incredibly diverse, including people that can trace their ancestry to a number of Latin American countries, and even the native population that occupied what is today considered U. S. territory in the time of the Spanish colonization. In addition, in the Latin community we find people with Spanish, indigenous, African and even Asian backgrounds. For example, I remember visiting a church in Riverside, California, comprised of indigenous people from Guatemala in which the service was conducted in the original language: Mayan. Likewise, I remember a seminary student whose father was Korean, but he considered himself Latino because his mother was from the Dominican Republic.

All of this points to an historic situation that has only recently been taken seriously in theological considerations: colonialism. As we know, the Christian faith arrived in the Americas at the hand of European colonial powers. In time, the United States challenged the European hegemony when President James Monroe established the political doctrine that carries his name. The "Monroe Doctrine", first enunciated in 1823, stated that the United States would no longer tolerate European nations establishing more colonies in the Americas nor interven-

ing in political matters of the established colonies. The United States declared itself to be “defender” of America’s “back yard” countries. With this warning, the United States declared its interest in becoming the hegemonic power in the continent.

The modern history of Latin American countries, particularly Central American and the Caribbean, has been marked by diplomatic as well as military interventions by the United States. In the case of Mexico, history records several wars with the United States, resulting in loss of a great part of their national territory. In the case of Cuba, history records how thousands of people left Florida when that Spanish territory passed to U.S. hands in 1819, only to see many of their descendants return to Florida 140 years later after escaping the Fidel Castro regime. And, in the case of Puerto Rico, history tells of the arrival of the U.S. Army in 1898, establishing a new political reality that continues to this day.

The colonial and neocolonial experience has given way to a postcolonial one in which the Hispanic and Latino community lives. In part, that condition is characterized by the growth of minority communities that trace their roots to colonial times, in the old cities. It is not just the number of persons in these minority groups that is growing, but also the influence on culture in general. As a consequence, we live in an era of social investments where the peoples colonized by the Europeans and the Americans are “invading the invader”, to quote the convincing description made by the late Puerto Rican political scientist Juan Manuel García-Passalacqua.

This inverted situation is taking place in Europe as well as in the US. The difference is that while in places like France and England it is the Muslim communities that are increasing,

in the US is the Hispanic or Latino community, particularly of Mexican, Puerto Rican and Central American origin.

The post-colonial situation in the US creates both opportunities and dangers for our people. Opportunities, because industry, the government and organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, increasingly need bi-lingual persons to assist the growing population of Latin American origin. Dangers, because the growth of our community increases fear and provokes conflicts in people in the dominant group that see us as a threat to their lifestyle. Of course, what is really feared is the loss of power and privilege that has been given them by forming part of the ascendant Anglo-European community that has enjoyed hegemony since the time when the US was a British colony.

This post-colonial condition directly affects how people of faith do theology. Our context determines how we see life, how we interpret the Holy Scriptures, and even how we worship God. In the case of the Hispanic community, the new post-colonial context challenges the theological views we received through the evangelization of the colonial times, which in addition to communicating the gospel, also aimed to “civilize” us. It is thus necessary on occasions to “deconstruct” theological concepts that advance colonial positions, in order to develop new pastoral practices.

As an example, in Puerto Rico in the 1930s a bitter controversy erupted between the national body of ministers and the American missionary leadership of my denomination. The missionaries stated that the Caribbean instruments and rhythm were not suitable for worship because they were “worldly”. After thirty years of evangelization, several Puerto Ricans had begun to write original hymns, using our music.

This was unacceptable to the missionaries, who believed the organ was the appropriate instrument for worship. For them, the use of guitars and percussion instruments was unworthy. After about five years, the missionaries were forced to give in, allowing stringed instruments like the guitar and “danceable” rhythms such as the “pasodoble” and the “vals”. Of interest is that it wasn’t until some 50 years after that experience that the Afro-Cuban music known as “salsa” began to be seen as an alternative worship style for churches that serve communities with a Caribbean background. In many ways, our community continues to battle with the colonial theology and pastoral practices bequeathed to us by the missionaries.

Jesus Christ in Hispanic preaching

The great cultural and theological diversity that we find in the Hispanic or Latino churches presents a great challenge for preaching. When a man or woman of faith stands in front of a Latinos congregation to preach the gospel, the audience is generally comprised of people from various nationalities. It is common to have twelve or more countries represented, even in those congregations that are primarily of Mexicans, Puerto Ricans or Central Americans. The cultural diversity increases each day, even in Puerto Rico where the majority of the population is Puerto Rican. For example, in my own church we have members from six Spanish-speaking countries, not counting those of who us that were born in the US.

In cultural terms, the Latin community in the US is forming a new identity, uniting people of different backgrounds to form a different community. I know a couple in which the husband is Puerto Rican, raised in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the wife is Peruvian, raised in the south of the US. The chil-

dren have lived a total of five years in Mexico and in Puerto Rico, where this brother moved to fulfill work commitments. Today, this family lives in the Midwest of the US. How would we describe this family? Are they Puerto Ricans, Peruvian, or Mexican? In reality, the family is Latino, since in their manner of speech, how they prepare their meals and other values that characterize lives are a combination of elements from each of the cultures they have encountered over the past years.

This situation requires that those who preach with a sense of responsibility in our churches seek ways to reach the entire congregation with their message. They cannot speak as if the whole world is composed of the same ethnic group, given that they might surely say some word that to some of other backgrounds would be vulgarity, offensive or otherwise not understood. The sermons should make reference to historical events, traditions and writings from the different countries represented by the congregation. In the worship, music should be included from all over Latin America. On special days, such Mothers' Day, it should be noted that not all countries celebrate that particular event on the same calendar date as in the US.

As Protestants, our preaching should center on the person and on the work of Christ Jesus, our Lord. Now the, the Christ that is preached from the Hispanic pulpits is not only the Savior of mankind; he is also the dark-skinned Jesus that lived as a foreigner in his own country, given that the colonial situation in Judea condemned him to live as a second-class citizen. This Jesus, excluded by the powerful, was unjustly condemned and executed in a vile manner by the army of the foreign occupiers. His death demonstrated the redemptive power of suffer-

ing and his resurrection sealed the victory of the forces of life over the powers of evil, over sin and over death. As a result, the Hispanic people see the Galilean as a paradigm of God's faithfulness, of survival and hope that encourages everyone with a Hispanic background to continue struggling for life.

A number of people committed to the study of theology have tried to express this particular vision of Jesus in terms understandable to Hispanic people. The pioneer in this field was Virgilio Elizondo, a Mexican-American Catholic author raised near San Antonio, Texas. Elizondo employed the region of Galilee as a theological paradigm, given that the region was seen with disgust by the Jewish. Due the geographical location, the Galilean people were always suspected of having relationships with foreigners in a world in which biculturalism and inter-marriage were viewed as manifestations of evil, given that it violated the laws and customs that protected the people's rites of purity. Elizondo, thus, viewed Jesus as a Galilean "mestizo", outcast by both of the dominant cultures in which he lived: the Jewish culture of Jerusalem, and the Greco-Roman culture of those the live in the Decápolis, that is, in one of the ten Galilean cities in which only Roman citizens could lived, particularly, army veterans.

Elizondo, reading the Scriptures from his social context, saw Jesus as a "mestizo" who lived between two peoples, between two cultures, just as the Mexican-American people in Texas. This "mestizo" Jesus understood the Hispanic people, seen with contempt by the Americans of Anglo-European ancestry. The Galilean knew, personally, the "mestizo" experience, of being bicultural and bilingual. That is why he identified with those that suffer the hurt of rejection, not only by

the American culture, but also by the culture of our respective countries of origin. Jesus knew what it meant to be, in a permanent way, “the other.”

In conclusion, Virgilio Elizondo understood that the Latino people share the experience of oppression and marginalization similar to that described in the Bible with regard to the region of Galilee. As such, Elizondo found the hermeneutical key for Hispanic theology in the US in the concept of “marginality” and what it means to be “mestizo”.

Orlando E. Costas, Puerto Rican Protestant author, also used the Galilee image a key point in his theological thinking. In particular, Costas wrote various articles relating the Galilee experience to the Hispanic experience of marginalization. In this way, if we can understand the key concept for understanding Elizondo is “mestizo-ness”, the key word for understanding Costas would be “periphery”. Unfortunately, Costas died at a relatively young age, which did not allow him to reach his full potential as a Hispanic theologian.

Nevertheless, Justo L. González, Methodist author of Cuban ancestry who lived for a number of years in Puerto Rico, filled that void, becoming the key figure in Hispanic theology with a Protestant perspective. Starting from a new way to read and interpret the Bible from a Hispanic context, González developed a coherent theological thought that also took as a starting point the harsh reality of marginalization suffered by the Latino community. The theological views of these authors take into serious account the marginality and oppression that Jesus of Nazareth, as a Galilean, faced with regard to both the Roman and Jewish political-religious structures of his day.

Now then, this effort to attempt to continue to understand Jesus from the Hispanic and Latino context continues. Perhaps one of the most radical proposals is the one by Loida Martell-Otero, Baptist theologian of Puerto Rican origin, raised in New York, in which she uses the word “sato” —a term used in Puerto Rico to describe abandoned street dogs— to describe Jesus. Although some may find the term irreverent, there is no doubt that it graphically describes, even shockingly, the marginality of Jesus, thus establishing a correlation between our situation of marginality as Hispanic persons in the United States.

The diversity of Latino preaching

I should point out that not all Hispanics that preach use in their sermons the theological categories indicated in the previous section. This is due to two main reasons. On the one hand, a great number of our preachers have little of no formal theological studies, or they studied in programs that do not require reading of theologians that write from a Latino perspective. My experience confirms this fact, since when I served as an executive for the office of Hispanic ministries of my denomination, over half of our pastors lacked a formal theological education. Added to this, some persons have studied in institutes and Bible colleges that focus on the positions and writings by those within their own denomination. For this reason, there are preachers that are not aware of, nor utilize Hispanic theological perspectives on which to base their preaching and teaching.

On the other hand, it is undeniable that many Latino preachers have adopted positions similar to those outlined in the writings of Elizondo, Costas, González and Martell-Otero, among others. They do so instinctively, because the reading of the Bible from their context leads them to see Jesus as the ex-

cluded mestizo, or the marginalized immigrant that struggles to exist in the midst of the shock of two cultures. Personally, I have seen how ministers with no formal theological training present Jesus as the traveling companion on the road of the Hispanic community, particularly when they treat subjects such as immigration in their sermons.

All of this leads us to consider the vast theological variety in the Hispanic pulpit. This variety is due to a whole series of factors, such as denominational background, theological perspective, gender, and the level of studies of the preacher.

In the first place, our denominational traditions mold our preaching. For example, a sermon in an Episcopal or Lutheran church would tend to be a relatively brief meditation on the readings of the Revised Common Lectionary as suggested for each Sunday, in particular, the reading from the Gospels. These sermons tend to reinforce the theological content and ethical implications of the text for the congregation, in a time frame that rarely surpasses 15 to 20 minutes.

On the other hand, a sermon in the Pentecostal tradition is an exposition of the Holy Scriptures based on passages that the pastor selects after a time of personal prayer. This sermon tends to be long, as the preacher can expound for 30, 40 or even 60 minutes. To this we should add the altar call that gives an opportunity for the audience to respond to the message, thus receiving ministrations from the preacher or other church leaders through prayer by imposition of hands and even anointing with oil. The time given for preaching and ministrations in a Pentecostal church can be longer than the time given to worship, preaching and celebration of the Eucharist in an Episcopal church.

The second factor that explained the large theological diversity in the Latino pulpit is the theological perspective of the person that is preaching. Although the denominational traditions have a direct impact on this point, the fact remains that each person has their own person vision of the faith. Depending on the theological rigor of the denomination, we can expect that the church traditions would have a direct impact on the preacher's personal theology.

For example, it would be normal for a Nazarene pastor to preach from a Wesleyan, Arminian perspective, whereas a Presbyterian pastor would preach from a Reformed, Calvinistic perspective. Nevertheless, other denominations afford their ministers the freedom to choose their own theological perspectives. That is my case, since the Disciples of Christ movement understand that the New Testament is our confession of faith and that each believer has the responsibility of studying it to reach their own conclusions, as long as they remain faithful to the traditional doctrines, such as the existence of God, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the work of Christ, etc. It is therefore possible for a Disciples of Christ pastor to preach from an Arminian point of view while at the same time another pastor from the same movement preaches from a Reformed perspective.

This explains why we find such dissimilar sermons in the Latino pulpit. We hear sermons from Lutheran, Wesleyan, Calvinist, Pentecostal or neo-Pentecostal perspectives. Some sermons are conservative, and others are liberal. Some include Hispanic or Latino theological perspectives, while others only present the traditional or denominational theological vision with which the preacher has identified.

This leads us to the third point, which is the gender of the person preaching. Listening to a male preacher is different than

listening to a female preacher, given that gender is one of the factors that define our place in society. Reading the Bible through the eyes of a woman is quite different from reading it with a masculine perspective.

I still remember the first time I heard a woman preacher expounding in a sermon about the daughter of Jairus and the women healed from a bleeding issue (Mark 5.21-42). As a woman, the preacher had a much greater “point of contact” with the text than I could have. Her exposition was so effective that it seemed to me as if I was hearing this passage for the first time. Although I had preached on that same biblical passage previously, I felt ignorant. While I had meditated on an experience foreign to me, the woman preacher could speak with an authority by virtue of being a woman.

In fourth place, much like gender, age is a determining factor of our place in society. Depending on our age, we form part of one generation or another, understanding that each generation has a similar world-view. There has been a plethora of writings with regard to the great differences that exist between the generational groups of our society.

In order to illustrate, we can compare four generations. The Silent Generation includes people born between 1931 and 1944. These persons experienced the effects of the Second World War and the Korean Conflict in their childhood and youth. That is why they tend to be conservative, saving for future financial situations, as well as thinking along the Modern lines. They are characterized by a sense of responsibility and their willingness to sacrifice on behalf of others, which they express through the establishment and running of institutions. In general terms, they do not use electronic gadgets

and are not connected to social networks. A pastor of 70 years of age or more would fit into this generation.

The generation known as “Baby Boomers” were born between 1945 and 1965. Those that form a part of this group were born in times of relative prosperity, but were marked by the Vietnam conflict, the sexual revolution and by the struggle for civil rights. Many of these were raised in the Church, but left in early adulthood, which is why their children were raised far from the faith. It is a quite individualistic generation whose way of thinking tends toward modernity.

This generation is followed Generation X, that includes those born between 1966 and 1981. These persons grew up in homes shattered by divorce. Many grew up outside the Church, given that their parents had abandoned the faith. They tend to be a little more conservative than their parents. They also tend to be post-modern, although they were educated more along modern lines. They tend to make use of technology, though most are not proficient in its use.

For their part, the Millennium Generation, also known as Generation Y, includes those born between 1982 and 2000. They were born into a technological world in which communication is immediate and constant. As they are “natives” with regard to technology, they communicate through computers, electronic tablets and smart phones. They say I “spoke with so-and-so” to refer to conversations that may be face-to-face, or via telephone, video-conference, e-mail and text messages, since there is no distinction between what is virtual and what is “real”. They do not believe in institutions and reject authoritarian attitudes. Their thinking tends to be post-modern. If they were raised in the United States, their first language could be English.

It is evident that the preaching by Latino ministers of different generations is quite different. The way they see topics such as marriage, divorce and sexuality varies enormously, more due to the generation to which they belong than to biblical and theological foundation.

In fifth and final place, the level of theological education reached also explains the vast differences that can occur in the sermons that are preached from the Latino pulpit. A person that has obtained a Masters in Divinity (M.Div.), a Doctorate of Ministry (D.Min.) or a Doctorate in Philosophy (PhD) will preach in a much different way than one who has no formal theological education or has only studied in a program that offers only a Diploma in Pastoral Studies. Those who have studied in advanced programs should know and apply the homiletic theory of the New School of American Homiletics, based on the writings of Fred B. Craddock, Eugene Lowry, David Buttrick, Tom Long, Ronald J. Allen, Jana Childers y Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, among others.

The element that marks the difference is the sermon design. In the Latin American pulpit the traditional deductive sermon has been the rule, handed down through the British Rationalist School of Homiletics through the writings of Charles H. Spurgeon, John A. Broadus y James D. Crane. This homiletic style sees the sermon as a rational discourse through which whoever is preaching intends to persuade the audience to make a decision for Christ. It is a fixed style in which the sermon begins with an introduction that gives way to the presentation of the theme, one that should be clearly stated as the expression of theological truth central to the discourse. A brief transition gives way to the body of the sermon where the main ideas are presented as "points" and are developed through sub-points organized in accordance with rhetorical methods, such as narrative, interroga-

tive, exemplification, etc. The traditional approach is to present three points or main ideas that branch off the theological truth presented at the beginning of the sermon. All this leads to the conclusion, where the theme or central truth of the sermon is reiterated, illustrated through an anecdote or a poem. At this time, the preacher can make a call to the altar, go on to celebrate Holy Communion, or conclude the service.

This type of sermon is called “deductive” for the logic that is utilized in presenting the arguments. Given that the “central truth” is presented in the introduction, the rest of the sermon comes to be an exposition, explication or application of said truth. It is also known as “traditional” because it is a preaching style that has been used since the age of the illustration, or illumination, to communicate the gospel message.

The problem is that this type of sermon is organized in accordance with the modern models. That is, it is assumed that the person preaching is an expert on the subject and has authority to present the sermon, authority that the audience accepts without question. It is also assumed that there is only one truth, that the preacher knows that truth and that each biblical text has only one correct interpretation. As such, the traditional deductive sermon has an authoritarian flavor, since it is a monolog presented by someone before a congregation that should accept the message as “God’s Word”.

Perhaps the main fault with the traditional deductive sermon is that the form taken by the biblical text is discarded. No matter what the style or literary structure of the biblical passage that serves as the basis for the sermon, the preacher that employs this style has to present the message in the same way: introduction, statement of theme, body of the message divided

in points and sub-points, and conclusion. I repeat, it does not matter if our starting point is an episode in the history of Israel, a Psalm, a prophetic text, a parable, a story of miracles, a portion of an Epistle or an Apocalyptic passage, the traditional deductive sermon wants us to extract the “message” from the text to empty it into the homiletic mold of three points and a poem.

It is evident in my opinion, therefore, that the traditional deductive sermon has serious defects as a homiletic model, particularly in these post-modern days in which the Millennium Generation is rejecting authoritarian postures. The new generations need whoever is preaching present him or herself as a person of deep faith, constantly seeking God. Young people that think in terms of post-modern values listen attentively to those who present their sermons as testimonies of faith, but not to those that present themselves as “experts” that need to be followed blindly.

In a recent study, I published three questionnaires on the Internet. The first two were directed to preachers in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. The questionnaire in Spanish received 100 responses and the one in English, 52. The third questionnaire, directed to preachers in the rest of Latin America received 50 responses.

Although these were not scientific probes, the questionnaires validated my suspicions, since they showed that nearly half of those that responded indicated that they preach in the traditional deductive style, or worse yet, that they had no defined preaching style. In effect, 36.36% of the responders to the questionnaire regarding Hispanic preaching indicated they preach in the traditional style; 17.17% stated they had no defined preaching style. In the English questionnaire, the

responses were 38.46% and 13.46%. In the Latin American questionnaire, the responses were 38% and 14%. If we add both categories, the combined results to the first questionnaire would be 53.5%, 51.92% in the second and 52% in the third. I hope to publish an analysis of these results at an opportune time, given that the answers to the other questions also reveal important information regarding our preaching.

Fortunately, the most effective persons in the pulpit have always known how to overcome the defects of this model, identifying with the faith experiences of the church members. They have also known how to temper the design of this kind of sermon, peppering the sermons with stories that move the audience. I believe, however, that it is time to search for more effective models for presenting the gospel message.

This leads me once again to consider the New School of American Homiletics. Fred B. Craddock established a milestone/a new framework in the history of this discipline when he called for a change from the deductive model to an inductive one. That is, Craddock pointed out the defects with the traditional preaching style and proposed a different style, one in which the preacher presents him or herself as a believer in search of divine truth. That is why Craddock inverts the logic of the sermon, adopting the “inductive” style. Rather than beginning by stating the central idea of the sermon, the preacher begins by identifying with the listener. Instead of presenting oneself as an authority figure to be obeyed, the preacher reveals him or herself to be a person of faith seeking to establish a relationship with God and to grow in the faith of Jesus Christ. In place of a monolog, dialogue elements are employed as a means to establish a conversation with the audience.

In practical terms, the introduction to an inductive sermon begins by appealing to the experiences of the listeners, signaling a problem, dilemma or source of conflict that calls their attention. The body of the sermon explores that problem, incorporating an analysis of the biblical text as means to clarify the subject matter. As the sermon is being presented, the preacher refines the arguments until a theological or pastoral idea is found that responds to the stated problem and that will edify the audience. The central idea is presented at the end of the sermon body, or in the conclusion. The objective is for people listening to the sermon to make the journey of searching for truth together with the preacher, in such a way that at the conclusion they assent and accept the presented message. The goal, then, is that at the end of the sermon the audience can say “amen”.

In terms of design, the inductive sermon can be employed in a number of sermon formats to communicate the message. Following are my comments regarding some of these inductive sermon formats.

1. Follow the form of the sermon

The most effective is to follow the literary structure of the text that serves as the base for the message. For example, if we deliver a message of a Bible story, our sermon could follow the structure of a short story: background scene, plot, climax and outcome. If we are studying a Psalm of Lamentation, the sermon should take us from lament to worship, given that this is the main characteristic of this literary form. And if we are preaching a parable, our sermon should have a surprising ending that challenges our old way of thinking and invites us to adopt the values of the Kingdom of God.

2. Moves and structure

An interesting variation is to pay attention to the manner in which the text develops its argument. That is, being aware of the “movement” in the biblical passage, studying how each text “constructs” the argument. For example, if we study Romans 5.1 to 5, we find that verse 1 concludes the argument regarding the origin of justification by faith that began in chapter 3, verse 21, at the same time that it begins a new exposition on the results, or the fruit, of said justification. In verses 3 to 5 we find a stair-step argument that states:

Not only so, but we[c] also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Note that verse 2 also affirms that believers “boast in the hope”, thus creating a thematic link with verse 5. Thus, a sermon on this subject should take into account these literary strategies, particularly the “stair-step” in which one concept leads us to another, until we are led to the hope that does “not put us to shame” (verse 5).

3. The “Lowry loop”

Eugene Lowry developed a style that allows for narrative movement to any sermon, even to those that based on a narrative text. The homiletic form he developed is known as the “The Lowry Loop”, a phrase that I have translated in my Spanish writings as “El ojal de Lowry”, although others have called it “El enredo homilético” (the homiletic tangle). In any case, the form has five parts:

1. **Oops! (Upsetting the equilibrium):** This is the introduction to the sermon. The purpose is to present a problem, a challenge or a question that moves the “plot” of the sermon.
2. **Ugh! (Analyzing the discrepancy):** This part describes, presents or explores various options to resolve the problem, challenge or question.
3. **Aha! (Disclosing the clue to resolution):** In this section, the alternative is chosen that will be presented as the solution.
4. **Whee! (Experiencing the gospel):** The purpose of this section is present the biblical and theological bases of the sermon. This should be the most extensive part of the entire sermon.
5. **Yeah! (Anticipating the consequences):** This is the conclusion of the sermon. The purpose is the visualize the future in the light of the solution that has been presented.

4. Preaching in the Afro-American communities

As homiletics in the Anglo-European communities of the United States followed the British Rational patterns, preaching in the Afro-American communities had another tone. Preaching in the churches comprised of the descendants of slaves was primarily narrative, with a “transparent” hermeneutic, that is, with an immediate application to the community context. In the Afro-American mind-set, all the biblical heroes and heroines are seen as dark-skinned people that survived and overcame oppression. In a word, in this style of preaching it is a given that Jesus is black. The objective of the sermon in these oppressed communities is to encourage and give hope to people in the midst of life-strug-

gles. That is why the sermon ends with community celebration, accentuated by moving music, in place of a summary of the main ideas presented in the sermon. This style has had a direct impact on Latin American Pentecostalism, a subject that is in the ink well for another occasion.

It remains clear, therefore, that the Latino pulpit needs to be updated, exploring new homiletic styles. At the same time, we need to analyze preaching styles that are characteristic of our Hispanic communities, such as the sermon in which the preacher shares his or her “testimony”, that is, relating how he or she came to the faith. This has enriched our preaching, making it ever more pertinent.

Conclusion

Having established the diversity of the Latino pulpit, we need to ask what element unite evangelical preaching in the Hispanic communities. To answer this question, I go back to the only conversation I was able to have with Orlando E. Costas, with whom I shared a workshop as part of the activities conducive to an assembly of my denomination in Puerto Rico.

With trepidation, I asked Costas how he could combine the liberation theology that he presented in his writings with Protestant, evangelical values. With great confidence, he pointed out that theology needs to be contextual, which explains the emphasis in social analysis and the call for liberation. Nevertheless, he affirmed that Protestantism cannot forget the central ideas that were that basis for the Reformation, such as justification by faith, the universal priesthood of the believers and the authority of Scriptures, among others.

Echoing the words of Costas, I say that what defines our “evangelical” preaching is the faithfulness to the values of the Protestant Reformation, calling each believer to develop a per-

sonal relationship with God, through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. This faith in the evangelical view calls for us to grow in the faith, with the spiritual nourishment that comes from the study of the Holy Scriptures and active participation in community worship.

If we are going to be faithful to this evangelical faith, we must reject theological fads such as motivational speeches with very little biblical basis. One example of this “light” preaching is the so-called “Prosperity Theology”, also known as “Prosperity Gospel”, that uses “victory” as a recurrent theme and sees life as spiritual warfare.

Perhaps the most effective strategy we can employ is the action-reflection model, in which the believer reflects on the practice of his or her faith. The most effective way to evaluate our preaching is by listening or watching recordings of our sermons. This gives us an opportunity to analyze the content of the sermon in such a way that we can increase the impact and effectiveness of our meditations in the near future.

Unfortunately, not only in Latin America but also in Latino communities in the United States, we have a lot of preaching, but little homiletics. Let me explain: in the Spanish as well as the bi-lingual world dozens of thousands of sermons are preached every week. Nevertheless, there are very few Latin Americans that are experts, as such, in the homiletics field. The greater part of homiletics professors have not had the opportunity to produce enough writings that analyze the preaching styles in our churches. In part, this is due to the fact that the great majority of them teach part-time, forcing them to take on other paid work to support their families. This does not allow them enough time for investigation. Even in the United States, where colleges have sufficient funds to hire full-time instructors, the tendency is to contract those that teach courses for ethnic-racial groups on a

part-time basis. Consequently, the lack of instruction, theory, and homiletic analysis in the Spanish-speaking world is the result of lack of time, financial resources and publishing opportunities.

How can we respond to this situation? First, we need to demand of our theological institutions that persons with preaching specialties be hired and that time and space be given for research and publication.

Second, the Hispanic evangelical community in the United States should demand that theological institutions in their respective movements establish, support and broaden the programs for Latino students. This would be important for every area of study, but it would be of particular importance in the areas of practical theology and pastoral studies, in which culture is a determining factor when it comes to preaching, teaching, counseling, leading and even in the resolving of conflicts in Latino congregations. Taking these courses in English, with professors that do not understand our culture, would be a serious mistake.

Third, it is necessary to cultivate an action-reflection model, analyzing the theological quality and pastoral effectiveness of our sermons. In order to do this, it would be necessary to develop a collegial vision of preaching, participating in small groups in which a select group of colleagues can comment on our sermons with the express purpose of helping us be more effective in the pulpit.

In summary, in spite of the vast diversity that we find in the Latino communities, the evangelical branch of Protestantism has a long homiletic tradition that should be honored. While remaining firm to the central concepts of the Protestant Reformation, we need to renovate our preaching, making it more contextual, more relevant and more effective. So help us God.

PART 3
CHALLENGES



CHAPTER 11

The Bible and Hispanic Immigration

Dr. M. Daniel Carroll R.

Introduction

The history of humanity is the history of migration — the migration of individuals, families, communities, and people groups that leave their homeland because of war, natural disasters, persecution, or generally in search of a new life. In recent years, however, this perennial phenomenon is occurring on a scale never seen before. The United Nations estimates that over 230 million people are migrating worldwide, generating unprecedented social, economic, political, and cultural challenges for the sending and receiving countries (<http://esa.un.org/unmigration/wallchart2013.htm>).

Immigration into the United States has a long and complex history, and the patterns and numbers have varied from country to country (Zolberg). The influx of people from Latin America and the Caribbean, however, is part of broader story that has had an ebb and flow over the last two centuries. The beginning of Mexican migration, for example, is usually traced to the changes in the national borders, which came with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo of 1848 that ended the Mexican-American War and the Gadsden Purchase of 1854 (Rodríguez 2007; Carroll R. 2013d: 9-17). Since that time, emigration from Mexico has been determined in large

measure by the World Wars, diverse economic and political trends, and legislative developments. The chronicle of those who have come from that nation in particular is unique, even as it shares similarities with immigrants from other countries of the hemisphere. Today the Hispanic population in the United States totals over 54 million; immigrants, whether documented or unauthorized, comprise perhaps 20 million of this demographic (for statistics, see Pew Hispanic Center).

The purpose of this essay, however, is not to review Hispanic immigration history or to analyze statistics. Neither is it to survey and research the processes of adaptation of Hispanic immigrants into American society, their impact on diverse spheres of national life (sports, entertainment, education, politics, etc.), nor the growing role of Hispanics in the religious world of the United States. Some of these matters are dealt with in other essays in this volume. Instead, this chapter focuses on what light the Bible might shed on how Christian believers should understand and evaluate immigration. What follows is a brief summary of this teaching.

A Biblical Orientation to Immigration

The experience of exploring the Scripture to better comprehend the divine perspective on immigration depends in part on the identity of the reader (Ruiz 2011: 1-53; Carroll R. 2013a; cf. Nanko Fernández 2010). For both the reader from the majority culture and the immigrant community, this study can reveal an amazing amount of relevant biblical material. At the same time, the immigrant reader also should grasp how much God cares for those on the move. The Bible largely is a book about and for migrants! They can appreciate that *Dios está con ellos* [God is with them] and that *su Palabra los acom-*

pañã y guía en el camino [his Word accompanies them and guides them on the way].

1. The Old Testament Contribution

Establishing the Immigrant's Humanity

The most appropriate place to begin any discussion on immigration is Genesis. (Carroll R. 2013: 45-51). In chapter one, the text declares that every human being is made in the image of God (1:26-28). This is the divine starting point: every person has worth and the remarkable capacity "to subdue and rule" the earth. From a Christian perspective, this foundational truth shifts the focus of the debate from concentrating primarily on the immigrants' legal status to an appreciation of their humanity and potential.

The lesson to be learned by Christians of the majority culture is that immigrants matter in the sight of God and therefore are to be valued by them as well. Sometimes the short, ideologically driven sound-bites in the media reduce the complex issues of migration to abstract debates about documentation, statistics, the economy, or national security. While these and other pragmatic matters are important, what can be lost is an awareness of the hard choices that people make to leave their homes, the tragic human cost paid by so many on their journey to the United States, and the many unique difficulties they face once they arrive. What can also be ignored are the many contributions that immigrants have made, are making, and in the future will make to society. Giving the immigration debate a human face changes its tone and direction. It now can be about compassion and grace and about facilitating the realization of all of the potential for the common good (through constructive legislation, education, and employment).

For immigrants, the belief that they are made in the image of God should convince them that they indeed do have value. Even though becoming part of communities in this country is not easy, they cannot accept the message or the feeling that they are inferior to the majority culture in which they live. They have God-given abilities that need to be cultivated, not only for the sake of their own lives and that of their families, but also to benefit this society. The image of God is something that should empower them to become the persons they were created to be. It also is a reminder that they are to live responsibly as good stewards of that potential before God, as a testimony before the majority culture of their faith and their cultural heritage.

Connecting with Immigrant Stories

The Old Testament can contribute to the national debate through its narratives of God's people in other lands (Carroll R. 2013: 51-74). There are many experiences in these migrant stories with which Hispanic immigrants can identify; so much of what they experience today transcends time and geography. What is crucial to see is that the LORD is present and active in these diverse settings, each of which brings new understandings of God and of the mission of his people in the world.

The book of Genesis begins with the mandate to "fill the earth." In a sense, then, migration is part of the human DNA. That is, as humanity spreads across the globe they "fill it". This movement began quickly, albeit due to a series of divine judgments. Adam and Eve were forced to leave the garden (Gen. 3:23-24), Cain was sentenced to wander (4:12-14), and at the Tower of Babel people are scattered to diverse parts of the world (chapters 10-11).

Two other narratives in Genesis are particularly informative of the immigrant experience. The first concerns Abram. He and his extended family leave the region of Babylon, travel northwest to Haran, and subsequently descend to Canaan (11:31—12:5). Once in Canaan, Abram receives the promise of being a blessing to the other clans of the earth. The story begins well. As Abram and the others travel south, he builds altars and calls on the name of the LORD (12:6-9). But, a famine drives them to leave and seek food in Egypt. What is striking is that the patriarch devises a plan to lie to the Egyptians so that they might gain entry (12:10-20; cf. 20:12). The decision to claim that Sarai as his sister is motivated in part by Abram's fears about what might happen to him should the Pharaoh want to take Sarai for himself. It also put Sarai at great risk, something she apparently was willing to do so that they could eat and survive. Culturally, this maneuver also bought time for the couple, since the custom of the day was that in the absence of the father of a woman, anyone seeking her hand in marriage would have to ask permission from her brother. By saying that he is that brother, Abram was protecting himself and her at the same time. The scheme worked, but eventually Pharaoh was made aware that Abram and Sarai were man and wife. This story presents a key lesson: needy people are willing to take extreme measures to survive! Desperate circumstances can lead to drastic measures that involve dangerous journeys, daring risk-taking, questionable decisions, and moral compromises (e.g., Hagan 2008; de la Torre 2009; Rose 2012; Martínez 2013; Adams et al 2013).

A second account in Genesis that resonates with the immigrant experience is the life of Joseph (chapters 37-50). Joseph was sold by his brothers to a passing caravan of Ish-

maelites headed for Egypt. Through a series of events in Potiphar's household, and later in prison, he emerged as second in command in Egypt. At that point, Joseph was very much integrated into that society: he was given an Egyptian name and an Egyptian wife (Gen. 41:45), and most certainly he understood Egyptian customs and spoke the language well in order to carry out his political duties. But the text also makes clear that Joseph does not forget his origins. To begin with, he bestows Israelite names to his two sons: Manasseh and Ephraim (41:51-52). When his brothers arrived in Egypt to buy food because of the famine in the land, Joseph still spoke his mother tongue (although he used the ruse of an interpreter, 42:23). Unashamed, he introduced his father Jacob to Pharaoh, though the Egyptians despised shepherds (47:1-12), and toward the end of his life asked for his bones to be taken back to Canaan at his death (50:24-26). In sum, Joseph never abandoned his cultural, linguistic, and ethnic roots or repudiated his family ties.

The same is true today for many Hispanic immigrants. They maintain connections to their homeland like Joseph did (and one could add others, such as foods, sports teams, family celebrations), living a bicultural experience that the social sciences label "transnationalism" (Levitt 2007). Immigrant communities have always maintained some form of ties to their country of origin, but in the twenty-first century this is possible to a degree never seen before, through communication that technology and the social media have made available. It enables immigrants —especially the first generation— to sustain diverse roots and commitments in two cultures. In so doing, they enrich both.

Hispanic immigrants bring new elements to the majority culture in the United States, even as they transmit fresh ideas, funds, and much more to their places of origin. While the majority culture might see this infusion via another culture and language as a threat to what it perceives as the “natural order of things,” the intercultural dynamic actually is a creative (although occasionally uncomfortable!) engagement that will produce a new and vibrant hybrid. This process of cultural transformation has been a constant reality in the United States with every successive wave of immigration.

The first several chapters of the book of Exodus also are informative. The narrative relates that the astounding increase in the Israelite population frightened the Egyptians (Exod. 1:7-10). Their initial response was to try to curb that growth by cruel oppression (1:11-14), and then it was ordered that all newborn males were to be killed (1:15-22). Later, Pharaoh mandated that work of the Israelites be made more difficult. They were to procure their own straw that was needed to make bricks, even as their daily quota of bricks remained the same (5:4-21). Ironically, this directive made no economic sense. Egypt needed the bricks and Israelite labor to construct Egyptian buildings! Not only were the building materials potentially compromised if the bricks were not up to standard, the labor force was made less effective and the nation’s projects put in jeopardy. In the midst of the Israelites’ painful suffering, the LORD heard the cries of his people and remembered his commitment to them (2:23-25). Distance from their homeland did not mean abandonment by God.

The Egyptians’ worry over the presence of foreigners was a natural, perhaps even common, nativist response. “Nativism”

is the dread of being taken over by outsiders or the anxiety that they will change the social fabric. These emotions find concrete expression in socioeconomic and political measures that are designed to impose controls on “strangers.” These reactions have characterized certain periods of immigration history not only in the United States, but also in most countries of the world. Accordingly, it is not surprising that many are voicing concern at the increase in the Hispanic demographic. Several states have passed laws that make it more difficult to find work (e.g., Arizona Senate Bill 1070 in 2010; Alabama House Bill 56 and Georgia House Bill 87 in 2011). Like the ancient Israelites, Hispanic believers must trust that their compassionate God cares about their current plight and is at work on their behalf, even if this fact can be hard to fathom.

A number of Old Testament narratives illuminate the complex processes of adaptation to a different culture. Ruth, for instance, left her homeland of Moab to accompany Naomi, her mother-in-law, to Bethlehem. This Moabite woman who years earlier had married Naomi’s son, a Judahite immigrant (Ruth 1:1-5), now became an immigrant to Judah (1:16-22). The rest of the book presents how through hard work and her loyalty to Naomi she was able to win the respect of the women of the town, the harvesters, the elders, and Boaz. By the close of the story, she was acclaimed as equal to great women of Israel’s past (4:11-12) and as more dear to Naomi than seven sons (4:14-15). We can be sure that her son Obed, as he grew up in Bethlehem as the child of a bicultural marriage, did not endure the challenges his foreign mother had. What is more astounding is that, unbeknownst to Ruth and to the other characters in the story, from the lineage of that son would one day come King David (4:22) – and the Messiah, Jesus! (Matthew 1:2-16).

Ruth's acceptance into that small town across the border had not been easy or quick, just as it is not for Hispanic immigrants today. But in time, like that peasant woman of old, efforts to integrate into new communities bear fruit. As in Ruth's case, who knows the larger story that will unfold in the years ahead and what might be the impact that they and their children will have!

Several accounts of life in exile in Babylon exemplify the process of enculturation, although in varied ways. One observes, for instance, how Daniel and his friends refuse to compromise their core identity, even though their names had been changed and they were being trained to be functionaries of the empire (Dan. 1:3-7). How difficult these circumstances must have been for these young men! They were being molded into servants of the very king who had ordered the destruction of their homeland and its capital. Surely the families of these youths from noble stock had lost their properties and most, if not all, of their wealth. Family members and others whom they knew likely had died in the war, and now they found themselves in Nebuchadnezzar's court almost a thousand miles from Jerusalem. Through it all, however, they kept their cultural distinctive (even their food, chapter one!) and openly professed an unwavering devotion to their God, unafraid of the threat of death (chapters 2-3, 5-6). They lived in that foreign world, but in their hearts they were not of it; they served that world, but ultimately obeyed the higher call of the truly sovereign LORD (2:20-23, 36-38, 46; 4:34-35; 6:25-27).

Different levels of cultural adaptation are evident in other stories of the exile. One can contrast Ezra with Nehemiah, who were contemporaries. The former, a scribe-priest, wanted to return to the land and to base the Jewish community of Yehuda in

faithfulness to the Torah (Ezra 7-10). Although Ezra counted on help from the Persian authorities to fulfill his mission (7:11-28), he had no interest in assimilation to the empire's way of life.

Nehemiah, on the other hand, was cupbearer to King Artaxerxes, a position that demanded absolute loyalty. Still, he was attentive to news about the condition of Jerusalem and of his people (Nehemiah 1). Nehemiah returned for a time to oversee the rebuilding of the city's walls (chapters 2-6, 11-12), and he too stressed obedience to the will of the LORD (chapters 5, 8-9, 13). In due course, he returned to the Persian capital (2:6) to continue his service to the king. With Nehemiah, there was a level of accommodation unlike that of Ezra.

Esther, whose setting predates Ezra and Nehemiah by almost four decades, was even more assimilated. She won the empire-wide search for a queen for King Ahasuerus (Xerxes I) to replace the disgraced Vashti (Esther 1:19-2:18), while keeping her ethnicity a secret (2:10). However, as the narrative progresses her level of connection and commitment to her people grows in response to Haman's plan to eliminate the Jews (3:5-10:32). Hers appears to be a gradual awakening to her cultural roots. These three individuals lived out their relationship to their foreign context in distinct ways.

One could mention still other accounts of the exilic period. These include Jeremiah's letter to those in Babylon, in which the prophet encouraged them to invest in their new land, because their stay would be a long one (Jer. 29:1-9). Ezekiel ministered to the exiles, not in the king's palace like Daniel, but among those settled elsewhere (Ruiz 2011: 77-99; cf. Lee Cuellar 2008). Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel proclaimed a hope of returning to the land in the future. In contrast, Psalm 137

communicates the humiliation and anger that some exiles in Babylon felt, while their captors mocked them as a defeated people who believed in a helpless deity; they sought immediate justice, not long-term hope.

These portions of Scripture, among others, can be mined to discern how the varied experiences and emotions of Hispanic immigrants might parallel what we read about the Jews in exile. As in the biblical world, today there are degrees of immigrant adaptation to the North American context: from a rejection of that context coupled with the desire to return to the homeland (Ezra; cf. Ps. 137), to those who work within the new context while retaining links to their land of origin (Nehemiah; Jer. 29; Ezekiel), to those whose lives are very much woven into their new setting, but who may go through a process of rekindling cultural awareness (Esther). In other words, Hispanic immigrants can see themselves in the pages of the Old Testament; its stories are their stories. They also can learn valuable lessons from these biblical characters about how to respond to difficult situations and to challenges to their beliefs, thereby to discover afresh the presence of God in a place unlike what they had known and held dear. These narratives are a curriculum for faith, a source of strength and encouragement for those of us who live so far from home. Coincidentally, culturally sensitive research into the Babylonian exile and its possible resonance with modern migrations is a relatively recent field in Old Testament scholarship (see Kelle, Ames, and Wright 2011).

Articulating the Challenges of Immigrant Legislation

Because humanity always has been on the move, societies, both ancient and modern, have had to grapple with the presence of

immigrants. In response to this reality, nations have formulated legislation to deal with matters related to outsiders. Today, these legal issues include a nomenclature to distinguish different kinds of foreigners (e.g., refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants), determining criteria for eligibility for community services and healthcare, establishing rules of employment, putting into place suitable mechanisms to facilitate language learning and cultural adaptation, deciding if and how to incorporate outsiders into the educational system, and the like.

Cultural anthropology tells us that a people's laws are one of the means by which they organize and regulate their world. Legislation defines in large measure the "proper" place, significance, functions, and responsibilities of a society's institutions and its social and ethnic groups. That is, a functioning legal system is central to a culture's worldview and experience of daily life. It circumscribes what makes a society seem "right" and "natural" to its members and is fundamental to what sociologists call the "social construction of reality." In sum, laws play an important role in shaping identity and worldview. Immigrants complicate this construct because they may not be versed in the ways that society is organized and how it operates. They might come from a dissimilar cultural background (with its own social construction of reality), and the host society has to settle if, how, and where these outsiders can fit within its world.

In an analysis of a society's legislative definition of who is "in" and of what it envisions doing with foreigners, it is important to recognize which values undergird those laws. What are the moral convictions that define the content, penalties, and purpose of a society's laws? What is the basis for discriminatory controls directed at certain people groups? What are

the factors that determine who might require special care and the programs that can meet their needs? Particularly revealing of a society's values is its treatment of vulnerable populations, such as women and children, the unemployed, the poor, the homeless, native ethnic minorities... and immigrants. Each of these groups is susceptible to marginalization, hardship, and exploitation at the hands of the majority. Laws, then, not only create and sustain an identity; legislation also is a window into a society's soul and its ethical principles.

In the biblical narrative, the Israelites leave Egypt and its social construct of reality. That sociocultural world was very hierarchical with Pharaoh at the top. Its religion, laws, government bureaucracy, and a military force legitimated and perpetuated Egypt's ideology of unassailable supremacy. In that society, the Israelites occupied a specific social space with its defined roles; to challenge that world was to violate what was perceived to be the proper order of life. In Exodus, the LORD confronted that unjust social order and defeated its gods. He redeemed his people and led them into the desert, and at Sinai revealed to them a new Law. The LORD presented to the Israelites the outline of a different social construction of reality, one founded on a relationship to him and a specific set of values (see Carroll R. 2013b; 2013d: 75-101). The expectation was that this redeemed people would be a nation of priests and that the new social construction of reality would be different from the one that they had left behind in Egypt as well as from whatever lay before them (Exod. 19:1-6). This Law, in fact, was to be a testimony to other nations (Deut. 4: 5-8). The point was not that the nations were to imitate or replicate Israel's legislation. Rather, its wisdom and transcendent values were a pointer to the God of Israel and to what should be reflected in the laws of all peoples.

The dissimilarities with Egypt's social construction of reality are readily apparent. An obvious example is the political ideology stipulated in the Law (Deut. 17:14-20). The king was not to accumulate war chariots, women, or wealth, three proofs of royal power and prestige in the ancient world. He was to have his own personal copy of the law and obey its statutes, so that he would not think himself better than anyone else. How different than Pharaoh, who was himself acclaimed to be a god! There are other ways in which the social construction of reality was to be unlike that of the surrounding peoples (cf. McConville 2006).

The relevant point for this essay is that the legislation regarding migrants was unique in the ancient world; therefore, so was their place and treatment within Israel's social world. Although other codified laws had provisions similar to Israel's in regard to helping the poor, widows, and orphans, what is decreed for foreigners in the Old Testament Law has no parallels. The LORD has a special place in his heart for immigrants, and this concern is expressed tangibly in laws that were to characterize Israel as a gracious and welcoming community.

In ancient times, outsiders were vulnerable for at least two reasons. First, in that era at crucial moments of personal and family life (such as at birth, times of sickness or hunger, and at death) people received help through extended family. There were no government programs or safety nets, as we have today. Then, immigrants were at a disadvantage; they stood alone, separated from their kin. They were at the mercy of the compassion of the Israelites. Second, ancient Israel was overwhelmingly a peasant economy. Most of the population lived in villages and tilled the family plots that had been passed down for generations through the male line. In an agrarian so-

ciety, having land to farm was fundamental for sustenance and survival. The obvious problem for foreigners was that they were not part of Israel's patrilineal structure and the acquisition of land would have been extremely difficult. Once again, the foreigner was at the mercy of the Israelites; in this case, for work and food.

Old Testament legislation contained laws designed to respond to the vulnerability of the foreigner. Here is a brief summary:

- ✦ Labor. Foreigners had the right to rest on the Sabbath, just as did the Israelites (Exod. 20:10; Deut. 5:14). They were to be paid a fair wage and be paid on time (Exod. 23:12; Deut. 24:14-15). These laws would protect the foreigner from exploitation.
- ✦ Justice. A common fear among outsiders is that they will not receive equal treatment under the law, a law that may be strange to them and which they may not totally comprehend. The Old Testament stipulates that both the native born and the foreigner will receive justice and suffer the same penalties (Deut. 1:16-17; 24:17-18; 27:19). There also is a provision for the periodic public reading of the Law, at which foreigners were to be present (Deut. 31:9-13). This reading could serve to educate outsiders about Israel's laws and

facilitate integration into their communities.

- ✦ Food. For various reasons, immigrants, like widows, orphans and the poor, could find it difficult to acquire food to eat; they were susceptible to hunger. The Law established two mechanisms to provide for them in such unfortunate circumstances. The Israelites were to leave gleanings in the fields at harvest (Lev. 19:9-10; Deut. 24:19-22) and take up a special tithe every three years (Deut. 14:28-29).
- ✦ Sociocultural inclusion. The religious life of Israel was its primary identity marker and its most precious institution. Several laws mandated that foreigners were to be permitted to participate in some of its worship (e.g., Exod. 12:45-49; Lev. 16:29). What is more, in Leviticus 19 the reach of the command to “love your neighbor as yourself,” which in context refers to a fellow Israelite, was extended beyond the native-born. Israelites were to treat the stranger as one of their own and to “love them as yourself” (Lev. 19:18, 33-34). Verse 34 ends with the refrain “I am the LORD (your God), a phrase repeated fifteen times in this chapter. The seriousness of the list of commands in Leviticus 19 (including loving the stranger) is undeniable.

In the Law, Israel was given two motivations for having compassion on the foreigner. The first was historical memory. God’s people were never to forget that they also had once been

mistreated when they were foreigners in Egypt (Exod. 22:21; 23:9; Lv. 19:18, 34; Deut. 24:17-18), where they had endured marginalization, discrimination, abuse, and violence. To forget that experience could lead to their becoming callous towards outsiders. In essence, they would become like the Egyptians and mistreat newcomers in the same way.

The second reason finds its source in the person and commitment of God (Deut. 10:17-19; cf. 24:15). The LORD loves the stranger, and this concern is expressed concretely by giving them food and clothing. So too, Israel must love the foreigner. They were to be the channel of that divine provision to these vulnerable people. This love of God for the stranger is the most profound and compelling incentive for embracing them. It strongly suggests that love for the outsider is evidence of Israel's commitment to God and a barometer of its moral life.

Of course, there would have been expectations that Israelites had for the outsider. For the immigrant to work and to join in the religious ceremonies would have necessitated knowledge of the language and culture. Attending Israel's rituals also could have led to conversion to the God of Israel, which in turn would yield greater integration into the community.

Many lessons can be drawn from the Old Testament for formulating a truly biblical perspective on immigration legislation in our day. Most significant is that immigration law should be guided by a spirit of empathetic kindness, and not be driven by an impulse to restrict or punish those individuals who have come to this country to meet their basic needs of work and safety and to secure a better future for themselves and their children. Christians should embody God's heart in their attitudes toward the outsider. They should not fall into the com-

mon North American collective amnesia about the checkered immigrant history of the United States, which includes such negative aspects as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, formal ethnic quotas in the immigration laws of the twentieth century, the ostracism of foreigners into ethnic ghettos in our towns and cities, the decades-long injustices on Angel Island in San Francisco Bay, the consignment of Japanese to internment camps during World War Two, the continuous exploitation of immigrant labor, deportation practices that separate families, the construction of a border wall hundreds of miles long, and the tragic deaths of thousands in the desert along that same border. Alongside the celebrated welcoming motto of the Statue of Liberty stands a dark nativist reality that this country would do well to remember. Because the nation has largely forgotten its past, unfortunate postures toward immigrants resurface.

How the values that undergird Old Testament immigration law might find expression in today's laws will be a difficult proposition. If one believes, however, that these laws are based on divine commitments, then they can be appreciated as a paradigm for contemporary legislation (Wright 2004). Efforts must be made to inculcate them into the national discourse. Israel's laws were for another time, place, and people, but their importance and relevance endures. This appropriation would require realistic analysis of the laws that are needed to respond to the complex pragmatic matters connected to immigration (security, education, healthcare, employment, etc.) and consideration of what foundational values will guide their articulation and implementation. Indeed, there will be values behind whatever is decided, whether these are articulated publicly or not. This is why Christians should speak out and get involved. The biblical moral framework constitutes our specific

contribution to the national immigration debate.

From the side of the immigrant, Hispanic or otherwise, there should be the conviction that God's Law matters and that there are believers working to see its values appear in legislation and in the treatment of foreigners. There is also the lesson that the United States, as the host country, has the right to expect immigrants to learn English and respect its laws. These processes will not be easy, whether for the native-born or the foreigner; but the Law is witness to the truth that care of immigrants is a divine imperative and that their healthy integration must be built on reciprocal respect.

This biblical viewpoint counteracts the stance that too quickly appeals to Romans 13:1-7 to decry the growing presence of immigrants in general and of undocumented immigrants in particular. An appreciation of the contemporary implications of Old Testament immigrant laws should prompt majority culture Christians to get to know the content of current immigration law and to discern and evaluate its underlying values. If these laws do not reflect biblical ideals, then all Christians should advocate for constructive comprehensive immigration reform.

2. The New Testament Contribution

Migration as a Metaphor for Christian Faith

In contrast to the Old Testament, the New Testament does not speak directly to immigration. It does not have expansive narratives of migration, nor does it contain formal legislation directed at helping the foreigner. The early church was not a nation state like ancient Israel (and Judah), but rather a loose, widespread collection of house churches. Nevertheless, there is a good bit of material that can help form a Christian per-

spective on immigration (Carroll R. 2013d: 103-28).

To begin, migration can be a metaphor for the Christian faith (1 Peter 2:11; cf. Phil. 3:20; Heb. 13:14). Believers should recognize that they are “strangers in a strange land,” with another king, citizenship in heaven, a global family that is not defined by ethnicity or geography (Gal. 3:26-29; Eph. 2:11-22; Rev. 5:9; 7:9), a unique worldview and lifestyle, and a higher calling and mission in life. For the native-born in this country this metaphor most likely is nothing more than an abstract idea. For immigrant believers, however, this strangeness is not just metaphorical; it is literal. They know what it means to be different. Could it not be said that majority culture believers might learn more about the Christian faith and its “strangeness” as they get to know immigrants and immerse themselves in immigration matters? Perhaps immigrant believers need to understand that not only is God with them, but also that the majority culture church needs them for its own spiritual health and identity.

Learning from the Immigrants’ Savior

Jesus does not directly address the topic of immigration. He does, however, begin his life as a refugee. He and his family flee to Egypt to avoid being killed by Herod’s soldiers (Matt. 2:13-23). We are not told where Joseph, Mary, and Jesus lived in Egypt, nor is it not known how long they resided there. But for immigrants, it should be encouraging that the Savior experienced life as a sojourner in another land. We can trust that the One whom we follow and adore understands the trials and tribulations of the foreigner.

The component of the ministry and teaching of Jesus that is most pertinent to an immigration discussion was his en-

gagement with those who were marginalized by society (e.g., Lk. 4:16-30; 14:12-14). This included feeding the hungry, his respectful interaction with women, touching and healing the sick (note especially the scenes with lepers and the woman with the flow of blood), kindness toward children, and relating to Gentiles (even soldiers of the occupying Roman army, Matt. 8:5-14 and parallel passages) and to Samaritans. Particularly striking is the interaction with the woman at Jacob's well (Jn. 4; cf. Lk. 17:11-19).

Two passages that stand out are the parable of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25 and the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10. The term in the first passage that has been applied to immigration issues is "stranger" (*xénos*; Matt. 25:35, 38, 43, 44). Some connect this word to immigrants, but the exegetical challenge is that these persons are identified with "the least of these brothers [and sisters] of mine" (25:40, 45). The issue is that in the Gospel of Matthew "little ones" and "brothers [and sisters]" almost always refer to followers of Jesus. This passage, then, may be speaking with regard to the mistreatment of disciples that are sent out to witness and minister in his name (cf. 10:11-42; 28:16-20), and not about sojourners as such. Although these words of Jesus are consistent with his ethical teaching, the application to immigration may be secondary.

The parable of the Good Samaritan is more apropos. In response to the inquiries from a teacher of the Law about inheriting eternal life and about the identity of the "neighbor" that he is to love (Lk. 10:25-29), Jesus tells this story. He bases his reply on the command love to love one's neighbor in Leviticus 19. It will be remembered that in that Old Testament passage the demand to love a fellow Israelite is expanded to include love

for the foreigner. It is no coincidence that in his parable Jesus does not make the Jewish religious leaders the heroes (10:30-32). The moral exemplar is the Samaritan, the one who stops to care for the wounded Jew (10:33-35). The question that Jesus asks the teacher of the law is revealing: “Who was the neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” (10:36, NIV). Jesus does not ask him to imitate the actions of the Samaritan; rather, he tests the man’s commitment to love the Other. Here, the Other is a Samaritan, someone from a people literally despised by the Jews. This parable of the Good Samaritan is Jesus’ application of the command to love the foreigner in Leviticus 19. To truly love and follow God (and Jesus), one must love those who are different, even those whom society may hate and reject. The relevance is obvious: followers of Jesus must embrace the Other, which in our time would include the immigrant.

Charitable, open hospitality towards the unlovely and the unloved is a virtue of the kingdom of God (Lk. 14:12-14; cf. 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8; 1 Pet. 4:9; Gal. 6:10; Heb. 13:2). This gracious spirit is to be especially present when believers gather for the Lord’s Supper as the Body of Christ, as forgiven sinners (Matt. 26:26-29, and parr.). At the table no one is to be excluded; none are to suffer deprivation (1 Cor. 11-12; Gal. 3:26-29; Eph. 2:11-22; Js. 2:1-13). These principles of our faith, deeply rooted in the teaching and ministry of Jesus, should be the lens through which all Christians view immigrants.

Embracing Immigrant Mission

Another way to appreciate the New Testament contribution with regard to the immigration discussion is to examine the book of Acts and Paul’s missionary strategy. Up to here, this essay’s biblical presentation has dealt primarily with immigrant worth, identity,

life experiences, and needs. This section now shifts its attention to immigrant mission. The concern is not to defend the dignity and rights of immigrants, but instead to consider immigrant status as a unique place from which to fulfill God's mission: that his people be a blessing in word and deed to the nations of the earth.

The worldwide movement of many millions of migrants has sparked the birth and growth of what is called "diaspora" missiology (Wan 2011; cf. Carroll R. 2012, 2013c). It draws on secular anthropological, sociological, and political research to understand the realities of diaspora communities. Diaspora missiology explores their presence as new areas for Christian outreach and promotes the potential of Christian diaspora individuals and churches to participate in world missions. This new orientation is a major thrust of global mission (note, e.g., <http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/home/diaspora>).

The book of Acts describes how the early believers were scattered from Jerusalem because of persecution following the death of Stephen (Acts 8:1-8; 11:19-30). As they travelled to Samaria, Antioch, and beyond, they preached the Good News and began to start churches. Some of the regions to which they moved were multi-ethnic and multinational, so that these early congregations from the very beginning were composed of diaspora peoples. Antioch is a case in point. Its leadership team came from different cultures and countries (Acts 13:1-3). Integrating various cultures and backgrounds into cohesive churches and eliminating ethnic tensions was not easy (Acts 15; Gal. 1-3; Eph. 2-5), but the goal was to express unity under one Lord and in one faith and baptism.

Paul was a multilingual diaspora Jew from Tarsus (Acts 22:3), but also a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37-38; 22:25-29).

Several early church leaders were also people of diaspora, who continued to move around the Mediterranean basin to do ministry. Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:1-3, 18-23; Rom. 16:3-5; 1 Cor. 16:19), along with Apollos (Acts 18:24-28; cf. Titus 3:13), come readily to mind. Paul's pattern for spreading the gospel in the cities he visited was first to contact diaspora Jews in their synagogues (Pisidian Antioch, Acts 13:14-52; Iconium, Acts 14:1-5; Thessalonica, Acts 17:1-4; Berea, Acts 17:10-12; Athens, Acts 17:16-17; Corinth, Acts 18:4-7; Ephesus, Acts 18:19-22, 19:8-10) before moving on to engage Gentiles.

The book of Acts, in other words, is the record of diaspora mission: diaspora believers interacting with diaspora groups and establishing churches that in part were made up of diaspora people. This account can serve to motivate Hispanic immigrants and churches to see their presence in this country in a missional light. In the sovereignty of God, their coming is not simply an opportunity for a new beginning in their lives. Their presence also carries the privilege and responsibility to do kingdom work as a diaspora people in an increasingly multiethnic world, both in this country and abroad.

Conclusion

This essay has surveyed what the Old and New Testament can teach the church, both of the majority culture and of the Hispanic community, about God's commitment to those who migrate. There is more that can be said and more scriptural passages that could be studied, but our hope is that the reader can appreciate his heart for migrants in a fresh and more informed way. May the immigrant be encouraged, and the majority culture be welcoming.

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CHAPTER 12

Postmodernism and Inter-generational Relations

Dr. William Hernández

Introduction:

There is a marked difference in time that controls, governs and determines both our earthly and eternal destinies, in which events or the happenings are not what define the behavior of creatures that therein exist. Here on earth we are identified and categorized by characteristics developed through the circumstances and events of the moment in which we happen to live. An irrefutable truth is that no human chooses the moment or time in which to live. We arrive and are responsible for the success or failure of the society of which we have become a part.

History tends to be divided into four great periods:

1. The Old Ages, beginning approximately 3000 B.C. to somewhere near the sixth century.
2. The Middle Ages, starting from the sixth century until the end of the 15th Century.
3. The Modern Age, from the end of the 15th Century toward the end of the 18th Century.
4. The Contemporary AGE, beginning with the end of the 18th Century and continuing to the present.

During our Contemporary Age begin the concerns and dissident thinking of emerging generations that question all the processes and existing methods used to resolve human needs. Facing deception with regard to modernism, or the age of illumination, these generations are thrown into the arms of relativism and doubt as to the existence of absolute truth.

Postmodernism and its identity

The term postmodernism has been employed in a broad sense to refer to a wide range of matters. Everything that is not related to the customs and primary traditions as well as promoting the relativity of issues has been categorized as “Postmodern”. The term began to be used as early as the 1950s when literature and architecture began breaking with prior patterns. The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, considered to be the first post-modernist, argued that truth was universal, but “human understanding of truth is only a perspective and not the truth”. (Elwell)

To arrive at a precise definition of postmodernism is not easy. In doing so, we would have to accept that we are violating the precise premise of this thought that there are no defined terms, nor limits, nor absolute truths. A variety of beliefs and a diversity of opinions on any give topic is characteristic of those that consider themselves to be postmodernist. The concerns of this philosophy are innumerable and are the result of a loss of confidence in the modern age in which science was projected as a panacea, bringing solutions to all the problems facing mankind. Out of this great deception arises the question “is truth merely an illusion”?

In the absence of an acceptable answer to this question, a culture arises with increasing pluralism, an emphasis on rel-

ativity, an information overload, confusion of identity and consumerism becomes a priority, among other things. In other words, the lack of a system, a totality, an order, in sum, the absence of coherence. This tendency has taken society to the edge of a decomposition of absolute, objective and universal truth. It is in this context that today's generation interacts must develop and become successful. The following table presents a comparison between the modern age versus the postmodern age.

Comparison Table

Modernism vs. Postmodernism

	Modernism	Postmodernism
Science	Illumination, utopian expectations	Disenchantment, rejection of utopian ideas and the idea of progress in general
Economy	A capitalist system with emphasis on production	A capitalist system with emphasis on consumerism
Models	Charismatic figures	Diversity of small idols that last until the next novel and attractive one
Religion	Respect and reverence for the doctrines of established religions	The great religions are questioned and a diversity of deities are established

Information	Necessary for informing accurately what is reality as well as relevant	Excessive transmission of information (often contradictory), distant from reality and relevance, turning into mere entertainment
Quality of life	Planning for the future with expectations of progress; emphasis given to intimacy	Living in the present is what matters; the future and the past lose importance, and intimacy becomes a spectacle with the presence of social networks
Technology	Use of technology to maximize the advances in communication for the benefits associated with advancing the quality of life	Technology is a god, whose reach controls and manipulates all its surroundings
Media	Communication with content and values	Content is not important for reassessing the manner in which it is transmitted nor the degree of conviction it can produce.
Politics	Loyalty to political parties and their leaders	Loss of faith in public power and political authority

The corruption of the western world, including religion, was a factor that flamed the fire of the concerns of the contemporary age. The faith in the traditional authorities vanished at the sight of ancient, traditional religious principles as well as the political system being unable to meet the needs of the masses (communism, socialism, capitalism). To this we can add the frustration at the lack of commitment to environment protection and the development of alternative sources of energy have tried the pa-

tience of the new generations that have emerged during the final decades of the last century.

There is no doubt that for these new generations the lifestyle of the previous generations has gone out of style, under an ineffective political system, without any sense of orientation and without value with regard to developing relationships. This generation holds that the promise of prosperity and freedom has been left on the printed documents in a vacuum with no real results and without satisfying human needs. They conclude that truth is relative and it is up to each individual to determine what truth is. For them there is no such thing as absolute truth. Consequently, to their way of thinking there is no need to redefine truth in terms of what is good or evil, true or false, correct or incorrect. This makes it impossible for anyone to claim to have authority to define truth, or to impose the way of thinking on others.

In his book *Truth Decay*, theologian Douglas Groothuis summarizes the essence of postmodern thought: "The postmodernist rejects written history based on the observation and inductive argument. They embrace relativism in regard to truth and knowledge, but deny that anything could be known with certainty. Each culture creates its own truth. The majority believe that humanity had not direct contact or access to reality." Dennis McCallum calls this "a cultural metamorphosis cultural, transforming every aspect of life, to include education, the theater, television and other means of communication."

The Hispanic generational mosaic and its challenges

Hispanics are the minority group with the longest time in the United States, second only to the Native-Americans. Histo-

ry records Hispanic presence from the 16th century with the founding of St. Augustine by the Spaniards. At present, according to 2012 statistics, there are approximately 53 million Hispanics representing the fastest growing ethnic group with 16% of the total population.

The 20th and 21st Centuries have left profound marks on the the generations that have emerged during that time. The American society has been shaken from its very roots that gave it life. It is no secret that the changes have accelerated and proven to devastating to the beliefs that gave this great nation the worldwide recognition of a nation under God.

The belief system of this era is an heavy influence on the identity development of Hispanic generations that are struggling to survive in it. In his study on the Latino population, Hispanic America: Faith, Values and Priorities, George Barna wrote: "The belief system of a person is critical component of his identity."

The present is challenging and the future awaits us with tremendous opportunities, fields white unto harvest, the reaping of souls that have tried everything, but are still thirsty. The words of the apostle Paul still ring in our ears:

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? (Romans 10:14)

We must respond diligently to this call in order to reach all generations for the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. It is our responsibility to recognized and understand the idiosyncrasies and identify with the generational mosaic in which we live in order

to give our best effort for reaching them for God. May we be facilitators in this process of preaching Christ to all, without considering the generational culture, but rather as “bridges between the generations”.

Auguste Comte, French philosopher of the 19th century, who gave sociology its name and developed the doctrine of positivism, was the first in attempt a serious, systematic study of generations. In his six-volume *Course of Positive Philosophy*, Comte suggests that social changes are determined by generational changes, in particular by conflicts between successive generations.

As one generation ages, “its instinct for social preservation” becomes stronger. This inevitably and necessarily leads to conflict with innovation provided through the “normal attributes of youth”.

A generation can define itself as including all those persons born within a consecutive period of years, approximately 22 years. The personality of this group is determined by the commonality in age, beliefs and actions. The members of this group perceive themselves as members of a common generation, individuals who through their place in time makes them part of a collective personality.

Our God is the one who acts in history. He was with the first generation, calling them by name and including them in the last generation. He is the Eternal God who keeps His covenant. This truth was imbedded in the writings of the prophet Isaiah, when he said:

“Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he.” (Isaiah 41:4)

The land that is now the United States has registered 24 generations since it began as a British colony, but only 14 as a nation. Hispanics, having been grafted into the branches of this tree, have come to be a part of this nation, assimilating the culture and contributing to its development. Of all the generations, it is notable that it has been in the last six in which the interchange between Anglo-Saxon and Latino cultures has been the most dynamic, stimulating assimilation and strengthening the mutual contributions.

The following presents a breakdown of the various generations from the beginning of the past century:

1. G. I Generation G. I. – 1901 to 1924 (John F. Kennedy)
2. Silent Generation – 1925 – 1945 (Colin Powell)
3. “Baby Boomers” Generation – 1946 – 1964 (Steven Spielberg)
4. Generation “X” – 1965 – 1980 (Michael Jordan)
5. Generation “Y” – 1980 – 2003 (Social networks)
6. Generation “Z” – 2004 – to the present

When we refer to the various generations, there are not necessarily precisely defined dates between them. For example some authors present different birth dates for the “baby boomers”, and obviously, not everyone within a specific generation will have the same attitudes on any given subject. To generalize about the attitudes and characteristics of these groups would bring a lot of exceptions into consideration.

However, if we pause long enough to look from the outside in order to see the forest instead of the trees, we will begin to notice certain patterns and similarities in them.

As a matter of generalization, the cultures and behaviors are different. Each generation has had its own collective experiences as they age, and consequently, similar ideals. The last three generations in particular have been defined by technology, influenced by global thinking that crossed geographical barriers, transcending countries and continents. They are seduced by contemporary tendencies. They are at the mercy of the promotion and marketing of diverse and varied lifestyles. As good communicators, we need to market and present our message these unequal generations. By understanding their behavior, we can create appropriate methods, correctly designed to effectively meet the needs of each generational group and reach them for Christ.

Survival strategies for a society in the dark

To think in generational terms could be either a recreational mental exercise or an important tool. Each generation has its own experiences and expectations that vary from one to another. Advances in communication allow us to understand how others think much more quickly than in previous years. This has greatly accelerated the pace of change from one generation to another

The terms G.I., Silent, Baby Boomers, X and Y are used by sociologists and the media to refer to individuals from different generations in our society. They have been grouped in general generations as characterized by similar qualities and attitudes. Although it is impossible to generalize in a precise manner that describes each individual within a group of per-

sons, it is surprising to see certain generational attitudes can be observed and characterized. The importance of this classification process is what gives the church the opportunity to focus on the salvation message for specific generational groups, identified by their similar attitudes and characteristics.

We begin our generational analysis with the two that combined have become known as the “Greatest Generation”: the G. I. and the Silent generations.

1. G.I.Generation: born between 1901 and 1924

The Greatest Generation were raised in the United States during the times of deprivation of the Great Depression, later forming part of the army that fought in World War II, along with those at home that contributed to the wartime efforts. In 1998, newsman Tom Brokaw wrote in his book *The Greatest Generation* “it is, I believe, the greatest generation any society has ever produced”. Brokaw asserts that these men and women struggled, not for fame or recognition, but because it was the right thing to do. Although the majority supported the idea of individualism, the G.I. Generation searched for the experience in groups. The configuration of many of our institutions, be they civic, religious, fraternal or professional, they all carry the mark of the G. I. Generation. This generation of the decades of the 20th Century created admiration in the eyes of previous generations as well as those that came later. They were the first Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and half a century later became the first “Senior Citizens”. The energy demonstrated by this G. I. Generation has been characterized in comic strips such as the superhero “Superman”, made famous just prior to World War II. From there comes

the phrase America as a Super Power. What gave rise to this generation? The Great Depression, World War II, economic growth, the positivism of John F. Kenney, the “cold war”, the invention of the radio, household appliances, airplanes, automobiles among other developments.

2. The Silent Generation: born between 1925 and 1945

If the G.I. Generation had a clean image (the reputation of good children), the Silent Generation followed with rebellious tendencies. Whereas the G.I. Generation enjoyed periods of extended economic development, later to be shaken by the Great Depression, The Silent Generation grew up in a shattered economy and in their adulthood, came to see the period of recuperation. They took care of their institutions and the world they had inherited. The dominant theme of this generation was the allegiance to the proper principles of law and order, patriotism and faith. This generation was characterized for its ambition, constantly seeking greater achievements. What was the mark of this generation? Having been born during the Great Depression, living through the Korean Conflict, the sexual revolution, the feminist movement, the Vietnam War and Watergate, among other events.

There can be no doubt that these generations established a solid foundation, with regard to moral and spiritual values, for future generations. Many of the members of these generations are retired, and themselves in need of physical, emotional and spiritual attention. The church cannot lose sight of their contribution to the formation of our beliefs and values. The least we can do is to remember them through programs that recognize and honor them and through social services for their personal needs.

3. The children of prosperity:

a. The generation of the children of prosperity, more commonly known as “Baby Boomers”, began in 1946 and extended until 1964. This generation, born in the years following World War II and into the 1960s, had an impact on society through a demographic growth that reshaped the world in which it lived. One distinctive trait of this “boomer” generation was the tendency to think that they were a special generation, different from all previous ones. The term “generational gap” has been used to describe the chasm that existed between them and their parents and grandparents. The journey of self-discovery of this new generation was based on humanistic narcissism. The great impact occurred beginning in 1964, turning into movements of free expression and protests against the war in Vietnam. On a spiritual level, religious traditions were mixed and shared to accommodate them, rather than submitting to the dogmas and teachings of one religion in particular. They have returned to church, but not to the traditional churches. During the 1980s, church attendance rose by 80%, but surprisingly it was mostly in Pentecostal and Southern Baptist churches. Others chose various oriental religions, the New Age philosophy or non-denominational churches. What gave form to this denomination? The invention of television, the civil rights movement, women’s liberation, the Dr. Spock “philosophy of not spanking children”, the Vietnam War and the affluence of the times.

b. This generation has always been and will continue to be the generation of large impact due to the demographic size. We should do all we can to understand the characteristics of this group and create an atmosphere in the church that will appeal to what motivates them. Studies have shown that after living a life in search of careers and possessions, they have realized that the spiritual dimension they have ignored does in fact satisfy and give happiness in life. Their attempts to improve, to be different and to have experienced progress has led them to be demanding in all of their activities. Their expectation is to be successful in everything they do, using the best methods, equipment and installations. As the church, we need to establish an atmosphere with the adequate measures to help this generation relate to God. Dios. Their desire for what is spiritual is an opportunity for to lead them into a deep relationship with their Creator. Their worship, service and devotion should be distinguished by an emphasis on excellence. Audiovisual helps, appropriate installations, challenging activities and the projection of a vision will without doubt motivate this generation to a commitment and dedication that will revolutionize the church and their community.

4. Generation X

a. The "X" Generation is the generation that followed the "Baby Boomers", those that were born between the years 1965 and 1980. The term Generation "X" came from a book written by Douglas

Coupland, *Generation X: Tales for an accelerated Culture*. The individuals considered part of this generation were born and grew up during the final years of the Vietnam War. A series of economic disasters, such as the oil shortage of 1973, the energy crisis of 1979, the recession at the beginning of the 80s, created an atmosphere of uncertainty and reduced long-term trust between employers and employees. This generation saw the beginning of home computers, video games, cable TV and the internet as tools with social and business advantages. Other events related to this generation included urban decay, power outages in New York in 1977, the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster, and the Iran hijacking crisis. This generation places more emphasis on close friends and family than on material success and association with what is traditional. Personal experience accounts for everything. Institutions are suspect, but for different reasons than those of the “baby boomers”. For them, these institutions promote regressive dogmas, without authenticity or real value. They are not given to loyalty or commitment; values are relative and all people should be tolerated. This generation, which is undoubtedly a result of the previous generation that did not fully realize their responsibilities as parents, now finds itself needing to care for the parents that had failed to care for them. What events shaped this generation? The Chernobyl nuclear plant disaster, the development of cable, the beginning of the digital age with fax, pagers, palm pilots among other things

b. This generation has suffered the consequences of the ambitions that resulted in progress by the previous two generations. They were ignored in the efforts of their parents for better paying work, more luxurious and costly possessions. Now we see the accumulated results of that neglect of family responsibilities in the avalanche of blended families, quite different from the traditional family that shaped a society within the framework of love and principles that were taught for an emotionally and spiritually stable society. A generation damaged by abandonment today suffers the consequences of their parents' actions. God's message, communicated with integrity in the context of sincere interpersonal relationships, can help this generation see the truth of a loving God that is concerned for all generations without distinctions.

5. La Generation Milenial

a. The "Y", or "Milenial", Generation beginning 1981 through 2000, the brothers and sisters of "X" Generation, were exposed to the harsh realities of violence, racial tensions, increase in sexual exposure, complex technology. They also saw the apathy, general discontent and hostility of the previous generation. They began the new century, in a somewhat air of mysticism. A study conducted by "LifeWay Research" found that this generation gives first priority to their family life, followed by friends, education, career and religion. Family was favored first by 62% of those interviewed. Friends were favored

by 25%. Religion was sixth on the list by 13% of the respondents; other responses included (12%), happiness (12%), health (10%) and the future (5%). The churches that place an importance on the family in its programming, including the ability to cross generations, allowing older adults to reach the young adults, will be more prepared to reach the “Millennial” Generation. (Church Leaders Report, May 19, 2010) Regarding the spirituality of this generation, they are more open to attend church than the generation “X”, and are more open to an experience with God, especially in group settings. Worship in large groups is the way in which this generation expresses their belief in God. Since their world revolves around electronic communication, they will long for an intimate relationship; they will want to find and enjoy a personal, deep relationship with God. This generation is also known for slowing down some of the stages in reaching adulthood. They are seen as living with their parents for longer times than previous generations. This has much to do with the current economic crisis that has with the increase in the cost of living, along with the high unemployment rate, created a situation that makes it hard for one to get ahead. What gave shape to this generation? The attack on the Twin Towers (9/11), the internet and the social media networks.

b. The church needs to focus on developing strategies that involved interpersonal relationships, less focused on programs and more on people. Ministries need to be directed toward collaboration in

which they are given active participation with dynamic roles as opposed being mere spectators. The service is an essential part of attracting this generation. By feeling that they are contributing to the cause gives them a sense of usefulness. Let us provide them with an atmosphere that will help them discover and develop their spiritual gifts.

6. The “Z”, or Internet, Generation

a. This is the final generation that has become part of the dynamic scene of our society. All of those born after the year 2000 belong to this generational group, although some sociologists place the start of this generation some years earlier (1994). It is an evolving generation that represents a golden opportunity for being influenced, with a quality education in professional areas of greatest need for the development of our country. Of particular importance is their need for moral education due to the lack of values that is damaging our world. They are more inclined toward hostile attitudes and behavior, but if the “Z” Generation can be properly developed, they could achieve much more than the previous generations. However, dependence on a digital world could make them more interested in individual rather than collective efforts, affecting interpersonal skills and the importance of family values.

b. The church is facing a great challenge. Although a large percentage of our society uses new digital technology, this generation lives in a totally digital world;

their lives have been shaped through their use of the Internet. We cannot waste time trying to adjust them to our teaching methods and approach, because we will have very little significant results. At the beginning of the decade of the 2020s, if the Lord has not returned, which would be much better, we will have a new generation entering the sphere of authority and control over the matters that influence a society. Will we be building an adequate foundation so that this generation, better prepared than any previous generation, be capable of governing and relating effectively not only with God but with each other?

The Hope for America

If God is the creator, the enabler and the designer of these generations, would there should be a reason for the differences among them? Wouldn't these differences by part of the development and growth of each of these generations? Would we not need each other to see the fulfillment of His purpose for each of us? In this strange world in which we live, that is known as post-modern, would not God have allowed the increase of immigrants to the United States with a divine purpose?

A national study by the Hispanic Churches in American Public Life (HCAPL) between August and October of 2000 found the following results: 70% of all Hispanics and Latino Americans were Catholic, 20% Protestant, 3% other Christian (e.g., Mormon or Jehovah's Witnesses), 1% identified with non-Christian religions (including Islam), 6% had no religious preference and only 0.37% claim to be atheist or agnostic. This shows that Hispanics/Latinos are not only highly religious, but also constitute a solid base for Christianity.

The study further demonstrated that Protestant Hispanics/Latinos as a minority group is greater than previously thought. The Catholic affiliation is greater in the first generation than subsequent generations of Hispanics/Latinos, which shows a high conversion rate to Protestantism.

At the beginning of the 21st Century, studies on the previous decade reflected a worrisome fact. The future of the American church seemed dismal and uncertain in light of the lack of a well-prepared, committed and dedicated leadership. Without a strong leadership that could influence society, the church was dying and there was a need for an awakening of the relationship between the generations.

How can we support the development of future Latino generations the form the minority group with greatest numerical growth in America? The first thing we need to take into account is for any nation to prosper materially, emotionally and intellectually, the spiritual dimension should define our strategy for shaping future generations. It is this important element that should enable us to focus on developing the essential values that will make for a healthy society and successful future generations.

I believe that the spiritual hope for the United States of America lies in the minority that is providing hopeful signs with regard to religious convictions, ethical values and the desire to succeed through the efforts of convictions and abilities. This is a marvelous opportunity that God has placed in our hands as members of His Kingdom, a field that is ripe with the potential for a great harvest for heaven.

May our efforts be well focused and coordinated, because the challenge requires planning with adequate resources and

the sensibility to value each of the emerging generations that challenge each other in the struggle for cultural survival. Protagonist sectarianism at this time of Hispanic geometric exploitation will only hold back the holistic health of a minority that represents the conscience of biblical, moral and ethical values.

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CHAPTER 13

Toward a Theology of the Hispanic Pentecostal Woman Dr. Miriam E. Figueroa Aponte

The Hispanic Pentecostal woman has been crucial in the development of Pentecostalism. History itself has been witness to this contention. Yet, Pentecostal women can also be counted among those that been discriminated against, and their voices need to be heard.

As a part of my area of investigation, I chose to explore the conflict faced by women pastors within the Church of God denomination (Church of God of Cleveland, Tennessee) in general, and of the Iglesia de Dios Mission Board in particular. Women pastors of these organizations are allowed pastoral duties and responsibilities, but at the same time certain limitations are placed on the full exercise of their gifts. They cannot serve at the same level of leadership as their male counterparts.

In order to examine this dilemma, I have employed a documentary methodology of investigation, specifically the ethnographic interview system of James Spradley. For analysis of the acquired data, I have utilized input from feminist and womanist theologies. The resulting analysis led me to develop a theological model, based on the methodology of Casiano Floristán's Iberoamerican Pastoral Theology of observation,

judgment and action, that is applicable to the Puerto Rican Pentecostal perspective in particular, as well to a Hispanic one in general. This model seeks to enable a conscientization of the oppression of women pastors in Pentecostal churches, and consequently, seek to build a church that does justice and y fosters equality for women in the exercising of pastoral duties.

The Context

The proposed theological model of the Hispanic Pentecostal woman is presented from the starting point of my own church background, Pentecostalism, as well as my Puerto Rican cultural heritage. Its development has resulted as a product of the reflection and experiences of Pentecostal women, particularly pastors of the Iglesia de Dios Mission Board, as well as an analysis of the Christian doctrine of pneumatology, from a Pentecostal perspective. The goal is the liberation from all discrimination and inequality experienced by women of the Hispanic Pentecostal churches at the hands of the men of those churches in order to build a more just church for future generations. This is vitally important for the message of salvation that is for everyone be intellectually credible and in practice consonant with the values of the kingdom of God and the teachings and actions of Jesus.

Background of the Literature

Our proposal did not come about in a vacuum. Voices from the fields of practical pastoral theology and feminist theology have been our companions in this time of reflection. We have benefitted from the following theoreticians in developing a theological model for the Hispanic Pentecostal woman.

On the one hand, from practical pastoral theology (PPT) we recognize the influence of Spanish theologian Casiano Floristán. Floristán represents a particular European-Ibero-American tradition with roots in the classic theology of Europe in general. Out of this, Floristán's process for practical theology is presented through a method that includes observation, judgment and action. Casiano believes firmly that PPT is the activity of the church and of Christians. These church activities lead to theological reflection. The idea is a contextualization of the praxis of Jesus in such a way that a community is formed, a people that bring the kingdom of God to earth. It is the implementation of the kingdom of God in society, and this occurs by the people of God in Christian community. For Floristán, the human sciences are instrumental for practical pastoral theology since they offer the mechanisms for examining and understanding pastoral practices in their various contexts. The results can then be compared with the word of God, followed by theological reflection in order to return to "the world of practice".

From the feminist perspective, the following theologians are recognized: Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Ada María Isasi-Díaz, Delores S. Williams and Pamela Dickey Young. Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza is a feminist theologian that has established herself as one of the most recognized voices in feminist biblical interpretation. Fiorenza, who identifies herself as Catholic, adds to an understanding of the barriers that attempt to limit the task and the call of God to women. In her book, *In Memory of Her*, she relates how by the second and third centuries the church fathers confronted the leadership positions held by women and, in her opinion, "without no little opposition" on their part.

On the other hand, Fiorenza's response is centered around developing a critical feminist method of approaching the Bible. In her book *Wisdom Ways: Introducing Feminist Biblical Interpretation*, she teaches that the Bible needs to be read from a feminist perspective (some would say with the eyes of a woman). In her writings she proposes important hermeneutical approaches that could help obtain the appropriate answers for the marginalization or exclusion of women in the church. Reading the Bible in this way would allow for a rescue of the stories in the Bible, the histories of women that have been excluded or marginalized with prejudice. Reading the Bible through a woman's eyes allow for answers to be offered for women in their struggles and life experiences. Feminist theology attempts to unmask the oppressive function of patriarchal theology, in the manner of a "critical theology of liberation". Fiorenza's thesis is that "the silence and invisibility of women is generated by the patriarchal structure of the church and maintained by androcentric, that is male-defined, theology".

Ada María Isasi-Díaz is a womanist theologian, activist and committed to the struggle for justice and peace. For her, doing womanist theology is a vocation; it is her responsible way to live out her Christianity, a form of struggling for survival as a Latina in the United States and a way to struggle for her liberation. This theology, according to Isasi, gives a baseline voice to Hispanic women that can help change the current social ideology and structures. It is the task of womanist theology first of all to make women aware of the oppressive structures that dominate their lives. This theology is a call to affect those oppressive structure in a radical manner. This theology intends to point out these structures as sin, a condition that does not allow for the revelation of God and his presence

to be manifest in the communities. The second task of this theology is to insist that Latinas define their future. Third, this theology enables Latina women to understand how much they contribute to the prevailing systems in such a way that they can internalize their own oppression. A radical structural change is imperative, but this will not happen unless a radical change takes place in each of these women.

In her concept to Cultural Theology, Isasi-Díaz explains that all theology is the product of culture. In her cultural context, Hispanic women in the United States struggle to preserve the values that distinguish them from one culture or another. It is the Struggle for survival in a society in which they find themselves excluded.

Delores S. Williams represents a “womanist” theology. Delores Williams, reading the Bible through feminist lenses, finds in the story of Hagar, Sarai and Abraham’s servant, but certainly protected by God, another story of a black woman oppressed, used, abused and rejected. She uses this story to frame the experience of African-American women and the oppression in which they have lived from the times of slavery to the present. Williams compares Hagar’s experience in the dessert and the lack of survival means with the experience of black women in America that have very little, but even so, God provides the provision necessary to sustain them and their families. Hagar symbolizes the survival of women in the midst of family, community and national difficulties.

Delores Williams aligns herself with liberation theology, but is more concerned particularly for the women in general which connects her with the feminist theologies. Williams makes use

of oral history and the recorded voices of black women, of the literature and music of black culture, as well as socio-analytic discussions as the basis for her analysis. Her theology claims that black women in the United States survive because they believe in themselves, in others, but most of all because the trust in God.

This theology recognizes as well the barriers for black women within the church. In the final chapter of her book she makes the distinction between the black church (an invisible representation that corresponds to the common experiences of the Afro-American culture) and the denominational African-American churches (the institutional church, those that meet in the designated location). The author indicates that there is “a horrible side to the black woman’s experience that has to do with sexist oppression at the leadership and other levels in the life of the Church”.

Last, Pamela Dickey Young has identified herself as a feminist Christian theologian within the Protestant tradition. In her book *Feminist Theology / Christian Theology in Search of Method*, she seeks first of all to reconcile feminist theories with feminist theology, then proceeds to identify the elements that need to be taken into account in order to categorize a theology as Christian. She explains that a feminist theology will always be related to feminist theories, including when one analyzes the construct woman from an ecclesiastic view or in religious terms.

In her theological methodology, Dickey Young looks at the Christian tradition, which many feminists reject, as well as the present, beginning with the experiences women have today, as well as biblical and extra-biblical sources. She rec-

ognizes the difficulty and the threat this approach presents for feminist theologians, but insists that it is fundamental for her to remain in the church in order to work toward reform and changes from within. The author maintains that although feminist theologies are manifest in different forms and shapes, they are in agreement in four postulates. First, that traditional theologies are patriarchal. Second, that that theology ignores or makes a caricature of women. The third postulate is that nature of patriarchal theology has had harmful consequences for women by not allowing them to develop as complete human beings. For this reason, and it is the fourth postulate, it is women who should question the established patriarchal mentality. They should be doing theology.

Finally, Dickey Young states that whoever wants to be a Christian theologian and a feminist theologian should “maintain a balance between stated Christian fundamentals and the feminist interest in finding a theology that takes seriously women’s experiences and recognizes equality between men and women”.

The postulates of these theologians have been highlighted because the epistemological and methodological framework their theologies represent are consonant with the theme of this study, and consequently, with the struggles of Hispanic Pentecostal women for liberation.

New links/relationships

In this emerging theological method, the intent is to follow Christian feminist theologians in unmasking what is patriarchal. In the first place, there is a vocabulary that is intimately related to the patriarchal systems that should be recognized by

the Pentecostal church, in such a way that the unequal and oppressive situation of their women pastors be recognized. The literature identifies concepts such as **androcentric** (the ideology that legitimizes the patriarch through affirming the idea that what is masculine is the norm for all that governs humanity) and **gender** (understood in feminist theology and with the help of social sciences, including anthropology, as a social construct). **Sexism** is another ideology that supports patriarchal views and is defined as the supremacy or superiority of man. In many cases these attitudes and social constructs are the germinating seed of **misogyny**, or the hatred toward women that culminates in violence, and more tragically, femicide.

Second, we hold that the church sacralizes what is patriarchal through the interpretation of certain biblical narratives and the use of literal interpretation in relation to other biblical passages regularly used for silencing women and keeping them on the margin of power. Historical and cultural antecedents in Pentecostal denominations also support such a position of oppression (marginalization and exploitation). A theology of the Pentecostal woman in pastoral ministry would state that the patriarchal system is not the will of God, but rather the result of sin. As a consequence, such sin affects relationships between men and women in the community of faith who respond to the call of God and has a negative impact on fulfilling the mission of the Church.

In third place, these linking views, epistemologically speaking, belong to the order of feminist theology in general, but particularly to the ones mentioned. According to Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, if one wants appropriate answers for the marginalization or exclusion of women in the church, one

should consider the hermeneutic of experience, of domination, of social standing, suspicion, remembrance, critical evaluation and contextualization. This creates an awareness of the need for a feminist reading of the Bible. Reading the Bible in this way allows for a rescue of biblical narratives, that is, the stories of women that have been excluded, marginalized or treated with prejudice. Reading the Bible with a woman's eyes will allow answers to be offered to women in their struggles and life experiences.

In this line of thinking, Pamela Dickey Young invites all to develop an conscientization of the oppression, then to research the existing literature and search for an explication for oppression and exclusion. Later, in the second stage, there is a need for action through reconstruction. Both Schüssler Fiorenza and Dickey Young have pointed to rescuing the history of women and a reconstruction of doctrines in the light of new, reflexive thinking.

From the womanist theology perspective, it is vital to make women aware of the oppressive structures that dominate their lives. This theology makes a call to alter these oppressive structures. This theology attempts to point out the sin of these structures as a reality that does not allow the revelation of God and his presence to be made manifest in the communities. The second task of this theology is to insist on a definition of a future projection in the life of each believer. There is here a call to internalize the fact that a radical change of the structure is imperative, but this will not happen unless there is a radical change in each woman.

On the other hand, from the theological perspective of the African-American woman, such as that presented by Delores

Williams, women face barriers within the church. The author indicates that “there is a horrible side in the experience of a black woman that has to do with sexist oppression at the leadership and other levels in the life of the Church”. That then means that the Bible, as the word of God, should be reinterpreted in such a way that it provide important information regarding the tradition in order to respond in one’s daily life.

To conclude, I agree with the approach of Pamela Dickey Young regarding the importance of maintaining a balance between fundamental Christian postulates and the feminist interest in finding a theology that “takes seriously the experiences of women and recognizes the equality between men and women”.

Where, then, do these postulates by the theologies of feminist Christians lead? From our perspective, they direct us to elaborate the basic elements that constitute a theology of the Pentecostal, Hispanic woman.

The model

Now then, what are the theological sources of our proposed model for a theology of the Pentecostal, Puerto Rican woman? On the one hand, the sources are the very experiences of the women, and the action is the result of such reflection. The experiences of the women are a living background that bear witness of discrimination. Their experiences reflect the struggle to obey God and exercise the gifts received from the Holy Spirit within a patriarchal system. On the other hand, our reflection is serves as a source that leads to the conclusion that there is inequality between men and women in the Pentecostal churches, in which women exist in a second class category. Women are “equal, but different”. This reflection drives

to action in areas of interest to make the church more just and equitable. What, then, is the methodology that supports a theology of the Hispanic Pentecostal woman? What are the elements that constitute our proposed theological model?

Toward a theological model of the Pentecostal Hispanic woman: Constitutive elements

Figure 1: Constitutive elements of the proposed theological model of the Pentecostal Hispanic woman

The task

What should be the task of the Pentecostal women from a practical pastoral theology perspective? The mission is to promote the total, complete humanity of women. It would be a complementary matter with men. It is not about denigrating the opposite gender, but rather identifying that both men and women function in patriarchal structures. It is important to emphasize that both carry within them, intrinsically, the image of God.

From a Pentecostal tradition in particular, it is our hope that everyone “attain to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12-13), and as Paul stated in Galatians 3:28: “there is neither... male and female”, specifically when women want to respond to the call that God has given them. The response to this call, with the obvious resulting exercise of the gifts received from the Holy Spirit, has caused much pain, doubts and frustration for women. They are not just souls or errant spirits in the churches, but rather incarnations in bodies that feel, suffer, struggle and survive in both secular and ecclesial cultures that do not do them justice. This injustice is intolerable and can no longer be accepted. Justice is a vital

aspect of the kingdom of God; it is the sign of a new people established by God.

Women are a living testimony. The women pastors of our investigation are the living communities that help us understand the divine. In our theological and pastoral tasks it is necessary to discover and demonstrate the manner in which they need to understand God. It is the task of theologians to interpret how they feel, experience, live and relate to God. The theologian Leonor Aida Concha, Catholic nun, states that “women are theological subjects that have become protagonists and are forging processes”. Justo L. González and José D. Rodríguez have expressed the women are the “emerging subjects of theology”.

For her part, Delores Williams, reading the Bible from the feminist viewpoint, finds in the story of Hagar, Sarah’s servant, another story of oppressed women, used, abused and rejected, whom she portrays in order to frame the experience of African-American women and the oppression they have faced since the time of slavery. This feminist perspective distinguishes women as the emerging subjects of theology, particularly the women pastors of the Pentecostal, Puerto Rican church.

At the same time, a theology of the Pentecostal woman should consider the person of the Holy Spirit, and how the consequent impact on these women’s experience. In this case, it involves a calling to pastoral ministry within a church that preaches the importance of responding to living a life in the Spirit in order to realize the task to which all are called. This emerging theology should, in dialog between women and men, bring to light how the Holy Spirit becomes pertinent and relevant in this gender conflict that seems to interfere with the missional call of the church. In addition, this theo-

gy needs to trust in what the Holy Spirit says as well as how he prompts to action in a liberating manner.

The hermeneutical method: Conscientization, biblical reflection, action under the direction of the Holy Spirit

The church, the body of Christ, is relevant insofar as it fulfills that task to which it has been commissioned: “go and make disciples”. It is also inherent in the mission of the church to go and set free the oppressed in the anointing of the Spirit of God. Jesus’ proclamation “yours is the kingdom of God” (Luke 6.20) evokes a believer’s conduct in keeping with the values of the kingdom of God. This conduct by the believer and the church should constantly be evaluated to ensure the believers are walking in the right path and fulfilling the task effectively.

Fortunately, practical pastoral theology allows an approach to ecclesial functions, or praxis, in a way that makes possible reflection for evaluating if what is practiced is in line with the calling and purposes of God for all women in the church. In the words of Casiano Floristán “...theology, therefore, is associated with the edification of the people and with social reality”.

The hermeneutical method of the proposed theological model of this investigation is defined as the set of procedures considered in order to express a system of thought in such a way as to provide justice for the women of the Pentecostal church. The objective is to enable, as a Christian community, in the most evident and intentional manner, reflection on the values of the kingdom of God in the church, community, society and finally, in the entire nation. The purpose is to fulfill the liberating commission in an integral way within the community of faith. The method is inductive as well as deductive,

since the conclusions are drawn from concrete acts, but also from abstract principles and prior ideas.

Feminist theologies see the concrete actions as the daily life, the struggles, the personal experiences of women in their particular contexts. For pastoral theology, the concrete actions refer to the human self as a document, the person that based on his or her own experiences can communicate and transmit a message.

On the other hand, the abstract principles and prior ideas of the proposed model are the postulates of the Pentecostal church, referring specifically to the teachings and sermons. Based on these teachings, a Pentecostal Puerto Rican theological model in particular, and Hispanic in general, can be elaborated.

Among these teachings, the following can be mentioned. On the one hand, an understanding of the Holy Spirit and the gifts that the Pentecostal church possesses is fundamental. There is also the idea that all are called, but it is the individual's responsibility to respond. Once people have responded affirmatively to the call of God, and have repented of their sins, then they are part of the community of faith. They come to be the light and salt of the earth. These individuals serve God's purpose of reconciling all of mankind to him through Jesus Christ. In sum, the experiences of women pastors as concrete actions as well as the invaluable teachings of the church become the basis for presenting this hermeneutical model. In the end, as a system the model needs orderly movement, with a defined set of steps. What, then, are the steps in the proposed theological model of the Pentecostal Hispanic woman?

Figure 2: Hermeneutical method for the proposed theological model of the Pentecostal Hispanic woman

The first step is conscientization. The necessary question is what is happening? One should be able to observe spontaneously, then in a directed manner, and finally, critically. In the Pentecostal dynamic it is known as “giving room to the Spirit of God” to act in men and women on a personal level. However, there are definite repercussions in the body, the people of the church. In this step one should observe the phenomena, the structures, the theories that are in play as well as internal mechanisms. Upon analysis of the conflict of the woman in the Pentecostal context, it is then possible to ask: Why can't Pentecostal women be part of the structures in which decisions are made that affect the entire church, nationally and worldwide? Why can't they exercise leadership in accordance with the gifts of the Spirit?

It would seem anomalous that women can be pastors, teach, lead a congregation, and in Puerto Rico be part of the church boards in local congregations, yet not be allowed to hold positions in the hierarchy of power. The theories of power and dominance in play are consistent with the patriarchal system. The structure of many Pentecostal churches is hierarchical, centralized and dominated by men and the biblical arguments supporting such dominance are weak and anachronous. It can also be argued that these supporting arguments are sinful and require repentance. With regard to this power play, women need to understand that underlying the negation of leadership positions to them is also the fact that each position opened for them would result in one closed to a man.

The internal mechanisms contribute to keeping women from rising to positions in which decisions are made. Women

in the Mission Board, trained for the task in accordance with the gifts they have received, are unable to obtain the credentials for bishopry that would permit them to participate in the decision-making process of the church. These women, who have responded to the call of God, need to find ways to resolve the conflicts that this situation creates in their ministry as well as in their personal lives.

Ada María Isasi-Díaz insists that the church itself “is oppressive, since it does not allow space for [Catholic] women to seek the possibility to develop their full potential, in contrast with the masculine gender”. It is necessary to make Pentecostal women aware that they form a majority of the church, yet are not accorded equal conditions as the male ministers. It is vital for women of this church become “conscientized” of the very oppression being effected that translates into discrimination and subordination.

The second step of this hermeneutical process is the re-reading of the Bible. Once one has become aware of the marginalization, the oppression, injustice and inequality, the following question needs to be asked: What is God’s response to this or that situation? Whatever the matter under consideration, it must be considered in light of the values of the kingdom and the teachings of God in the person of Jesus Christ. The proposed hermeneutical model for emerging theology invites an encounter with the Word of God in order to determine how the actions of the church are in consonance or inconsonance with Scriptures. This is to read the Bible as a dialogue between partners inspired by the Spirit; it is to bring questions, circumstances and needs to the text, and through it to the Lord. It is to permit him to bring his own agenda in such a way that it is he who speaks to the reader

through the Word. Nonetheless, the encounter has the primary objective of producing a liberating experience.

In the present conflict facing Pentecostal women pastors, the inequality between men and women is identified. This raises the question, what are the arguments presented by the ecclesial structure to support their actual position? These arguments are generally supported by quoting the Bible.

To begin, what does the Bible mean to Pentecostals? For them the Bible is the Word of God. In its Declaration of Faith, the Church of God, in particular, affirms its belief in the verbal inspiration of the Bible. "The Church of God believes and holds the complete Bible, correctly interpreted. The New Testament is the only rule for governing and discipline." On occasion the church in full has met to interpret the Scriptures and to make known the teachings that have been found.

However, more than just a doctrine, the Bible is seen as an experience with the Holy Spirit.

The Pentecostals in general read the Bible, not to learn the history of Israel, nor the development of Christian theology in the early church, or the life of Christ, but rather to meet Christ in the text, and to provide an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to speak to our Spirit. In our tradition, the reading, interpretation and proclamation of Scripture has little to do with intellectual comprehension, and everything to do with the revelation of a divine God.

Andrew Davis states that "when the Pentecostals bring their shared experiences to the text, they find the security they need

to base their faith on the Scriptures with no doubting of what they see in it". He adds that "as Pentecostals we prefer to interpret Scripture more as an encounter than through exegesis... and more simply, to allow the Spirit of God to tell us whatever he wants us to know from the words on the page".

This investigation has presented precisely, as a link between the feminist theologies and the proposed Pentecostal Puerto Rican theology, the importance and the approach to be used in seeking answers from the Bible. For Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, if one wants appropriate answers to the marginalization or exclusion of women in the church, one should consider, among other things, the hermeneutic of suspicion.

Theology invites women students to read the Bible in this manner, with suspicion, because women, in Fiorenza's opinion, have been taught to read the Bible from the hermeneutic of respect, acceptance and obedience. This feminist theology contends for the practice of a hermeneutic of deconstruction that would enable an analysis of the linguistic and cultural practices in the dominant structure, especially with regard to women. When the Bible is approached from this perspective, students can ask, critique and demystify ideas and concepts that occult the deeper truths. Consequently, biblical narratives of women that have been marginalized or presented with prejudice can be rescued. To read the Bible through the eyes of a woman will offer responses to women in their struggles life experiences.

Delores Williams describes in her book the suffering and struggles to survive of African-American women and recognizes as well the barriers for women within the church. One way in which these women can survive their experiences is

through appreciation of the value of the Bible. In the same manner, Pentecostal women consider the Bible as the Word of God. That word is what inspires and nourishes their life. The Bible is comfort in times of tribulation and provides guidance and direction when wisdom is sought; as well, it presents answers to questions and doubts.

Just as for African-American women, the Bible is a source of strength for Pentecostal women, who “read the Bible not to take hold of it, but rather to let God take hold of us through it. And once the Word has made an impact on our hearts, it becomes a fire in our bones”. Just as the Womanist theology took the story of Hagar and gave it a re-interpretation with regard to their own sufferings of slavery, so have the Pentecostals seen themselves through the eyes of women such as Mary, Deborah, Ruth and Esther, among many others. The challenge, however, is to not to use the Bible as a means to reinforce the undeniable, present patriarchal structure in which women find themselves.

As a primary concern for feminist theologian, it is also vital for this writer as well to rescue the stories of women in the Bible. This means to comb through the stories and reinterpret them, divesting them of the patriarchal trappings by which they are generally understood. This is what the women pastors of this study have stated: the Bible texts need to be revisited and taught new.

The third step hermeneutical step in the proposed theological model is action under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Now one is in position to answer the question “what needs to be done”? Here, theology is not only transformational, but also militant and committed action.

The womanist theologian, in the voice of Isasi-Díaz, aspires first of all to conscientize women of their situation in order for them to act. This theology explains that when Hispanic women in the United States begin to understand their situation, based on the religious experience they embrace, the begin to fight for their dignity and the values that give them identity.

Casiano Floristán states that it is in this stage of action that the structures must be classified. Eldin Villafaña, for his part, advises his readers regarding sinful structures. When the church excludes, marginalizes, judges and torments, employing the structure as a means of “enslaving” women, it operates in the realm of sin.

A precise action is a matter of thought. In general, Pentecostals understand that when difficult or delicate situations occur, “the best thing is to pray”. There is value in the spiritual tradition of prayer, but it is no less certain that on occasion, while in prayer and after, one must move to action. Pentecostal women who have been conscientized of their oppression, and then find in the Scriptures passages that free them from their captivity, must certainly act in behalf of justice for all. The dynamic power of the Spirit cannot circumscribe momentary, personal experiences, but rather should serve to impulse those that receive that power to be witnesses of the liberty found in Christ in all sense of its significance. The church needs to be the setting where both individual and social transformation can occur. In this regard, Eldin Villafaña very eloquently states:

The charismatic empowering of the Spirit has received a singular and distinctive emphasis in Pentecostalism. Pentecostals... tend to interpret this

experience in a limited way. It is true that Pentecostalism has been recognized as a powerful force in evangelization, world missions, church growth and spirituality, but it is equally true that the services and prophetic voices against sinful structures and for social justice have been absent..

What, then, is the manner in which this investigator should act with regard to the conflict facing women pastors in our Pentecostal churches? It should be said that for several years now (the last four world assemblies) the matter of ordaining women has been a subject of debate. Each world assembly confronts anew the ecclesial culture and questions its hermeneutic. Papers are presented in favor and against the ordination of women by different currents of thought in the church. Again, it is very difficult for officials to accept and legitimize what women do. Within the body, the church, the base, however, people have been able to accept the authority of women in their occupation as pastors.

This writer, together with a group of women and men of the Iglesia de Dios Mission Board presented at the business meeting in January, 2005 a motion that would permit Puerto Rican women ministers with the second level of credentials, ordination, would be eligible to hold positions of leadership in the ecclesial structure, with the exception of national bishop. The motion was unanimously approved.

It is in the knowledge of this investigator that women in other countries of Latin America are now also being elected to national advisory boards. In our island, women are being named as well to district supervisory positions and as members of some important boards. These are concrete actions that

occur have there has been conscientization based on Scripture passages that validate the total participation of women in matters of the kingdom of God and his church.

Interlocutors: Pentecostal women and men together as prophets of justice

The church represents Christ here on earth, and according to Scriptures, the believers are his ambassadors. The kingdom of God is not just eschatological, since its values can be practiced in the present time. That was the mandate of the Lord Jesus in his earthly ministry. This kingdom, however, is different from earthly kingdoms. The kingdom of God should be characterized by justice and peace. In order for the peace of God, which is a fruit of his Spirit, to abound in the church, justice must prevail. There can be no abounding peace where there is no justice.

The Old Testament prophets confronted people from both within and without their boundaries with regard to sin and injustice. The prophets denounced and interpreted the times, calling on the people to draw near to God and extend mercy and justice to others. It was necessary to change the attitudes and respond to the call of God.

In the same manner, Jesus preached that his kingdom was not structured like earthly kingdoms. In his wisdom, he entrusted the message of his resurrection to women. At the same time, he chastised the disciples that did not believe them. It is in this tension between the divine and human that the church needs to demonstrate to the world the image of Christ, of the Father and the Holy Spirit, an image that does not differentiate between race, color, ethnicity, age, state in life, social standing or gender. A. J. Tomlinson, founder of the Church of God

expressed that the church is not a government to be patterned after the democracy of the United States, nor is it like any other earthly government. It would be incorrect, therefore, to continue teaching that women have no inherent place in matters of governance in the church in which they serve. That does not serve justice for women, and does not produce peace.

Consequently, new interpreters of the Word of God are needed; new prophets that recognize the authority of that Word, that do justice to the body of Christ, demonstrating the kingdom of God in the present. For us, the new prophets are men and women, guided by the Holy Spirit, can overcome the historic decisions of this church to the detriment of women. They are men and women that recognize that God gives spiritual gifts to all for the edification of the body, and that gender does not disqualify one for the exercising of those gifts, including the gifts of leadership and administration. These prophets of justice are men and women who, in the light of new sciences of interpretation, are able to update the message of salvation before a society that demands equity and equality for the ministry of Pentecostal women.

The Pentecostal church must not continue fighting the Holy Spirit who calls both men and women for the fulfillment of the mission.

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:10-11)

The Holy Spirit gives gifts to individuals for the edification and building up of the church. The apostle Paul, however, teaches that the church then serves to affirm, recognize and validate what the Holy Spirit has entrusted:

We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. (Romans 12:6-8)

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. (1 Corinthians 12:27-28)

Conclusion

It is imperative to view Pentecostal women “living communities,” which implies hearing and interpreting what their voices are saying within that context. The women in our interviews expressed having lived with discrimination, prejudice and oppression in living flesh. They confirmed that the task has not been easy, and not due to that nature of the task itself, but rather for the prejudices they faced. They concluded that they need to work hard and exert themselves much more than men in order to be recognized.

Nonetheless, they are standing firm in the fact their task is a calling from God. They understand that God does not play

favorites and that they can count on the guarantee of the Holy Spirit for performing the mission. These women are willing to carry on with their ministry even knowing that they are not in equal condition. They are intelligent, dedicated, courageous and committed women who have demonstrated their ability to lead in the multiple areas in which

Thus, the proposed model intends to serve as a response to the situation in which Pentecostal Hispanic women are called to minister in areas of leadership, this from a practical pastoral perspective as well as feminist theologies.

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CHAPTER 14

Hispanics and Islam in the United States History and Diverse Experiences Dr. Victor Hugo Cuartas

1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to describe and examine the history and background of Islam in the United States and the diverse experiences of Hispanic Muslims, as well as the background of Hispanics in this context, in order to better understand the process of religious conversion among Hispanic Muslims in the United States. Another important aspect to be considered in the dynamic process of conversion is the development of Islamic organizations and their role in the conversion process among ethnic minorities.

This chapter addresses the following issues: the context and background of Islam in the United States; the conversions of Hispanics to Islam; the salient reasons for conversion; the most appealing aspects of Islam; the role of the converts in making choices; and the role of Hispanic Muslim organizations in the socialization process.

The historical background is one of the lenses this researcher uses to analyze the dynamics of religious conversion among Hispanics. Furthermore, it is crucial to analyze the dynamics of immigration among Muslims and Hispanics. How

did these two immigrant communities begin to interact in their neighborhoods? The purpose of this chapter is not to fully describe the history of Islam and Hispanics in the United States, but to offer an introduction of how Islam began and how African-American Muslims contributed to the early conversion of some Hispanics in the United States.

The Immigration Act of 1965, alongside the Civil Rights movement, and the rise of religious Revivalism in the United States were crucial to facilitate more openly the practice of Islam among immigrants. This chapter highlights the fact that changes in immigration regulations, and these social movements between the 1960s and 1970s created a positive environment for active interaction between Muslims from several countries, African-Americans, and Hispanics.

The first part of the chapter describes the background and history of Islam in the United States. The second part includes the history and background of Hispanics in the United States. Next, the chapter describes and analyzes the dynamics of conversion of Hispanic Muslims, presenting the methods, findings and generalizations of an empirical study among Hispanic Muslims in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area. The chapter concludes with a discussion on some helpful theories such as modernity and multiple “modernities” to explain the findings.

2. History & Background of Islam in the United States

The history of Muslims and Islam in the United States is very dynamic. “The history of Islam in the contemporary world, as throughout much of history, continues to be one of dynamic change. Muslim societies have experienced the effects of rapid change and

with it the challenges in religious, political, and economic development. Muslims continue to grapple with the relationship of the present and future to the past” (Esposito 1999b:690).

Muslims from different countries have immigrated to the United States throughout the years. Muslims in the United States come from different backgrounds, and are one of the most racially diverse religious groups in the United States. “The results shed light on one of the most diverse religious groups in the United States, reflecting the economic, racial, and political diversity within America itself” (Gallup 2009:1).

One of the challenges for immigrants in general is to maintain their identity as they embrace new cultures and societies. “This identity has shaped several general generations of Europeans and Americans through the cauldron of two world wars. It has been celebrated in literature, art, music, and dance” (Haddad 1999:611).

Muslim immigrants have also been shaped in their home countries by the specific

events and views of their generation. Many adult Muslim immigrants “have a pre-formed distinctive identity, not only of their tribe, village, town, or city, but also a national identity instilled by the schools and the institutions of the state from which they emigrated” (Haddad 1999:611).

2.1 Islam in the United States from the Pre-Columbian Era through the Nineteenth Century

Scholars have different opinions regarding the exact date of Islam’s first encounter with the New World. Nevertheless, Nyang (1999) affirms that a Muslim explorer from Mali in

northwestern Africa named Mansa Abu Bakr visited the region of the Gulf of Mexico in 1312.

Bakr's expedition was documented by the Muslim historian al-Omari. Nyang also references the research of Leo Wiener to substantiate Bakr's excursion to the New World. Wiener documents similar ethno-linguistic behavior patterns between West Africans and Native Americans from the Gulf of Mexico (Nyang 1999:12).

From the 1880s to 1914, several thousand Muslims immigrated to the United States, mostly for financial purposes, from the Arabian areas of the Ottoman Empire, and from South Asian countries such as Pakistan and India. According to Curtis IV (2009), Muslim immigrants did not establish distinct settlements, and possibly assimilated into the broader society (Curtis IV 2009:119). In addition, many slaves taken to colonial America from Africa were Muslims; it is estimated that 15 to 30 percent of the African slaves were Muslims (Hill & Lippy 2005: 394).

One of the first historical accounts of a Muslim in the the United States dates back to the Narvaez expedition in 1527, an early exploration of what is now Arizona and New Mexico by the Spaniards. "Estevanico of Azamor, a slave of Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, was a Muslim Berber, originally from Morocco, North Africa" (El Kacimi 2008:19).

Estevanico Dorantes was raised in a Muslim home. However, Estevanico was captured in 1513, and enslaved by the Portuguese and forced to convert to Christianity. There is no strong evidence to affirm that Estevanico openly practiced Christianity. Race Capet (2010) reports that Estevanico went

on to explore the regions of what is today New Mexico and Arizona prior to his death at the hands of the Native American Zuni Pueblos (Capet 2010:549-550).

2.2 Islam in the Twentieth Century

Muslims in the United States experienced significant changes during the twentieth century. The economic hardships during the nineteenth century prevented many Muslim immigrants from succeeding financially. Therefore, many Muslim immigrants decided to settle in the United States, particularly in the Midwest in places such Dearborn, Michigan; Quincy, Massachusetts; and also Ross, North Dakota. Muslim immigrants started arriving in small numbers around the turn of the twentieth century and continued in increasing waves throughout the first half of the century, “adventurers” who became attracted to the New World for its economic opportunities (Haddad & Smith 1993:11).

The twentieth century witnessed several favorable developments for Muslims in the United States from a demographic perspective. Haddad states that in the last half of the twentieth century, the number of Muslims in the United States rose substantially due to immigration, procreation, and conversion (Haddad 1998:88). Thus, migration plays an important role in the advancement of Islam in the twentieth century.

According to Haddad & Lummis (1987), the migration of Muslims to the United States occurred in the following five ways:

- 1. The First Wave from 1875 to 1912.** This wave of immigrants “consisted mostly of uneducated and unskilled young Arab men from the rural areas of what now constitutes Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and

Lebanon, then under Ottoman rule” (Haddad & Lummis 1987:14). There were some Christians and Muslims among the immigrants. Most of the immigrants came with the purpose of improving their economic status, but they had difficulties in finding jobs. Some had to work in factories or small merchants. Others were forced to return to their country of origin because of the challenges of learning a new language and the difficulties in adaptation. For the most part, they settled in the eastern United States, the Midwest, and along the Pacific Coast (Smith 2004:1).

2. The Second Wave from 1918 to 1922. After the conclusion of the World War I, immigrants from urban areas in countries such as Libya decided to emigrate to the West due to political and economic reasons. “The majority were relatives, friends, and acquaintances of the earlier immigrants” (Haddad & Lummis 1987:14).

Restrictive laws regulated the number of immigrants who were permitted to enter the United States, with preference given to relatives of former immigrants (Haddad 1998:89). Immigration was limited according to the national origin of the foreign-born population of the United States in 1890, later changed in 1920, In 1924, a new U.S. immigration law controlled the number of immigrants by instituting the national origins quota system (Smith 2004: 2).

3. The Third Wave from 1930 to 1938. Due to restrictive regulations during these years, the movement of Muslims to the United States was very lim-

ited. Only relatives of former immigrants were allowed to immigrate. Many immigrants and Muslim families experienced challenges and difficulties due to these regulations.

4. The Fourth Wave from 1947 to 1960. There was a considerable increase in the number of Muslim immigrants, and not only from the Middle Eastern countries. This wave also included immigrants from India, Pakistan, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union. Some of the immigrants left their countries of origin due to political reasons. Many Muslim families applied for asylum to escape political persecution.

5. The Fifth Wave from 1967 to the present. Muslim immigrants from different countries have chosen to come to the United States for several reasons. Some of the main reasons to immigrate include economic, educational, and particularly political issues. "Many of the arrivals from Pakistan and the Arab world since the middle of the century have been educated professionals. More newly groups of semi-skilled workers have come from Pakistan, Yemen, Lebanon, and Iran" (Haddad & Lummis 1987:14). This trend of significant Muslim immigration will continue due to the instability in some countries in the Middle East and North Africa, such as Libya and Egypt.

I concur with Curtis IV who states that "the Immigration Act of 1965, the Civil Rights movement (1955-1968) and the rise of religious Revivalism

in the United States (1965-1970) were crucial in facilitating more open expression and the practice of Islam among ethnic minorities and immigrants” (Curtis IV 2010:261). Moreover, I argue that the changes in the immigration regulations and these social movements between the 1960s and 1970s created a favorable environment for active interaction between diverse ethnic groups from different religions and backgrounds in neighborhoods and the marketplace.

As a result of these changes in immigration law, many Muslim immigrants came to the United States to settle and to contribute in the American development, and to obtain higher education and advanced technical training for particular work opportunities (Haddad 1998:89). This opening of doors for immigration not only facilitated the increase of Muslims in the country, but also led to the creation of several Muslims organizations and the building of mosques in various states.

2.3 Islam in Post September 11, 2001 Period

The events and the consequences of the September 11, 2001 multiple attacks, including on the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York, significantly transformed the presence of Islam in the United States. Within hours of the attacks, an unprecedented rash of intolerable incidents on Muslims and Arabs along with Sikhs, South Asians, and other individuals who appeared to be of Middle Eastern descent, in the form of discrimination, harassment, racial and religious profiling was reported (Peek 2005:230).

Muslims in the United States experienced great challenges. The Patriot Act, approved in October 2001, resulted in the rounding up about 1,200 Arab, South Asian, and Muslim men on suspicion of potential ties to terrorism. The detainees' names were not released, and they were not even permitted access to a lawyer, and were therefore held in jail without being indicted of a crime (Curtis IV 2009:100).

One of the main challenges faced by the Muslims in the United States, both indigenous and immigrant, is to remain active as US citizens without losing their Islamic heritage and culture. The difficulty for Black Muslims will be the possibility of full integration into the U.S. social and political order (Simmons 2008:275). Another challenge within the Muslim community centers on the current tensions and intergroup relations between the immigrant Muslims and the native-born converts.

Despite all the difficulties and challenges after September 11, "Muslim Americans of all racial and ethnic origins, their organizations, and institutions became visible players in the American public life to a greater degree than even before" (Curtis IV 2010:506). After the terrorist attacks, Muslim Americans emerged in a much different social position than that which they held prior to the attacks. Muslims in the United States today represent diverse movements and identities: immigrant and indigenous, Sunni and Shiite, conservative and liberal, orthodox and heterodox (Smith 2004:1).

This first section has described several periods in the history of Islam in the United States and the role of immigration. The next section will discuss the history and background of Hispanics in the United States as the largest minority, looking

at the religious affiliation and the influence of the Nation of Islam in some of the conversions of ethnic minorities.

3. Hispanics in the United States: The Largest Ethnic Minority

Hispanics have become the largest minority in the United States. According to the Pew Hispanic Center (2008), “The Hispanic population, already the nation’s largest minority group, will triple in size and will account for most of the nation’s population growth from 2005 through 2050. Hispanics will make up 29% of the U.S. population in 2050, compared with 14% in 2005” (PHC 2008:i). The top five states by Hispanic population are California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Illinois.

There has been a remarkable shift in regard to the Hispanic population in the United States. In 1900, when the U.S. population was 76 million, there were an estimated 500,000 Hispanics. The Census Bureau estimates that between the years 2030 and 2050, Hispanic contribution to the nations’ growth will be 57 percent. Thus, by 2050, one-quarter of the population will be of Hispanic descent. This demographic change is essentially driven by immigration from Latin American countries.

According to the PHC’s 2012 report, the largest Hispanic populations are generally found in Los Angeles and New York. In Los Angeles, Hispanics make up 45% of the area’s residents. In the New York metropolitan area, Hispanics make up about one-in-four (24%) of all residents (PHC 2012:4). In addition, more than six out of every ten Hispanics in the United States were born in the U.S.

Statistics based on the 2010 Census reported 50.5 million Hispanics in the United States, a 43 percent increase from

2000 Census. These numbers do not include the approximately 12 million undocumented immigrants from Latin American countries. The United States has the second largest Hispanic population in the world. The first largest Hispanic population is in Mexico, with approximately 115 million Hispanics. Six of the top ten emigrant countries to the United States are in Latin America. The top ten emigrant countries in 2006 were Mexico, People's Republic of China, Philippines, India, Cuba, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Vietnam, and Jamaica. This representation of different nationalities from Latin America adds a great diversity in terms of culture, idioms, and religious expressions.

Moreover, there has been an increase in the concentration of Hispanics in metropolitan areas. About half (45%) of the Hispanic population in the United States live in just 10 metropolitan areas, according to a survey conducted in 2010 by the Pew Hispanic Center (PHC 2012:1). The metropolitan Washington area, which includes parts of the states of Maryland and Virginia, is the twelfth largest metropolitan area in terms of Hispanic population in the United States. This is the geographical area where I am conducting this research. Therefore, I will expand later on the demographics of this area.

The contribution of Hispanics in the religious landscape of the United States is very significant. The Pew Hispanic Center and The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life published a comprehensive study about Hispanic religions in the United States. This study suggests that "Hispanics are transforming the nations' religious landscape, especially the Catholic church, not only because of their growing numbers, but also because they are practicing a distinctive form of Christianity" (PHC 2007:1).

This study conducted by the Pew Hispanic Center, however, does not contain data for analysis in regard to their conversion by Hispanics to or affiliation with Islam. Thus, I argue that there is a need for conducting more research about the dynamics of religious participation in different religions among the Hispanics.

3.1 Hispanic Religious Affiliation in the United States

De La Torre states that “Hispanics are bringing transformation to religious communities in the United States, and also [that] these religious communities are bringing change to Hispanics” (De La Torre 2009:xx). The Pew Hispanic Center (2007) comprehensive study of religion among the Hispanics in the United States shows that Hispanics express greater commitment to religion (68 percent) than the overall population in the United States (60 percent). Nine out of ten Hispanics identify with a specific religion (PHC 2007:1-4).

The PHC’s study reveals that nearly a third of all Catholics in the United States now are Hispanics. The study projects that the Latino percentage will continue rising. In addition, more than half of the Hispanic Catholics identify themselves as charismatics, compared with only an eighth of non-Hispanic Catholics. In the same way, the “renewalist” movement is very influential among Hispanic Protestants. More than half of Hispanics in this group identify with spirit-filled religion, compared with nearly a fifth of non-Hispanic Protestants. Many Hispanics who are joining evangelical churches are Catholic converts (PHC 2007:1).

According to the Hispanic Churches in American Public Life (HCAPL) national survey conducted in 2000, Hispanic

religious affiliation in the United States is as follows (Espino-
sa et al. 2003:14-15):

- ✦ 70 percent of Latinos is Catholic, translating into 29 million Catholic Latinos in the United States (compared to 22 million white, mainline Protestants).
- ✦ 23 percent of Latinos is Protestant or “other Christian” (including Jehovah’s Witnesses and Mormons). That translates to 9.5 million people.
- ✦ 85 percent of all U.S. Latino Protestants identify themselves as Pentecostals or Evangelicals. That translates into 6.2 million people.
- ✦ 37 percent of the U.S. Latino population (14.2 million) self-identifies as “born-again” or evangelical. This figure includes Catholic charismatics, who constitute 22 percent of U.S. Latino Catholics.
- ✦ 26 percent, or 7.6 million, of all Latino Catholics self-identify as being born-again.
- ✦ 1 percent of Latinos identify with a world religion, such as Buddhism, Islam or Judaism.
- ✦ 37 percent of all Latinos are atheist or agnostic.

Despite the surprising percentages of Latino Protestants, the vast majority of U.S. Hispanics, 70 percent, are Catholics, making the Catholic Church the most recognizable symbol of Latino religion. In 2005, there were approximately 29 million

Latino Catholics in the United States (Murray n.d.:1). However, recent immigration of Hispanics from different religious backgrounds and several generations are adding new dynamics to the religious landscape in the United States.

The number of Hispanic Catholics in the United States has decreased in the last three decades. According to Greeley (1997), “the Catholic population in the United States among those of Spanish origin in the early 1970’s was 78%. By the mid-1990s that percentage had dropped to 67%. Greeley estimates that the defection rate is approximately 60,000 people per year” (Greeley 1997:1). According to the institute for Latino Studies, the Hispanic population in 2002 was divided into 70% Catholic, 23% Protestant, 6% without a religious preference/other, and 1% practicing a world religion other than Christianity. “Hispanics are transforming the nation’s religious landscape because they are practicing a distinctive form of Christianity” (PHC 2007:1).

The speedy growth of the Hispanic population over the past 30 years has created a significant shift in the makeup of Catholic Church in the United States. Studies show that while only 12 percent of U.S. Catholics were Latino in 1970, today that number is estimated by U.S. Catholic bishops at 40 percent. Over that same period, however, the percentage of U.S. Latinos who consider themselves Catholic has declined.

There is now a trend in conversion from Catholicism towards Protestant Evangelicalism in the United States, and especially to Pentecostal congregations and the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. This trend evidently shows that while Catholicism is still the leading religion among Hispanic immigrants, it no longer holds a religious monopoly (Althoff 2007:

6). Some scholars have done research in the United States on Pentecostalism and Charismatic Catholic movements (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo 1998; Wilson & Miranda 2002; Espinosa et al. 2005). However, I argue that there is a need to research more about the Hispanics' experience with other religions as well. The experiences of Hispanics' conversion from Catholicism and Protestantism to Islam, for example, will shed new light into the studies of religious conversion among ethnic minorities.

Regarding the assimilation of Hispanics in the United States, Huntington (n.d.) states that Latinos do not assimilate in the way prior immigrants did (Murray n.d.:5). However, scholars such as Espinosa (2003) disagree with Huntington. Espinosa states that the Latino immigration to the United States is fundamentally different than prior waves. "The fact that we share a border with Mexico means Latino immigration should be considered very different. However, the idea that Latinos will come in and completely assimilate like the Irish or other ethnic groups is somewhat problematic" (Murray n.d:5).

3.2 Hispanics in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area

The Hispanic population in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area is growing (Census Bureau 2010; PHC 2008, 2011). There are more than 750,000 Hispanics in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, which includes parts Virginia and Maryland. Salvadorans comprise the single largest nationality, growing grew by 152% since 2000, and comprising 33.7 of the Hispanic population (PHC 2011:4, 6; U.S. Census Bureau 2011). Puerto Ricans are the largest Hispanic origin group in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania/New Jersey, the 24th largest His-

panic metropolitan area, making up more than half (53%) of all Hispanics there (PHC 2012:4).

In addition, the diversity of Hispanics in this area is significant. There are Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Dominicans, Guatemalans, and others from South America. This area is the heart of the nation. The capital of the nation is located in this area, and this fact brings interesting dynamics in terms of immigration, religious and ethnic diversity. Thus, the converts from this area will add insightful aspects to the conversion studies.

There is a tendency to see Hispanics in the United States as some type of monolithic group. This is not the case. According to de La Torre (2009), "Hispanics represent a very diverse population. Some of them are white, some indigenous, other black, and most somewhere in between. They are a *mestizaje* (mixture) of cultures, races, and ethnicities" (De La Torre 2009:xv). In addition, Hispanics represent all the colors of the human rainbow of skin pigmentation, coming from a multitude of cultural and ethnic backgrounds (De La Torre 2009:xv). My argument is that the diversity among Hispanics facilitates the interaction with other ethnic groups in the United States. Also, it helps them to inquire about other religions.

These interactions occurred in several cities in the United States, particularly in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area during the middle of the twentieth century. While individuals from the small Hispanic population at that time assumed leadership roles and began to organize as a community, they also collaborated with African-American leaders and neighborhood activists. Living side by side in a city

that, like other major U.S. cities, was experiencing a period of economic and physical decline, residents began to organize neighborhood-based commissions and service agencies (Cadaval 2003:236-237).

The civil rights movement between the 1960s and 1970s was significant because it brought together different ethnicities to fight for a common cause. Traumatic events such as Martin Luther King's murder and the consequent race uprisings in Newark, Washington D.C. and Chicago underlined the social and economic inequalities in the United States (Cadaval 2003:236). Here we found Hispanics, people from Middle Eastern countries, and African-Americans marching together for a common purpose.

Immigrants began to fight for justice to defend their civil rights. "Latinos, particularly in Washington, adopted the objectives of the civil rights movement: The Cubans shouted for their rights as refugees. The Mexicans can fight because their land has been taken away, but then the Colombians and Dominicans are left without any rights. Reverend Welty, a Colombian, organized a meeting at the Wilson Center so people could gather and share about their struggles and values" (Cadaval 2003:237).

Thus, language was not the only thing in common. The fact that immigrants from different countries struggled with the same issues gave them a sense of unity, empowerment, and purpose.

According to Cadaval (2003), "the struggle for civil rights became an intense self-coding process. For example, African-Americans developed a new style and political awareness based on the

motto “black is beautiful”. Mexican-Americans identified with La Raza (the concept of mestizo roots) in honor to their often repressed or denied Indian heritage. The Hispanic immigrants who arrived later did not necessarily have either a black or Indian awareness. However, they understood the need to establish a new self-definition in a new land” (Cadaval 2003:237).

Consequently, a Latino aesthetic and culture emerged in several places in Washington, D.C. A sense of home began to reshape the neighborhood and to transform it into the barrio. Hispanic grocery stores played a significant role in establishing the barrios because they facilitated not only the interaction between people from different countries, but also their financial improvement (Cadaval 2003:237).

Later, other businesses such as record stores, shoe-repair shops, cafes, and restaurants were established. During this time, a new leadership emerged from several businesses and social-service agencies that responded to the specific needs of the people in their communities. New Latino communities, with their own social agencies, stores, restaurants, and festivals were developed also in Maryland, and Virginia (Cadaval 2003:243).

There are some scholars that emphasize the importance of the formation of panethnic identities among Hispanics in the United States. For example, Itzigsohn (2004) states that “the social and cultural features of contemporary life in the United States create incentives for immigrants and native-born Latinos and Latinas to identify with a panethnic label for instrumental or expressive purposes” (Itzigsohn (2004:197).

In addition, Itzigsohn reports that the basis for Latino panethnicity is not devotion to the Spanish language since

many second and third generation Latinos do not speak the language. Latinos “are strongly attached to their more specific ethnic or national identities and come together only in situations where cooperation enables them to exercise political influence to the common advantage of the participating nationalities” (Foner & Fredrickson 2004:7). Some immigrants may find it more appealing to support social organizations that are led by people from the same nationality.

Cristian (2009) conducted a comprehensive study among college students at George Mason University in Washington, D.C. Cristian states that “as their individual definitions of being Latino changed, their cultural identities changed, whether it was panethnic or ethno-national. Now at the last stage of their undergraduate career, they have a more clearly defined view of themselves and their place within the Latino community and their ethno-national communities” (Cristian 2009: ii).

3.3 The Nation of Islam

The Nation of Islam (NOI) was probably the most influential organization in the United States. The NOI was founded in 1930 in Detroit, Michigan by Wallace D. Fard who later took the name of Farad Muhammad. The organization he created was officially named The Lost-Found Nation of Islam in the Wilderness of North America (Haddad 1998). The NOI built many mosques and temples, particularly in depressed areas.

According to Edward Curtis IV, the Nation of Islam was founded upon the principles of “racial separatism and ethnic pride” (Curtis IV 2006:2). This movement conversely taught a different form of Islam, supporting Black supremacy and labelling of white people as “devils”. Even though Fard only

remained in Detroit briefly, “his movement would have an impact on the whole country” (Curtis IV 2006:2).

Patrick Bowen states that “the large shift of African-American New Yorkers to Sunnism in the 1960s and 1970s — with groups like Dar ul-Islam, Malcolm’s Muslim Mosque, Inc., the Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood, the Islamic Party in North America, and then W. D. Mohammed’s group — was a continuation of a subtle process that had truly been in the works for many years prior” (Bowen 2011:283). I agree with Bowen that it is important to recognize the influence of other African-American Muslim groups, particularly in New York between 1904 and 1954.

3.4 African-American Converts to Islam

African-American conversions are historically more likely than Caucasian, particularly in the United States. “African-Americans make up about a third of the estimated 4 to 8 million Muslims in the U.S.; conservatively, around 1.5 million, and composed of nearly 5 percent of all African-Americans. According to a poll conducted in 2001 by Muslims in the American Public Square (MAPS), 20 percent of African-American Muslims are converts, while 80 percent were raised Muslim. More detailed information about Islam in the African-American community, however, is relatively scarce” (Armstrong 2003:1).

Islamic institutions are focusing on ethnic minorities. The influence that it has had historically on African-Americans and in modernity on all Americans is increasing. Grasping a sense of the history behind not only Islam, but also that of African-Americans, is important to evaluating the appeal of this faith tradition to ethnic minorities such as Hispanics.

Some of the most famous African-American converts to Islam include Malcolm X, Mohammed Ali (born Cassius Marcellus Clay, Jr.), Andre Carson, Keith Ellison, Mike Tyson, and Shaquille O'Neal. However, conversion to Islam in the United States has not been restricted to citizens of African heritage. Several Muslim leaders project there are between 40,000 and 75,000 converts from among the white population, the majority being women (Haddad 1998:92).

There are also Hispanic Muslims converts who are actively choosing to follow Islam for several reasons and motivations. There are significant appealing aspects as well and some Hispanic Muslim organizations are playing an important role in the adaptation and socialization of the new converts. These will be the topics addressed in the following section.

4. Hispanic Muslims in the United States

There are several definitions of conversion. Lewis Rambo, for example, defines a religious conversion as “a process of religious change that takes place in a dynamic field of people, events, ideologies, institutions and orientations” (Rambo 1993: 5). Henri Gooren defines conversion as a “comprehensive personal change of religious worldview and identity, based on both self-report and attribution by others” (Gooren 2010a:3). In this study, conversion is understood as a dynamic and complex personal process of religious change that usually implies the construction of new identities and also the adoption and/or revision of new values and beliefs.

The religious pluralism and religious diversity that exists in the United States are facilitating the process of religious change. That is the experience of some Hispanics who are choosing to

follow Islam. According to Bowen, “Latin@s have been slowly and quietly been converting to Islamic communities in the U.S. since at least the 1920s” (Bowen 2010a:1). “Many conversions came through contact with African-American majority Muslim movements such as Moorish Science Temple, the Ahmadiyya Movement, the Nation of Islam, and the African-American Sunni groups that emerged in New York City and Washington, D.C. in the 1960s and 1970s.” (Bowen 2010b).

A 2007 study conducted by the Pew Research Center (2007) showed that Hispanic Muslims accounted for an estimated 4 percent out of a total of about 2.5 million Muslims living in the United States. That is approximately 10,000-15,000 Hispanic Muslims (Pew Research Center 2007).

According to the Islamic Society of the United States (ISNA), and the Council for American Islamic Relations (CAIR), there are 40,000 Hispanic Muslims in the United States. As recently as 2006, Ali Khan, national director of the American Muslim Council in Chicago, claimed that this number had increased five-fold to 200,000. Most current conservative estimates suggest that the U.S. Latina/o Muslim population is somewhere between 50,000 and 75,000 (Martinez-Vasquez 2010:2).

The majority of Hispanic converts to Islam are women. However, the statistics about the precise number of Muslims in general and Hispanic Muslim converts are scarce and wide ranging. One of the main reasons is because the United States Census Bureau does not provide statistics on religion.

The first large-scale conversions of Hispanics to Islam occurred in the 1960s and 1970s, when many Spanish-language

Muslim groups began to emerge and the Black Muslim movement was at its height (Galvan 2008:26). Latino Muslim communities have emerged in New York, New Jersey, Chicago and Miami (Ramirez 1999), “often through the interaction with African-American Muslims” (Bowen 2009b:28).

4.1 Methods Used in the Qualitative Study

The primary data for this is drawn from field notes, a demographic survey and thirty-six in-depth interviews conducted over four years with Muslim leaders, and converts from different stages, generations, previous religious backgrounds, national origins and gender. Using a qualitative approach, the data was grouped appropriately and analysed in conjunction with selected cases and existing typologies and theories of conversion and identity.

I conducted thirty-six semi-structured interviews in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan and Union City, New Jersey areas. I interviewed twenty-five Hispanic converts; fifteen women and ten men. I also interviewed six imams, and two Muslim community leaders from different Islamic centers. Moreover, in order to better understand the dynamics of the Hispanic Muslims in the United States, I also interviewed three Hispanic born Muslims (two men and one woman) who grew up as Muslims, their parents having converted to Islam first.

The average age of the converts was thirty-two. The ages ranged between nineteen and seventy-four. The average age when the individual became a Muslim was twenty-two years old. Average time span in Islam of those who converted was ten years (e.g., how long they have been a Muslim since conversion). The average time span it took to become a Muslim was almost three and

a half years, the time period from when they were first interested to when they converted. In addition, sixty-seven percent of the converts are members of a Hispanic Muslim group on Facebook.

Most of the Hispanic Muslim converts were women. Usually, women were more willing to share their stories. However, I was able to interview ten Hispanic Muslim men. One of the challenges was to find Hispanic Muslim men who were willing to share their stories of conversion. Three men refused to participate in the interviews, but some of them were willing to provide contacts for potential interviews

Also, there have been some difficulties in trying to interview some Hispanic Muslim women. For example, one of the Hispanic Muslim women was very willing to do the interview at the beginning, and even helped to set up some appointments with other Hispanic Muslim Women. Nevertheless, she has not replied to my emails lately, nor has she answered my phone calls. Therefore, this interview is still pending. At the moment, I have not been able to interview relatives of the converts, with the exception of married Hispanic Muslim couples.

Most of the interviews were conducted at the Islamic centers. Some of the interviews were conducted at convenient places for the interviewees. In addition, I had the opportunity to interview a Hispanic Muslim couple in their home. The main purpose was to gain a different perspective from them. He grew up in a Muslim family and his wife converted to Islam (Field notes, February 4, 2012). Accordingly, the set of questions used in the interview with him was different, since he was raised a Muslim.

The Hispanic Muslim couple lives in a residential area. The house has three rooms and a small backyard. The house

is located in a middle-class neighborhood (Field notes, February 25 2012). They have two young girls that were playing as we were conducting the interview. I was told that they have several copies of the Quran at home. They spoke English and Spanish at home (Field notes, February 25 2012).

The data has shown that social networking, peer learning by observing and doing, Arabic language academies, Islamic schools (madrasahs), and local mosques play a paramount role in religious conversion. Almost eighty-four percent of the converts interviewed mentioned that they were first introduced to Islam by friends. Based on the data, male converts have been more influenced by friends than female converts. However, the percentages are high in both male (90%) and female converts (79%). Converts also mentioned that they were first introduced to Islam by reading literature, going to mosques (Islamic Centers, Masjids), attending lectures, and learning Arabic at college.

A media outlet that has played a role in this conversion process has been the internet. I found initial evidence of this fact in my research, particularly among the second generation of Hispanic Muslims, which comprises sixty-three percent of the converts that I interviewed. Most of them are bilingual, speaking both Spanish and English, and they have been more exposed than the first generation to Islam through the internet and social networks such as Facebook. Most of the converts are members of a Hispanic Muslim group on Facebook.

One of my assumptions is that socialization is part of the process of rebuilding their identities and also serves as a mechanism for developing a sense of belonging. In addition, the use of internet and the access to Islamic websites have

played an important role in exposing diverse ethnic groups to Islam. Some of these converts probably never heard about Islam before (Peres de Oliveira 2006).

4.2 Why Do People Follow Islam?

Hispanics that follow Islam in the United States do so for various reasons. However, there is no single set of aspects that explain why Hispanics are embracing Islam. There are some converts that were looking for a sense of belonging and community. Others were more focused on theological aspects, such as believing in one God. Others experienced several crises, and according to them found answers in Islam. Some individuals were socialized by Muslim friends or coworkers.

The most appealing aspects are the following: the teachings of Islam, some of the converts stated that Islam is simple and it makes sense. Others mentioned the monotheistic aspect of Islam (*tawhid*). Several converts have argued that Islamic values harmonize with the traditional values of Hispanic/Latino culture. Converts have cited such similarities as respect for social solidarity, community, the family, the importance of religion, and education.

Some Hispanic Muslims also shared that they had difficulty with the church, believing in original sin, and in the Holy Trinity. Others stated that they had questions about their previous religion's beliefs and they did not find satisfactory answers.

Van Nieuwkerk conducted a comprehensive study of Muslim Women converts from the Netherlands and reported the following motivations for conversion: an attraction to Islam's high regard for family and community, its strict moral and ethical standards, and the rationality and spirituality of its theology,

as well as a disillusionment with Christianity and with the unrestrained sexuality of so much of Western culture (Van Nieuwkerk 2006:95). Thus, the focus of Islam on community and some disappointments of the converts with previous religions were common in both Hispanics and converts from the Netherlands.

Martínez-Vasqu ez affirms that “while this connection with the Nation of Islam is less strong now than what it was during the height of the civil rights movement, there are nonetheless some U.S. Latina/o Muslims who come to Islam through the Nation of Islam” (Mart nez-Vasqu ez 2010:16). Some Hispanic Muslims in my research expressed the influence of Nation of Islam during their conversions, particularly the first generation of Hispanic Muslim converts.

4.3 Active Agency and Decision Making

A common theme in each of the interviews involves the idea that all of them had certain questions about religion that they needed to ask and have answered. They also tended to value the desire of wanting to be a good person, by living their life in the best way possible. They were mostly all attracted to the complimentary values expressed between Hispanic culture and Islamic culture. Perhaps the biggest generality that is involved with all of the converts is the idea of decision making. Essentially, converts want to be accepted into the new religion, and are forced to navigate the idea of connecting their past selves with the present.

Questions about God and Christianity sparked a conversion journey for many of the converts. For others, there was also the question of their role in dealing with social justice issues and how they would be able to leave their mark on the

world for the right things. Some just found comfort in finding a religion that they were able to call their own.

Overall, most if not all converts appreciated the fact that there was only one God, and that Jesus did play a role in teaching the world how to act, but that he was just one part of a story that continued with the prophet Mohammad. For some of the converts, there is a comfort in knowing that their relationship with God can be practiced in silence, while for others, there is a comfort in knowing that they can truly be amongst the community of believers.

For all, Islam has been able to give them something that was not found in practicing Christianity. For that reason, even the idea of making necessary changes seem evenly divided. There are contrasting responses with regard to choices after the conversion stage. For example, there are some women who are adamant about wearing the hijab (headscarf) while other Hispanic Muslim women are satisfied with not wearing the hijab outside of the Friday prayers. One of the female participants was not wearing the Hijab at the beginning of the interview, but later asked me to give her time to wear it during the interview.

Similarly, there are some men who wear no beards and change nothing of their behavior, and others who know and love what it means to abide by the traditions of the religion. Some actively involve themselves in dawah (call or invitation to Islam; dissemination of Islam) and in the conversation about interfaith. Others have decided to practice Islam more privately than publicly. Still, in the end, the message of all the converts is that they are pleased with the decision to convert to a new religion. The conversions and experiences of the con-

verts are different and need to be examined in their own contexts and realities.

4.4 Hispanic Muslim Organizations

There are several Hispanic/Latin@ /Muslim organizations in the United States. Among the most important organizations are the Latino American Dawah Organization (LADO) and Alianza Islámica. Other organizations include the La Asociación Latino Musulmana de América (LALMA) and PIEDAD.

Alianza Islámica was founded in 1975 by a group of Hispanic Muslims from Puerto Rico. This was the first Muslim association among the Hispanics in the United States. “Several Hispanic Muslims and others involved in the African-American Sunni groups gathered together in Harlem to form the Alianza Islámica” (Bowen 2010a:3).

LADO is a Hispanic Muslim organization that was founded in September 1997 by several Hispanic converts in New York City. LADO communicates the message and values of Islam by providing Islamic literature in the form of books, brochures, and other media in English and Spanish. They also have some materials available in Portuguese.

Some of the converts expressed during the interviews that they are actively searching the Internet for resources to know more about Islam and to be able to connect with other Hispanic Muslims. Most of the converts are using Facebook and Twitter to build relationships with other Muslims in the wider community. There are several Hispanic Muslim groups that have been created in Facebook by Hispanic Muslim converts in order to help new converts in the socialization process with other Muslim converts.

A number of converts emphasized the need for more materials to be available in Spanish and other languages, particularly the first generation converts, since the second generation of Hispanic Muslim converts are usually bilingual. Some Hispanic Muslim converts are also actively involved in other Muslim organizations such as the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA).

This chapter analyzed the diverse experiences of conversion of Hispanic Muslims and described the methods used in this empirical study among Hispanic Muslims in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Next, this chapter will conclude with a discussion on helpful theories to explain the results of the research.

5. Modernity and Religious Pluralism

The conversions of Hispanic Muslims take place in the context of globalization, modernity and religious pluralism. The conversions of Hispanic Muslims need to be understood in their own contexts. Some of the theories that can be helpful to partially understand the dynamics of these conversions are modernity and multiple modernities. The main focus of modernity theory is on society shaping religion and the emphasis on secularization. However, scholars who support the multiple modernities theory underline the relevance of cultural traditions and world religions for the formation of multiple modernities with multiple identities (Casanova 2006:13). Hispanics have been largely characterized for a strong spirituality.

According to Topić & Sremac 2014, "Eisenstadt (2000) argues that religious traditions are reconstructed regardless of the secularization process and that religion as such remains a

constitutive basis in all societies. This view is also in line with criticism of the secularization theory in the *Sociology of Religion* (Casanova 1994).

Some scholars argue that “religion and modernity are inextricably linked to each other, for modernity is seen as directly opposite to the religious. However, consensus has never been reached on who is modern and what it exactly means to be modern, and especially not when religion and religious identity are concerned” (Topic & Sremac 2014:6). These theories are very helpful but cannot fully explain the dynamic and complex processes of conversion.

David Singh 2012 conducted a comprehensive study among the Van Gujjars in India. He states,

“In terms of Islam and western modernity, one might offer a counter view to the prevailing position on Muslim Diasporas’ distance from the host cultures” in the West. A study conducted by Inglehart & Norris 2009 illustrates that the “basic social values” of Muslims in their adoptive countries experience a definite change but, in most cases, much of who they are remains between their country of origin and the host country. According to Singh, “immigrants do not remain fixed in their attitudes; they adapt and absorb the ambient culture” (Singh 2012:240).

There are more opportunities for interactions among different ethnic groups in current societies. As people move to different places, and with the notorious diversity and religious pluralism in the United States, Hispanics are finding new opportunities to explore diverse religions. According to Aponte 2012, “Despite being a nation where some people question the

continuing relevance of any spirituality or religious conviction, different types of religion, religious practice, and spiritual beliefs and practices seem to burst from the cultural landscape in the United States” (Aponte 2012:3).

It is imperative to recognize the importance of these new trends and dynamics because Hispanics are the largest minority in the United States and are shaping the religious landscape of the United States. There is also an increasing focus on spirituality, religiosity and religious practices of varied types that needs to be examined. Aponte emphasizes that, “In the context of an increasing religious pluralism and burgeoning interest in religions, religiosity, and spirituality within the United States, accompanied by new understandings of religion and popular culture, it is essential to understand the varieties of Latin@ spirituality” (Aponte 2012:7).

6. Conclusion

The first part of the chapter described the background and history of Islam in the United States. Some of the important facts that facilitate the practice of Islam among immigrants were The Immigration Act of 1965, alongside the Civil Rights movement, and the rise of religious Revivalism and Religious pluralism. It is important to notice the ethnic diversity of Muslim immigrants in the United States. Muslims are one of the most racially diverse religious groups in the United States. This fact needs to be considered because the multiple interactions with Hispanic Muslim converts who are also a diverse ethnic group with different backgrounds as well.

The second part included the history and background of Hispanics in the United States. Hispanics are the largest mi-

nority in the United States and are shaping the religious landscape in this nation. This influence goes beyond Catholic and Protestant churches. There has been an increase in the Hispanic population in metropolitan areas such as Washington, D.C. and New Jersey areas.

More empirical research is needed in the United States to better understand the complex dynamics of Hispanics following other religions and spiritualities. This research contributes to studies among Hispanics in the United States in the areas of sociology of religion, immigrant religions and identities of Hispanic/Latin@ in the United States.

This chapter also described and analyzed the diverse experiences of Hispanic Muslims, the methods, findings and generalizations of an empirical study conducted among Hispanic Muslims in Washington, D.C. metropolitan and New Jersey areas.

In light of the data, perhaps the biggest generality that is involved with all of the converts is the idea of decision making. Essentially, converts want to be accepted into the new religion, and are forced to navigate the idea of connecting their past selves with the present.

The conversion of Hispanics to Islam is a dynamic process that it is shaped by multiple factors with different levels of socialization, negotiations where most of the converts have a very active role in decision making, not only during the pre-conversion and conversion stages, but also after they convert to Islam. The levels of commitment and participation differ as the converts construct their new identities facing tensions between culture and religion. Similarities and differenc-

es are found among the converts based on gender, previous religious background and generational aspects.

This chapter concluded with some comments about modernity and multiple modernities theories to partially explain the findings. Theories such as modernity, multiple modernities, globalization and secularization are considered to understand the dynamics of conversion of ethnic minorities in the United States. However, these theories are limited because it is necessary to recognize important links and connections with multiple contextual factors. Thus, there is a need for a multidisciplinary approach that considers the multiple layers, the contextual factors, the role of the converts and religious institutions, the different levels of socialization, and the tensions between religion, ethnicity and culture.

The findings of this study needs to be examined carefully and it is not intended to show a representation of all the Hispanic Muslims in the United States. The conversions and complex dynamics of these conversions in the Washington, D.C. and New Jersey metropolitan areas need to be interpreted in their own contexts.

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CHAPTER 15

A Historical Invoice, Adversity, and the Dignity of Hispanic Migration to the United States

A Social, Legal and Theological Analysis
Dr. Raúl Zaldívar

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of mankind, the migratory phenomenon has been a valiant manifestation of the human will to overcome adversity and to seek a better life.¹⁰⁷ In today's era of postmodernism and globalization, the advances in communication and technology have allowed for a considerable increase in the number of people with the desire and the means to pay the necessary price to move to the place they consider will allow them to develop as persons.¹⁰⁸ The first barrier that

107 It is of utmost importance to know that according to the Gallup Poll, only 40% of migrants moved from south to north. At least a third of migrants moved from South to South (although the figure could be higher if more accurate data was available), and just over a fifth of migrants (22%) migrate North to North. A small but growing percentage of migrants (5%) migrate from North to South. These figures may show a slight variation, depending on what definition of "North" and "South" is used. Vide. Report on the 2013 World Migration International Organization for Migration. IO. Switzerland. 2013.

108 There are dramatic changes in the cultural and racial composition of societies and these are the results of a high degree of globalization making it necessary to reconceptualize the term citizenship. To find a particular concept of citizenship involving Hispanics and which would result in a fairer society is of utmost importance to study the work of Rocco, Raymond. "Transforming citizenship: membership, strategies of containment, and the public sphere in Latin Communities." *Latino Studies Journal*. 2004.

migrants will have to overcome will be a pathetic ethnocentrism,¹⁰⁹ a characteristic of societies that receive migrants, that includes a series of economic and legal obstacles. Not everyone will be successful, as many migrants give up or are forced to give up when they are deported.

In this presentation we will focus on Hispanic¹¹⁰ migration to the United States and the tensions created on both sides by this social phenomenon. For this study we have divided the research into three areas. First, we will focus on the theme of a historical invoice, a thesis by which we try to show *Sitz im Leben* of the Hispanic migration. To achieve this purpose, we go back to the nineteenth century with the incursion by United States into Latin America, either at the invitation of the governments of the time, or on its own initiative, and the establishing of relationships that form the cultural context being addressed in this paper.

In the second section we will focus on US soil and analyze both social and legal adversities that Hispanic migrants have had to face in their quest to grow and develop as individuals. In this study we bring to light the hypocrisy of an ambivalent system that continues to rely on its privileged position to harass immigrants that in most cases does not favor the migrant.

109 Racism has to do with physical differences, whereas ethnicity has to do with cultural differences. Ethnocentrism is the conflict produced by both and can be defined as the tendency to judge other cultures by one's own, which is generally seen as superior to that of others. Vide. Preston and Smith. *Sociology. A contemporary approach*. Third Edition. Allan and Bacon. 1989. USA. P. 283 - 284

110 In the US Hispanics are seen as all latinos without regard to the country of origin. For some, this term obscures rather than clarify the social and political variety of a society in which immigrants come from different Caribbean and Latin American countries. Mari Zaldivar holds that this is part of the racial profiling, which is nothing more than the imposition of racial categories by a dominant group. Vide. Zaldivar, Mari. "Racialization of Illegality." An essay presented in the University of Chicago. 2014.

We must expose the perversity of a legal universe so that no more immigrants will be subjected to humiliation.

The final section focuses on the metonymy of the book *El Rostro Hispano de Jesús*¹¹¹ [The Hispanic face of Jesus] that speaks of the God who empathizes with the causes of migration and calls for the elimination of prejudice and racial discrimination, advocates reform of immigration laws and calls for the dignified treatment of migrants. The Hispanic face of Jesus is a reminder to the Anglo culture of the United States that the Jesus they recognize as God does not agree with the anti immigration behavior that they display.

Without further introduction, we proceed to address the issue of Hispanic immigration in three main sections: (I) A historic invoice for American neocolonialism; (II) Hispanic migration vs. an adverse social and legal system; and finally, (III) migration and the Jesus with a Hispanic face.

I. Hispanic migration: A historic invoice for American colonialism

If Newton's second law is true, in the sense that every action causes a reaction, then the Hispanic migration to the United States is a reaction of these countries to the historic conduct of the United States in Latin America. It is our task in this section to uncover the past that has caused the rampant exodus of people who today risk their lives on an often unpleasant and traumatic journey.

¹¹¹ *El Rostro Hispano de Jesús* is the book I wrote with Miguel Álvarez y David Ramírez and published by Editorial CLIE on one of the hot topics in the area of North-South relations. Immigration. The book redefines this phenomenon from a biblical and human perspective and makes clear God's purpose in that area.

Everything began in the nineteenth century when the United States became a world power and initiated a neocolonialist agenda with the Latin American countries that had recently achieved independence. These societies were in a situation of extreme poverty, subsisting on a rudimentary agricultural economy without any possibility of economic development. It was in this context that the Anglos arrived with capital, technology and an overwhelming spirit to find a mestizo and indigenous population at their mercy. In this way, the notorious transnational companies were created, primarily in cultivating and selling the natural resources of the land, such as through the extraction, production and transportation of fruit, etc.¹¹²

A parallel consequence was the creation of the first banking institutions and infrastructure of trade and services that *ipso facto* created a severe dependency of these countries to the United States. The US came to exercise an influence on the political life of new States in which the rulers often were mere puppets of the Anglo interests that had come to plunder the riches of these new States. This was like a nail in the coffin for many unfortunate, illiterate and impoverished populations.¹¹³

For a better understanding of the Anglo neocolonialism, this section will be divided as follows: (1) Anglo neocolonialism from a social perspective; (2) Anglo neocolonialism from an economic perspective; and finally, (3) Anglo neocolonialism from a political perspective.

112 Vide. Argueta Mario, *Historia de los sin historia 1900 – 1948*. Edit. Guaymuras. 1992. Tegucigalpa. Posas Mario, Del Cid Rafael. *La construcción del sector público y del Estado nacional de Honduras 1876 – 1979*. Editorial Universitaria Centroamericana. 1981. Tegucigalpa. Both of these books demonstrate the neocolonialism carried out by the United States in Honduras, the same history of the other Central American countries.

113 Cf. Galeano, Eduardo. *Open Veins of Latin America*. Monthly Review Press. USA. 1997.

1. The Anglo neocolonialism from a social perspective

The first thing to understand is the scenario in which these new states found themselves. They had just removed the dominating yoke that Spain had exercised for more than 300 years in a fierce and merciless way. The mestizo and indigenous population was in a socially deprived status, under the so-called “criollos”¹¹⁴ that controlled the new states politically and militarily. At that time there was a subsistence economy based on agriculture and livestock with landlords that controlled the vast majority of peasants who survived in inhuman conditions.

On the other hand, the independence from Spain unleashed the political passions of any number of generals who felt they had the right to govern. To that effect, numerous wars were triggered that plunged these people to an even greater backwardness and poverty than before.¹¹⁵

This was the scene found by the Anglos who set out on their conquest of Latin America. The Anglos were in a much higher socio-economic level than the “criollos”, the mestizo or the indigenous population, so that all the doors were opened with an almost unconditional surrender by the governors who had no choice but to bend the knee to the US dollar.

In this way, a new phenomenon in the incipient world of capitalism was born: transnational companies, gigantic emporiums of US businessmen established in the agricultural sector

114 The criollos were the children of Spanish parents born in Latin America.

115 Vide. Posas, Mario, Del Cid, Rafael. *La construcción del sector público y del Estado nacional de Honduras 1876 – 1979 Op Cit.* In this book the authors show how one of the Central American countries was developed: Honduras. Some of the things they mention are completely valid for all of the hemispheric countries, such as the internal battles for power.

by creating the famous banana companies as well as the mining explorations, exploiting non-renewable natural resources in these new states.¹¹⁶ For the development of these major projects, the Anglo employer had to hire great numbers of laborers for the production or exploitation of resources. It was in this relationship between the US companies and the new states that the full force of Karl Marx's theory on the capital ratio – work emerged. A social minority that held the means of production established a relationship with an immense number of unfortunates who had nothing but their labor, who sold themselves for a salary that could never compensate the effort, creating a huge wealth for the American capitalists through what Marx called the “surplus value” or capital gain.¹¹⁷

This resulted in 12-hour work days with no rights to strike that would be recognized and protected by the state, and without any social benefits, in which the worker was simply part of a work force, not a human being. This was a reality until after the mid-twentieth century when the worker's movement began promoting¹¹⁸ class consciousness and made the first strikes to revolt against the transnational systems supported

116 As an example, we cite the case of Chile and its famous copper mines. At the beginning of the 20th century there were three American companies exploiting copper: Braden Copper Company, Kennecott Corporation and Anaconda Cooper Company. In 1971 President Salvador Allende nationalized the copper mines and their administration was left in the hands of CODELCO. For an complete history see Alcayaga, Julián. *El Manual del defensor del cobre*. Ediciones Tierra Mía. Chile. 2005. This work presents overwhelming evidence based on documents and irrefutable investigations of the ransacking of the Chilean copper that has taken place in the last 20 years by multi national companies in complicity with and cover up by the elite business class and government authorities

117 In the work edited by Tucker Robert. *The Marx – Engels Reader*. Second edition. W.W. Norton & Company in the article Wage Labour and Capital the theory of Karl Marx of capital-workforce ratio is presented. P. 203 and following.

118 Cf. Meza, Víctor. *Historia del Movimiento obrero hondureño*. Edit. Guaymuras. 1980. Tegucigalpa.

by the politicians in power. Ultimately, they had no choice but to legislate and recognize the most basic rights of workers.

At that historic moment Latin American society was stratified as follows: The ruling class that was traditionally composed of the military ranks who had come to power through violence or electoral fraud, the aristocratic class who were descendants of Spanish landowners, and the transnational managers had created a state within a state, i.e., established schools for their children, hospitals, banks, roads and even railways. And last in the social scale were the masses of workers selling their labor to foreigners and the peasants who worked for low wages on behalf of the Criollo landowners.

2. Anglo neocolonialism from an economic perspective

The social reality described above created a paradox. On the one hand, it gave life to a subsistence economy which focused on livestock and agriculture with no possibility of moving to any other level. On the other hand, a national bourgeoisie was created that formed alliances with transnational companies to keep the workers subjected to poverty.

With regard to the first part of the paradox, Anglos brought with them the technology necessary for the development of agriculture and mining. They also built an infrastructure including docks, railways and roads to facilitate commerce. They founded banks and trade centers. In the social arena they built schools and hospitals for their use, but in some cases were for the benefit of workers as well. Obviously, all of this generated employment and money circulated among the people. The problem was that the result was an unequal distribution of wealth. The owners of the means of production kept a huge

piece of the pie and left little for the masses who were the ones who truly paid the price.

The other part of the paradox was the creation of a national bourgeoisie, through the assistance and support of cooperation programs via private foundations and United States agencies.¹¹⁹ The new States began to receive a large influx of money that was stolen in whole or in part by those in power and who became rich virtually overnight. Another insidious use of those funds was the large salaries they gave themselves, representing an affront to the millions of poor living in their countries. This national bourgeoisie did not have the interest of the masses in mind.

The reaction to the outrage was immediate. Some decided to take up arms and launch insurgencies to change the status quo, and that resulted in civil wars or guerrilla warfare throughout the continent.¹²⁰ An important segment of the populace that would not take up arms chose to go to the United States, beginning a great migration flow that exists today.

In summary, there were two factors from an economic perspective that were the cause of this migration: inequality in the distribution of wealth in the capital/labor ratio, and indifference and selfishness on the part of politicians who saw only their interests, never caring about the masses who they always isolated through ostentatious spending, causing a sentiment of impotence and anger from those who had nothing.

¹¹⁹ The United States has historically developed programs of international cooperation with developing nations, and those of Latin American have not been an exception. There are a number of channels through which countries can receive economic aid, one of the more well-known being USAID, which is the agency of the government that combats extreme poverty and helps people in democratic countries achieve their full potential. It also provides military assistance, help in the war against drugs, and the promotion of justice among other things.

¹²⁰ The rise of groups such as Sendero Luminoso in Perú, the Tupamaros in Uruguay, the FARC in Colombia, to mention a few.

3. Anglo neocolonialism from a political perspective

Unlike the Spaniards who came by force to conquer, enslave and annihilate those that opposed them, the Americans came to form alliances with successive governments whom they dazzled with their wealth and development opportunities. It is important to note that matters were not handled privately between Anglo capitalists and the rulers of the host States. By this time, the US had an embassy in each Latin American country and its ambassadors not only represented the people and government of the United States, but were also valuable allies of the capitalist citizens who ran transnational businesses as well as other US interests in Latin American territory.

What does all of this mean? It means that despite the principle of the International Law of Non-Intervention in the Internal Affairs of States, at that time the US ambassador in a Latin American country was a power behind the throne. Hence, the saying became famous among politicians that to rule in Latin America one needs the Church, the American Embassy and the military; nothing else mattered, and from there came Henry Kissinger and other Americans referring to Latin America as “the backyard of the United States”.¹²¹

When one studies the history of Central America, the Dominican Republic or Mexico, to name a few countries or regions, we find how the government leaders had to align with US policy in order to be considered legitimate governments. In fact, most of the governments at the time were puppet governments of the interests of transnational companies and existing foreign capital. When there was a government not in favor with Washington, it was simply overthrown by a coup or

¹²¹ Quoted by Isabel Allende in the prologue to the English version of *Venas Abiertas de América Latina*. [Open Veins of Latin America] See Galeano, Eduardo.

groups opposed to the government were financed. The latest example of this sad reality at the end of the Cold War was when Ronald Reagan funded the counter-revolution in Nicaragua because the Sandinista regime led by Daniel Ortega did not favor the American interests.

The above analysis shows the erratic policy of the United States toward the new states of Latin America in the three areas studied: social, economic and political. We are not saying that Anglos should have not reached out to these latitudes. These new States needed foreign investment, needed technology, education and competition with a more advanced society than ours.¹²² The problem was that foreign investment came to exercise an ethnocentric, selfish policy based on capital; a policy which excluded the development of workers who innocently sold their labor and made the American investors immensely rich.

Latin American workers dispatched thousands of ships from their ports full of bananas or precious metals like gold, silver, copper and many others. They never had a fair recompense, nor were they motivated as humans to develop through education. On the contrary, it was believed that the more ignorant the better a worker; the worse living conditions, the better a worker. In short, there was no fair policy to develop the indigenous society. The American investor did nothing to improve the living conditions, helping to create the discontent that became a direct cause of migration.

¹²² Luis Bográn, who governed Honduras between 1883 – 189, pointed out that “...this has been the primary objective of my government and the primary reason for which we have made various contracts and given concessions over mining, agriculture, roads, highways and railways. In these aspects the government has been liberal and should have been. In order to bring foreign capital to our deserted, uncultured and lawless country it should be flattered in the hopes of receiving huge profits. See Posas, Mario, Del Cid, Rafael. *La construcción del sector público y del Estado nacional de Honduras 1876 – 1979 Op Cit.* P.17.

So out of this unjust relationship of Anglo capital/Latin labor was birthed the germ of discontent that began with the rise of class consciousness and then action and eventually, migration. In some cases, that led to bloody revolutions, as in Nicaragua,¹²³ El Salvador and other violent insurgencies as well as counterinsurgency outbreaks across the continent.

It would be important to note that the political indoctrination of these irregular movements were sponsored by the Soviet Union through Cuba within the framework of the Cold War. Hence, the United States, in order to counter the communist escalation, promulgated the Doctrine of National Security as was taught at the School of the Americas in Panama¹²⁴ where military personnel from all over the continent were trained in counterinsurgency strategies against the communists. From this school came the military leaders who, upon taking power in their countries of origin, led the dirty war against the leaders of the leftist movements.¹²⁵ So the desire of the United States to not allow another "Cuba" in the hemisphere resulted in events such as the coup in Chile in 1973¹²⁶ and the subsequent Operation Cóndor¹²⁷ or the dirty

123 This can be seen in the interview given by Anastasio Somoza to the journalist Jack Cox. See Cox, Jack. *Nicaragua Traicionada*. Western Islands. USA. 1980.

124 The School of the Americas is an American military school located in Panama City between 1946 and 1984. which makes any B. 1070, known also as the hate bill. For more information, see s is ation rms of racial discrimination of the Un

125 Many famous military personnel graduated from this school, but with regard to the dirty war there were Leopoldo Fortunato Galtieri of Argentina and Gustavo Adolfo Álvarez Martínez of Honduras. Other graduates included Manuel Antonio Noriega, Ollanta Humala, Vladimiro Montesinos, Roberto D'Aubuisson, among others.

126 This is exactly with Isabel Allende points out in her prologue to the book by Eduardo Galeano. *Open Veins... Op. Cit.* P. IX.

127 Operation Cóndor was a program by which the military rulers of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay united through their repressive structures to eliminate political adversaries. For more useful information on this subject see Mariano, Nilson Cezar. *Operación Cóndor. Terrorismo de Estado en el Cono Sur*. Ediciones Lohe - Lumen. Argentina. 1998.

war in South America and Central American countries like Honduras, where the counter-revolution was sponsored by the Reagan administration that provided unconditional support to the Salvadoran army to counter the rising Farabundo Marti Front.

As can be seen, in the 80s Latin America was a tinderbox and there were thousands of displaced persons throughout the continent who for the most part did not have any role in the conflicts; they were simply victims of a pointless war between two superpowers that did not take into account human suffering. Naturally, this led to a mass exodus from Latin American countries to the first world. Most South Americans emigrated to Europe and Australia, while Central Americans emigrated to the United States.

All of the above supports our view that migration of Latinos to the United States was and is the collection of an old debt with the American society, perhaps an unpayable invoice, because the exploitation of the Anglo investment extinguished the life from millions of human beings, but also because such exploitation led us to Marxist ideas, and those in turn resulted in the violence that claimed the lives of thousands of people so that American ideals could prevail on this continent.

This is the reality that not only Americans need to recognize, but also the new generation of Hispanics in the United States in order to understand that our presence in this country has not arisen *ex nihilo*, but is a direct consequence of that actions of this country.

Having addressed the issue of an historical debt to the United States with Latin America that establishes one of the

key reasons why today there is a huge flow of people migrating in search of the American dream,¹²⁸ it is necessary to focus now on in Hispanics in American territory. We will specifically attempt to tie this issue with its relevance to the adverse social and judicial systems that this social group faces.

II. Hispanic migration vs adverse social and judicial systems

Man is by nature ethnocentric. Hence, the first settlers that arrived in what is now the United States felt they had all the social, legal and political rights over the new territory. By virtue of the above, the first settlers discriminated against and withheld rights from those who came after them. This was the story when the Italians arrived in New York, when the Poles went to Chicago, to give a couple of examples. These groups had to pay their dues until they were fully integrated and assimilated into the social system. The Asians fared worse; they were subjected to laws that denied them entry to the US for many years and faced discriminatory policies while in the US.¹²⁹

The migration of thousands of Europeans in the nineteenth and early twentieth century made it necessary for Congress to pass the first immigration laws to regulate this social phenomenon. Over time, these laws have been tightened until

¹²⁸ It is estimated that more than 50% of the migration to the United States comes from Latin America, Mexico leading the way with 29%. The second area of largest migration is Asia, at 26%, with most of those coming from the Philippines. For further information, see Hanson, Gordon H. *Why does immigration Divide America? Public Finance and Political Opposition to Open Borders*. Washington, D.C. Institute for International Economics. 2005. P. 14.

¹²⁹ See the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Also useful to read is De la Cruz, William. *La migración hacia los Estados Unidos vista desde una exclusionary law of perspectiva bíblica – teológica*, thesis for the degree of Licenciado en Teología. Seminario Teológico of Honduras. Tegucigalpa. 2013.

it has become impossible for those who do not have the economic resources to migrate legally, so the only recourse left to them has been to enter the country in irregular ways.

1. Hispanic migration vs the social system

In the book *El Rostro Hispano de Jesús*,¹³⁰ my co-authors and I pointed out that not all Latinos are alike. We identified at least four groups of Latinos, in which the Cubans appeared to be the ones best positioned in American society. What is certain is that the dominant culture has maintained a stereotypical view of the Latino, *verbi gracia*. In a city like Chicago, a Latino is stereotypically seen by non Latinos as an individual of Mexican origin that works in landscaping, maintenance or construction. To prove what I am saying, I can give some concrete examples. In the movie *The Fugitive*, actor Harrison Ford enters the cleaning department and encounters a Mexican man singing Cielito Lindo¹³¹ from whom he steals an identification card.²⁵ The same occurred in the movie *Cellular*, in which a Kim Bassinger's maid is a Latina woman. The obvious question is why the Latino has been stereotyped as being a person that can only aspire to those kinds of employments.

Undoubtedly, American society has developed a hypocritical and perverse system, since on the one hand they contract *illegal* labor, especially in jobs that an Anglo typically does not want to do or for which to accept lower wages; yet on the other hand, the system punishes undocumented migrants with unfair laws that seek to expel regardless of number of years spent contributing to the country, the presence of kids born

130 Zaldivar, Raúl, et al. *El Rostro Hispano de Jesús*. *Op cit.* P. 19 and ff.

131 A popular Mexican song considere to be the second national anthem.

on US soil, or any other important considerations. At the same time that the Latinos are used as cheap labor for social and economic development, others are put in jails to await a deportation order signed by a judge.

Despite paying taxes directly from income¹³² as well as indirectly, the government will not hesitate to expel them if they are discovered.

The logical question to all this is why do Latinos continue coming to the United States if they are to be treated this way? Would it not be better to not charge the historical invoice? The answer is simple. With all the adversities they face at home, it is still better to come to the United States than to stay in Latin America, especially if one belongs to the fringes of society. The reason is because there is always a possibility that after much effort in the US, a person might succeed in overcoming these obstacles and can economic stability or simply give their children a chance to have the decent life they never had. That makes it worthwhile in the face of any adverse system.

To conclude this section we present some of the adversities within the social system that a Latino has to overcome in order to survive in America, adversities that former congressman and academic Tom Tancredo called the cost of migration and for which he presented economic arguments to promote a restrictive migration policy.¹³³ 1) The children of immigrants

132 The majority of undocumented immigrants pay taxes on their income and since they do not have a Social Security number, the IRS has created a number for personal identification of the contributor known ITIN. Undocumented workers often pay taxes out of civic duty and in order to not call the attention of the IRS.

133 Tom Tancredo is quoted from his book *In mortal Danger. The Battle for Americas' Border and Security*. Tancredo is a politician from Colorado who served in congress for 10 years, but lost his bid to be governor of his state. Ironically, his Italian ancestors in the early 20th century entered through Ellis Island and had to go through many of the traumas that Hispanics face today. As we

are a financial burden for schools because special programs have to be created to teach them English for them to be on par with the other children. 2) Among Latinos there are many criminals that have to be supported in the prisons. 3) The fact that Latinos accept lower wages affects the Anglo labor market. 4) Hospital emergency services cannot deny attention to undocumented workers who cannot afford medical services, requiring the State to bear the costs. And finally, 5) Latinos send a high percentage of their money earned in American territory to their countries of origin.¹³⁴

In response to these arguments I will point out that we have to understand that these points perhaps true for first-generation Latinos. Second, it should be noted that too often the rhetoric in the immigration debate assumes that first generation immigrants who migrate to the US in irregular ways have a real choice. Despite the aforementioned costs to the state, the individuals often cite, immigrants contribute in many other ways and, as noted, often pay income and other taxes. These costs should also be compared to the large and growing budget the US sets for border security, deportation centers, ICE officials, and an entire infrastructure built almost exclusively around the goals of expelling people. Third, as we have seen, we Latinos are not here as a spontaneous movement, but rather as a result of a series of events in Latin America in which various ruling parties over the years in the United States bear a high share of responsibility. Having made these remarks, I will only point out that we also paid a high price for the neo-

mentioned earlier, when an immigrant is assimilated he often looks down and objects to the new arrivals. Such is the human race.

¹³⁴ Recently on the Fox News show *The Five*, panelists Andrea Tantaros, of Greek origin, and Eric Bolling were commenting that Mexico was not a friend of the US because their nationals were sending money back to Mexico and asking Americans to boycott Mexico by not travelling there.

colonialism of the United States. As a farmer from Central America would say, one should never spit into the wind.

2. Hispanic migration and the judicial system

We know that the law prevents anarchy in any given society. We also know that the highest aspiration of a society is to achieve justice and provide the highest possibility of living in harmony and peace. The United States has established a legal immigration system that still has many gaps and is far from reaching what is just, which makes it unacceptable in many cases. The system is not working and millions have found themselves for many years in a situation of flux while pushing for immigration reform.

One of the recriminations to the immigration legal system is that it is an unjust system that has turned the pain and anguish of the immigrant into a windfall for others. For example, the American government steep rates for each application, and reserves the right to increase these costs at will. Further, immigration lawyers often prey on immigrants and charge any amount they choose just to fill out a simple document.

Let us consider the government that, only by way of example, created the famous Temporary Protection Status, better known by its acronym TPS. This status has been given to Salvadorans, Hondurans, Nicaraguans and Haitians *inter alia*. It is usually granted for 18 months. In the specific case of El Salvador, in the last TPS conducted in 2012, 208,490¹³⁵ people renewed for the ninth consecutive time, each time paying

¹³⁵ See Prensa Gráfica de El Salvador, Agosto 13 de 2011.

\$465.00. To this must be added the nationals of other countries who have to do exactly the same. It only takes a simple calculation to know that the US had gained billions of dollars through this procedure. Simply multiply the number of nationals from each country under this process by the amount paid each time they have reapplied. Then multiply that by the nine times they have requested the extension and you will see the financial results. Considering the case of Salvadorans alone, the US has brought in almost 900 million dollars.

During all these years there has not been a political will on the part of the American government to “legalize” all persons within the TPS who according to the principles of justice deserve to be recognized. What is most cruel of all this is the uncertainty that prevails in the people who do not know the rules, that is, do not know how long they will be under this process; meanwhile, they have to live with constant legal imitations. This is precisely what makes the system perverse: the insolence, the indifference of the people who make the decisions and who have used human pain for their own financial gain.

The issue of TPS, however, is only one among many other legal intricacies in the system used to exploit and build supremacy over millions of unfortunate people, whose only crime is being born outside of this country.

This brings us to the other part of the system, the immigration lawyers. We know that professional fees are valid and we understand the price a person has to pay to become a lawyer and then get licensed to practice the profession. What we do not understand is how they take advantage of the suffering of thousands of excluded people, oppressed by the system, but

with a dream of self-actualization. Charges of \$500 an hour to a commercial company or customer that obtains huge profits financially can be understood, but to charge exorbitant rates to a human being who had the bad fortune to be taken by immigration officers and placed in a prison for deportation cannot be understood.

Some years ago one of my disciples, Erasmo, was stopped by immigration officials. He was a pastor of a church in the Houston area. Erasmo had not committed any traffic violation and his conduct was irreproachable. His crime at that time was his brown skin and that speaks volumes. It was clear that the officer who stopped him knew in advance that he was undocumented. What followed was the simple legal formality “May I see your ID”. Of course he knew there would be no identification. Erasmo was then taken into custody, but not before being placed in handcuffs, stripped of his vehicle and made to feel like a criminal. He was taken to a prison where thousands of undocumented immigrants wait for a judge to sign the deportation orders to be put on the “plane of shame”¹³⁶ to their country of origin.

In the case of Erasmo, we hired a law firm that charged us

¹³⁶ The plane of shame is that in which the US government transports deportees to their country of origin. Government statistics show an average of 1,024 undocumented individuals deported daily (42.6 per hour). During the fiscal year 2012 the average was 1,220 undocumented individuals deported daily (50.8 per hour). Of these, a little over 55% of them had criminal records according to the government. According to ICE 206,776 were Mexicans and of those 132,974 had a criminal record (64%) and 73,802 had no record (36%). Second place belonged to Guatemala with 40,099 deported, and of those 12,613 had a record (31%) and 27,486 had no record (69%). In third place, Honduras had 29,681 deported, and of those 13,226 had a record (45%) and 16,455 with no record (55%). See “Siguen las deportaciones masivas en los Estados Unidos.” Noticias Univisión. <http://noticias.univision.com/article/1650114/2013-08-26/inmigracion/noticias/siguen-las-deportaciones-masivas-en-estados-unidos>

\$500.00 just for the initial visit. The lawyer who visited him, rather than give hope and present the legal process for his case, spent the entire time giving him an accounting of everything that it would cost to be defended by his firm, an amount of over \$17,000. At the end of the interview, Erasmo was left in a state of depression. If it is with difficulty that immigrants in the United States can provide bread for the table in support of their families, forced to live in dire situations with the miserable wages they receive, where was Erasmo going to obtain \$17,000 for his case to be presented before an immigration judge? Given this fact we could feel nothing but anger and helplessness in a system that did not care one bit that Erasmus had a wife and three children who would be left homeless. In the end, Erasmo was deported to Guatemala, causing irreparable damage to three children born in the United States and who had no responsibility for the fact that their father was a foreigner.

This story is a clear example of a convoluted system that allows immigration attorneys to in many cases traffic in the pain of fellow beings, charging high legal rates without regard to the principles of charity and human dignity. The irony in all of this is that the vast majority of these law firms are comprised of Hispanic immigration attorneys who prey on their own people to extract even what they do not have. While it is true that there are agencies that assist immigrants without charge, many lawyers that begin their practice in these agencies, after learning the ropes, often open their own offices and begin the hunt.

In this section the adversity by which Latinos are confronted in both social and legal areas is clear. In the social arena, they have to combat discrimination and prejudice, and then have to work hard to earn respect. This is an uphill battle. The United States

has created a complicated legal system that oppresses them financially and gives rise to legal professionals who profit from the pain of victims to these situations.

III. Migration and the face of Jesus

To explain the power of the metonymy that Jesus has a Hispanic, or Latino face, we will employ Aristotelian logic to construct a syllogism: People who are Protestants are governed by biblical principles. Americans are generally from a Protestant tradition. Therefore, Americans are governed by the principles of the Bible. This syllogism would not have the same value in a Muslim society, for example, or where people do not know Jesus Christ as a deity. But in American society it does fit, because a high percentage of its population attends church on any given Sunday morning, if only by tradition.

According to the Christian faith, the principles of the Bible are the parameters by which we should conduct our lives and in the Bible we find the greatest of all principles, that of love. From it, all the others principles are derived, such as all men are equal before God regardless of race or culture, and that Jesus Christ gave his life for all, and that everyone who believes in Him has eternal life. In short, any number of principles that have nothing to do with prejudice and discrimination are still founded on the idea of love.

So when we say that Jesus, the Almighty God that we as Protestants recognize, has a Hispanic face, or countenance, we are telling the Anglo society that we have an ally, that we are not alone; that is, the same God that they claim to have which is also ours. So it is a clear warning not to commit the same mistake of the Jews who thought they were serving God while

they opposed Jesus. Latinos are on American soil because God has brought us here. So human law does not allow one to pursue, to separate families, to humiliate those whom God requires us to love. As Samuel Rodriguez says: "... it is the cross that forces us to declare that no human being can be illegal. It is the cross that leads us to reconcile the law (Rom 13) to treat the immigrant as if he or she were one of us (Lev. 19).¹³⁷

I now proceed to explain the meaning of the metonymy the Hispanic face of Jesus.

1. The removal of social prejudices

In order to understand the argument, it is essential to first clarify two concepts: prejudice and discrimination. We define prejudice as *an unfavorable and negative attitude toward members of a racial group that are stereotyped in any certain way. This attitude is the result of how one person characterizes another and not the specific acts by the group.*¹³⁸ This case specifically concerns how the dominant culture regards the Latino. As Miguel de la Torre and Edwin Aponte well point out: "To see is not an innocent phenomenon that involves a simple transmission of light waves. It comprises a way of thinking that transforms the object being viewed into a concept in order to bring about an intellectual assimilation and possession"¹³⁹

137 See Samuel Rodriguez in the prologue of the book by Daniel Carroll. *Christians at the Border Op cit.* P. IX.

138 See Preston and Smith. *Sociology. A contemporary approach Op Cit.* P. 294.

139 See De la Torre, Miguel, Aponte, Edwin. *Introducing Latino Theologies.* Orbis Books. USA. 2001. To objectivity this observation, the authors take a world map and place it in four different ways to demonstrate how cultural prejudice can make one see the world in different ways. For example, they show how the map is usually presented in the US, where the world is divided in two parts and the American continent is placed in the center so that the US stands out. Another way is to present the map in the opposite of how we would usually draw it. They hold that from space the world is seen differently and the south

What these authors are telling us is that the interpretation of a social phenomenon or behavior will depend on the cultural platform from which it is viewed. To not see the social act or behavior from all possible positions, but rather to frame it in terms of stereotypes and thereby make an intellectual assumption, is what creates prejudice and the attitude to which we refer in our definition of prejudice.

Discrimination we define as *the different treatment a person receives through the assumption that he or she belongs to a particular group*. In the study of the history of American society we notice that although this is a State founded by noble democratic ideals under the aegis of God, it is also a State that slaughtered Indians and enslaved blacks using racial beliefs to justify its brutality.¹⁴⁰ Along the same vein, the first immigration laws were widely discriminatory by not granting citizenship to blacks and not allowing entry into its territory to the Chinese for strictly racial reasons.

Since this is society with a Protestant majority, where the name of God appears even in the currency with the phrase "In God We Trust", and in which the president takes the oath of office by placing his hand on a Bible, this kind of conduct demonstrates an ambivalent behavior toward perhaps the most crucial mandate of the Bible, which is to love, and instead results in prejudice and discrimination. The end result is unacceptable because it contradicts the faith they themselves boast to profess.

This is the society, full of contradictions and paradoxes, in which immigrants from Latin America have landed. As a re-

can be north or vice versa. These examples demonstrate that the exercise of *seeing* has to do with the culture of who is doing the interpretation.

140 Passim. Nemattanew. *The North American Genocide*. Powhatan Press. USA. 2002.

sult, we live in the flesh the ravages of this system that, like it or not, in one way or another discriminate against us.

With the formation of the United Nations and the enactment of a number of international conventions,¹⁴¹ this kind of discrimination is unacceptable, at least on paper, in the context of the international community. It is for this reason that discrimination now exists in veiled forms in some cases, or through legislation with hidden racist expressions, but in essence, maintains a racist spirit.¹⁴²

When we say that Jesus has a Hispanic countenance and that this removes both *de facto* and *de jure* discrimination for ethnic or racial reasons, we are saying metaphorically that Jesus had dark skin, dark eyes and a certain type hair. If Jesus has a Hispanic countenance, it would be absurd, as indeed it is, that a Christian people as in America would discriminate or despise all people of Hispanic origin. In simple words, the ethnic criterion does not work in the differentiation of humans. This is an established biblical principle. When the apostle Paul pointed out: *There is no Jew nor Greek; slave nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesús*¹⁴³ he was removing any barriers whatsoever, which makes any conduct in the contrary an affront to the Word of God.

141 One of these international conventions is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights pronounced by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10, 1948 in which Article 1 states: *All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights...* the most important convention is the International Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination of December 21, 1965.

142 A juristic aphorism is that the law is not just the letter but also the spirit. In this sense, many American immigration laws are carefully worded but the spirit is completely racist. An example of this is the Arizona S. B. 1070, known also as the hate bill. For more information, see De la Cruz, William. *La migración hacia los Estados Unidos vista desde una perspectiva bíblica – teológica Op Cit.* P. 84 – 85.

143 See Galatians 3:28.

This affirmation is intended to make the Anglo world realize that it is no longer possible to maintain a double standard, that it is necessary to put aside prejudice and racial discrimination³⁹ because it expressly contradicts the very values they claim to uphold and because such conduct is contrary to international conventions adopted by the international community. Above all, because they contradict the principles of love and mercy enshrined in the Holy Scriptures. The principles of *Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them and with the same yardstick you measure will be measures*⁴⁰ are not mere biblical catch phrases. They are principles by which we should regulate our lives. Hence, the Hispanic face of Jesus requires all those who profess His name to eliminate racial prejudice and discrimination that goes against love and Christian testimony.

2. The enactment of a just immigration reform

The metonymy of a Hispanic face of Jesus also means that it is time for the American government to pass a fair legislation in order to accommodate all those who deserve such recognition of legal, permanent status.⁴¹

One of the first steps is to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families⁴² adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 1990. This is an international legal instrument which unfortunately has not been ratified by receiving countries, including the United States. It is important to observe that this international convention would grant legal immigrants all rights in accordance with other international conventions, such as the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant Politicians and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. As such, the non-ratification of this convention is a very strong message from the United States against migration and also contradictory, as it goes against the legal principles which they boast to champion.

Secondly, it is past time for the United States Congress to approve an immigration law that is fair to all those who deserve better treatment.⁴³ We understand perfectly that the times are different from the amnesty of President Reagan and that with the events of 9/11 immigration has become a national security issue.⁴⁴ As such, a reform of existing immigration laws has to consider a number of elements to protect American territory from terrorist attacks. However, what is unethical is to prolong the pain and exclusion of millions of noble human beings who do not deserve such a fate. It is true that President Obama has not been entirely indifferent to the issue, since he signed the DACA law through an executive action that partially benefits *dreamers*⁴⁵ resulting in an act of good will that brought peace to thousands of families whose children were previously unable to attain a higher education, and therefore a better future. However, this is not enough, because the DACA initiative is not a definitive solution, but only a partial effort. Nor is it enough because there are any number of people that are in the TPS program that have renewed this status nine times and have demonstrated integrity and respect for the laws of this country but are still disenfranchised. Therefore, it is time to give permanent residence status also

to those persons who have resided for more than 20 years in the shadow of a system that haunts them. The Roman jurist Ulpian has stated, «*Iustitia est constans et perpetua voluntas ius suum cuique tribuendi. Iuris praecepta sunt haec: honeste vivere alterum non laedere, suum cuique tribuere.*»⁴⁶ “Justice is the constant willingness to give each one his right. The precepts of law are these: to live honestly, not harming others and to give to each his own.”

3. Giving dignity to the Hispanic people

The powerful statement that Jesus has a Hispanic face holds much value. We Latinos have been a suffering people from our very beginning. The Latino is a result of the blending of the Spanish with the indigenous people. This genetic symbiosis was not made under the principles of biblical morals, but by a barbaric and inhumane abuse of Spanish males who sexually overpowered the natives who had no choice but to bow under such abuse.⁴⁷ This resulted in several things. First of all, this resulted in rampant sexism in society and all its ramifications, and then a people with a battered self-esteem. These people came out of the fire of the Spanish colonization to fall into the coals of neo colonialism of the United States. To cross the river, so to speak, and tread American soil means becoming able to provide for one’s family and gaining dignity from a human and material perspective. When we say that Jesus has a Hispanic face we are asserting that God is part of this whole process of creating dignity, because despite the anti-immigrant laws currently in place, and despite the persecution from the United States authorities, millions of Latinos whom God has vindicated live in dignity.

With these words we want to send a strong and clear message to the Anglo world: we are not outcasts in this world, we are not orphans, we have a Father, we have a Savior and that fact alone gives us worth. We need to become aware that we as a people have to value ourselves first before the Americans will. How are we going to do this? Very simple. The first step we must take is to have a direct relationship with God. Then we have to educate ourselves, have dreams and act accordingly. The truth of the matter is that nobody is going to respect us for what we say, but rather for who we are, and that is our challenge: to build a reputation, because in the end this is the only way that can put an end to discrimination and racial prejudice.

We have done the right thing by crossing the river. First, because living in our own home countries is extremely difficult for the vast majority of the population. In our native countries, social inequality is extreme. In many Central American countries, for example, 10% of the population possesses more than 40% of the wealth. Further, in these societies the customary behavior of politicians is to line their pockets and that of their companions, insulting the people with their large salaries, living in big houses and driving expensive cars alongside extreme poverty. This blatant injustice has created a series of scourges that has made it unbearable to live under the current conditions such as drug trafficking, contract killings, extortions, and kidnappings for ransom⁴⁸ *inter alia*.

People who refuse to live in that reality have to migrate to societies that will allow them to develop as normal people with dignity. While we acknowledge that real change needs to happen in this country, the people at the fringes of society cannot afford to carry out this change or wait for this change to happen. Hence, we have argued that the Jesus of the Hispanic face knows

that our cause is just and that there is nothing wrong with for a man to aspire that the Charter of Human Rights Council of the United Nations be a reality in his life, not a chimera.

This brings us to a second reason why crossing the river is a just cause. Every human being has a talent that God has given and must develop to its fullest. When a man or woman has that awareness and has a legitimate aspiration for oneself as well as for their future generations, then he or she must do everything possible to achieve that dream. To achieve that is to give value and dignity to a human being. And the Jesus with an Hispanic face does precisely that, dignifying, not debasing man.

One might argue that what is stated in the previous section is a contradiction the statement that it is good to cross the river. At first glance it is, but when viewed in all its dimensions, we will recognize that it is a thousand times better to cross the river and face the brutality of the anti-immigrant Anglo system than to live in a society where the possibilities of the excluded are almost nil, where the unbending and indolent heart of the political class has insulted the people, sentencing them to "100 Years of Solitude". Under these circumstances, these words take on greater significance: "*it is better to die standing than live on one's knees*"⁴⁹ take on real significance."

This section has presented the meaning of the metonymy the Hispanic Face of Jesus in Protestant America, the birthplace of many evangelical denominations, and the nerve center for Christian missions and ministries that circumvent the entire planet, which firmly believes that Jesus Christ is God made flesh, who died on a cross in our place to atone for our guilt and provides salvation to a fallen race. This declaration has the importance and power to change any behavior. If the Jesus of the Hispanic

face does not differentiate people on the basis of racial criteria and does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of ethnic roots, then what entitles American society to do so? Nothing, absolutely nothing. If the Hispanic Face of Jesus gives a new value to man, how dare we do otherwise? How can we proclaim laws like SB 170:⁵⁰ The power of this metonymy makes crystal clear the hypocrisy of a society that has set aside the Bible or has made an interpretation of the text out of context and moral implications. The potency of this metonymy lies in the fact that it calls for awareness to everyone who calls or considers themselves Christian to evolve from a theoretical Christianity to one with a commitment to a real and practical Christianity that dignifies rather than denigrates the crown of creation.

Conclusions

1. The root of this entire problem is that man is in essence ethnocentric; that is, having the tendency to wrongly judge people of another culture by one's own standards, which he regards as superior. Theologically speaking, the root of the problem is sin that dwells in mankind and which leads him to act against love and mercy.
2. Hispanic migration to the United States is not a phenomenon that has arisen *ex nihilo* or that occurs in a social vacuum. On the contrary, it is a social reaction to events that occurred in the past, which had much to do with successive American governments. First, the American transnational companies introduced capitalism to Latin America, creating *ipso facto* the working class which was abused and exploited by taking advantage of the naivety of a society coming out of the Spanish yoke and finding itself in an unfortunate socio-economic state of backwardness.

Second, the United States established itself through diplomatic means as the power behind the power in Latin America, supposedly to safeguard their interests. Using their money and privileged position in the international community, they entered into collusion with and corrupted the politicians in power. These become the new rich and far from developing the country, they stole the money and with that behavior kept the countries in an underdeveloped state.

3. This conclusion is based on the following statement: The migration of Hispanics to the United States is the payment of a historic debt which they created through transnational companies and the collusion with the illegitimate rulers who sold their souls to Satan for money, plunging millions of people into an extremely cruel misery.
4. The first major migrations of Latinos began in the 1960s. These continued to rise in the 1970s, but soared to unthinkable numbers following the civil wars in Central America, considered by most to be proxy wars in the cold war being waged between the United States and the former Soviet Union. Entire displaced communities were forced to emigrate.
5. The Hispanic immigrant who crosses the river meets an anti-immigrant social and legal system against which he or she has to fight for many years in order to establish legal status, if they have the good fortune to do so. Many never succeed, because they die or are deported.
6. The prevailing social system in the United States is a hypocritical system that on the one hand engages the Latino as cheap labor, that exploits and does not give social ben-

efits in many cases, and then chases, harasses and finally deports. It is hypocritical because it has a double standard, giving poorly remunerated jobs, and then collecting taxes through the famous ITN. But if a policeman wants to stop a man with Hispanic features, he can just do it, and then imprison him until deported by a judge.

7. The legal system is anti-immigrant, or at least anti poor, who are the majority of those seeking refuge, and we say the poor because a foreigner who invests a million dollars in the United States and provides work for ten US citizens can have legal residency automatically.
8. One of the evils that helped to create this system, unfortunately, has been the notorious immigration lawyers. A large number of them are traffickers in the pain of their own brothers. Motivated by greed and money, in many cases they cheat people who because of their anguish give up all their savings.
9. The metonymy the Hispanic face of Jesus has an intrinsic power in a Protestant society like America with its prejudice and discrimination against us. The power lies in ensuring God's empathy toward ethnic groups which *cosuetudo enveterata* are called Hispanic. This statement presents with clarity that there is someone who answers on our behalf, that we are not outcasts.
10. This is the moment for the United States Congress to approve an immigration reform that grants justice to millions of human beings living in the shadow of a harassing system. The goodwill gesture by President Obama to sign

the DACA is recognized, but this is not the final solution. It is necessary to regularize the immigration status of those stuck in the TPS and those who for many years have been residing in US territory and have demonstrated exemplary behavior.

11. Those people who because of their immigration status have been taken into custody or are fighting a deportation order should receive a full amnesty. You cannot consider them as criminals for violating immigration laws alone, and they should be eligible for full legal status.
12. The fact that Jesus has a Hispanic countenance gives us worth and dignity as human beings. In light of this reality, Latinos must raise their level of self-esteem and never look upon themselves in a negative light, but rather as they are, created in the image of God, brought to the United States as fresh air to fulfill a purpose in the eternal plans of the Creator.

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30. *Convención Internacional sobre la eliminación de todas las formas de discriminación racial.* Promulgada por la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas el 21 de Diciembre de 1965.
31. *Convención internacional sobre la protección de los derechos de todos los trabajadores migratorios y de sus familiares.* 18 de Diciembre de 1990.

APPENDICES



APPENDIX I

LATINAS EVANGÉLICAS – HTI FELLOWS:

Elizabeth Conde-Frazier
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Education

Ph.D., Boston College
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B.A., Brooklyn College, City University of New York

Biographical Statement:

As Dean of Esperanza College, Dr. Conde-Frazier is responsible for setting the vision, the strategic direction, and providing leadership and management for the programs and faculty. Previously, she was professor of religious education at the Claremont School of Theology and taught Hispanic/Latino/a theology at the Latin American Bible Institute, in California. As professor, she mentored Latino/a students and wrote in the areas of multicultural education, Latina feminist theology, the spirituality of the scholar and issues of justice as they relate to education. As founder of the Orlando E. Costas Hispanic and Latin American Ministries Program at Andover Newton Theological School, she developed programs for the development of ministers and lay leaders, including youth. She has over ten years experience as an ordained pastor and has been a bi-

lingual teacher. Dr. Conde-Frazier holds a Ph.D. from Boston College, a M.Div. from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary and a B.A. From Brooklyn College, City University of New York. She recently published *Listen to the Children: Conversations with Immigrant Families*. (bilingual) Judson Press, 2011.

Cristian De La Rosa

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Education

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M. Div. Wesley Theological Seminary
B.A. University of the Pacific

Biographical Statement

The Reverend Dr. Cristian De La Rosa is an ordained elder with the United Methodist Church and came to Boston University School of Theology from the role of National Director for the Hispanic Youth Leadership Academy (HYLA) at Perkins School of Theology. She previously served as Director of Continuing Education and Course of Study School at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary and more recently served with The Association for Hispanic Theological Education (AETH) as the National Director for Tertulias Pastorales, an ecumenical clergy initiative sponsored by the Lilly Foundation. Dr. De La Rosa received her PhD in Theology and Ethics from Chicago Theological Seminary where her

dissertation focused on contextual dynamics of power and agency. Her areas of scholarship include Feminist Theology, cultural theory, Latin American Liberation Theology, and the Hispanic/Latino community and its religious history. She currently serves as Administrative Co-convenor for the National Association of UM Latina Clergy Women (ACLAMEN), as a trustee of Esperanza Academy, and as a board Member for the Massachusetts Council of Churches.

Cristina García-Alfonso

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Education

Ph.D., Brite Divinity School, Texas Christian University
M.A.T.S., Episcopal Divinity School; Th.M., Candler School of Theology
B.A., Seminario Evangelico de Teologia, Matanzas, Cuba

Biographical Statement

Cristina García-Alfonso is a native of Matanzas, Cuba. She graduated from the Seminario Evangélico de Teología, Matanzas, Cuba in 1997 with a Licenciature in Theology. In October 1997, she was ordained to the ministry in the Fraternity of Baptists Churches of Cuba (FIBAC). In the year 2000, she arrived in the United States to continue her theological education. She earned her Master of Arts in Theological Studies (M.A.T.S) degree from Episcopal Divinity School in Boston, MA in 2002, and a Master of Theology (Th.M) from Candler School of Theology, Emory University, 2003. She was awarded the Doctor of Philosophy from Brite Divinity School in May

of the year 2008. Cristina completed a year of CPE residency and is currently working as a Hospice Chaplain for United Hospice-Pruitt Corporation in Gainesville, GA. In addition to her interest in the Hebrew Bible and gender studies, she also explores the intersections of biblical studies and pastoral care with special attention to Latino/a communities.

Awilda González-Tejera

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Education

Ph.D., Biblical and Historical Studies, Boston University
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M.A. (1992) Christian Education; M.Div (1994) Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

B.A. Business Administration, University of Puerto Rico,
Arecibo, P.R., 1991

Biographical Statement

Dr. Awilda González-Tejera was born in Puerto Rico. She received her Doctor of Theology degree from Boston University School of Theology, with a major in New Testament and Pauline Letters. Dr. González-Tejera has served as an Adjunct Associate Professor of N.T. at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Boston, Fuller Theological Seminary, California, and The General Theological Seminary, New York; she has taught two courses through “Orlando Costas Hispanic Program” of Andover Newton Theological School, MA. González-Tejera has a special interest in the letters of Paul and the relation of

his writings to historical and social aspects, practices, and understandings of the Greco-Roman world. She is the author of the commentary *Filipenses, Colosenses, 1 and 2 Tesalonicenses, Filemón* for the bible commentary series “*Conozca su Biblia*” (Augsburg Fortress, 2009). González-Tejera is also the author of the chapter “Biblical Equality in United States Latino Churches” for the book *Biblical Equality* (WIPF and Stock Publisher, 2009). She resides in Texas.

Leticia A. Guardiola-Sáenz

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Education

Ph.D. in New Testament – Vanderbilt University

M.A. in Theological Studies (1990), M.Div. (1992); M.A. in Religion (2001) Northern Theological Seminary (Chicago, IL); Vanderbilt University

B.A. in Accounting (1983); B.A. in Spanish Literature (1987)

Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey (Monterrey, México)

Biographical Statement

Leticia Guardiola-Sáenz, is a New Testament scholar originally from Mexico. She did her doctoral studies at Vanderbilt University and has been working as Assistant Professor of Christian Scriptures at Seattle University since 2008. Her most recent work is included in *The Peoples’ Companion to the Bible*, a collection of articles featuring multicultural perspectives and culture-critical methods on the Bible, for which she served as editor responsible of the articles on the New Testament. Her scholarship interests include: the represen-

tations of Jesus in the Gospels, contemporary hermeneutics, and the role of women in Scriptures.

Nora O. Lozano-Díaz

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Loida I. Martell-Otero

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B.S., University of Puerto Rico

Biographical Statement

The Rev. Dr. Loida I. Martell-Otero is Professor of Constructive Theology at Palmer Theological Seminary, in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania. She received her degree from Fordham University. She is an ordained American Baptist Churches/

USA minister who pastored for 15 years. She is also a doctor of veterinary medicine. She served as an assistant professor at the University of Puerto Rico/Medical Sciences campus, and as an adjunct faculty member at the Center for Urban Ministerial Education (the Boston campus of Gordon-Conwell Theological School), Hartford Seminary and at New York Theological Seminary. Her writings include "Creating a Sacred Space: An Iglesia Evangélica Response to Global Homelessness" in *Dialog* (March 2010); "Encuentro con el Jesús Santo: An Evangélica Soterology," in *Jesus in the Hispanic Community* edited by Harold Recinos and Hugo Magallanes (WJK, 2010); "Of Santos and Saints: Salvation from the Periphery," in *Perspectivas* (Summer of 2001); and "Mujeres Hispanas/Latinas Teologizando: Una Perspectiva Evangélica," in *Más Voces: Reflexiones Teológicas de la Iglesia Hispana* (Abingdon Press). She is co-editor and contributor to *Teología en Conjunto: A Collaborative Hispanic Protestant Theology* (WJK) with José D. Rodríguez. She has participated in various HTI and Wabash Center workshops, and has made presentations in ecclesial and professional venues, including the American Academy of Religion and the American Baptist Churches/USA Gathering of Scholars and Theological Educators. She has developed a passion for photography.

Adriana Pilar Nieto

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Ph.D., University of Denver & Iliff School of Theology-Joint Doctoral Program.

M.A., University of New Mexico.

B.A., University of New Mexico.

Biographical Statement

Adriana Pilar Nieto, Ph. D., is an Assistant Professor of Chicana/o Studies at Metropolitan State College of Denver. Her research includes borderlands, religiosities, Latina feminist theologies, and embodied liberatory practices. She is interested in the work of artists who utilize their body to interrogate the intersections of race, class, gender, spirit, and nation as they converge.

Elaine Padilla

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Ph.D., Drew University

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B.A., Eugene Bible College

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Biographical Statement

Elaine Padilla is Assistant Professor of Constructive Theology and Director of Assessment at New York Theological Seminary. Her research, teaching and writing engage the areas of Process Thought, Latino/a Theologies, Constructive Theologies, Postmodern Philosophies, Ecotheology, Mysticism, Pluralism, Gender Studies, and Women Religious Studies. Among her most recent publications are the essays "Border-Crossing

and Exile,” in *Cross Currents*; and “The Eros of Intersubjective Becomings,” in *Seeking Common Ground* (A festschrift for Joseph Bracken). She has co-authored “A Proximity of Love” with Stephanie M. Crumpton, published in *Perspectivas*; and “Where Are the Pentecostals in an Age of Empire?” with Dale T. Irvin, published in *Evangelicals and Empire*. Forthcoming are her book *A Passionate God*, to be published by Fordham University Press, and a co-edited three-volume project with Peter C. Phan, *Theology and Migration in World Christianity* to be published by Palgrave MacMillan. She is a member of the American Academy of Religion where she is on the Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities, and a member of the Catholic Theological Society of America. She is currently serving at the Governing Board of the Hispanic Summer Program, and is a member of the Board of the International Foundation for Ewha Woman’s University. Padilla is a member of the Riverside Church in New York.

Zaida Maldonado Pérez

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B.A., University of Massachusetts, Lowell.

Biographical Statement

Dr. Zaida Maldonado Pérez is the Dean of the School of Urban Ministries and Professor of Church History and Theolo-

gy. She received a B.A. from the University of Massachusetts, 1980; a M.Div. from Eden Theological Seminary, 1993; and a Ph.D. from Saint Louis University, 1999. Dr. Pérez came to Asbury Seminary in 2002 after serving as director of Hispanic Theological Initiative at Princeton Theological Seminary. She has also taught at Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, Candler School of Theology and Saint Louis University. She has written and edited several articles and chapters. She has also written a book, *An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Abingdon Press, 2002) which has been published in English, Spanish and Portuguese. She has also participated in seminars and speaking and teaching engagements throughout the world. Dr. Pérez is a member of the American Society of Church History, the American Academy of Religion and Asociación para la Educación Teológica Hispana (The Association for the Theological Education of Hispanics).

Mayra de Lourdes Rivera Rivera

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Biographical Statement

Mayra Rivera joined the HDS faculty in July 2010, having previously been Assistant Professor of Theology at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. She also mentored doctoral students of the Graduate Theological Union. Her

trans-disciplinary work in critical theological studies engages key Christian themes in relation to current theory and philosophy Rivera's work also analyzes the role of religious ideas in Latina theory and literature. Her book *The Touch of Transcendence: A Postcolonial Theology of God* (2007) explores the relationship between models of divine otherness and ideas about inter-human difference. She is also co-editor, with Stephen Moore, of *Planetary Loves: Spivak, Postcoloniality, and Theology* (2010) and with Catherine Keller and Michael Nausner, of *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire* (2004). She is currently writing a book that explores the connections between theological and philosophical metaphors of body and flesh.

Matilde Moros (Ph.D. Candidate at Drew University)

<http://www.nbts.edu/newsite/estory.cfm?storynum=161>

B.A., College of Wooster

M.T.S., Harvard Divinity School

M.Div., Princeton Theological Seminary

Ph.D., Drew University (candidate)

Matilde is a Venezuelan/US Ph.D. candidate in Religion and Society. Her interdisciplinary approach to Christian social ethics integrates interests in Latin American and Latina/o studies using critical theory and narrative methodologies with a particular emphasis on women, violence, and resistance. She is Presbyterian and aims to teach in a seminary or university.

LATINAS EVANGÉLICAS – OTHER PROFESSORS

Daisy Machado

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María Pérez y González

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http://www.gordonconwell.edu/academics/view-faculty-member.cfm?faculty_id=15890&grp_id=8946

APPENDIX II

A Statistical Overview of the Hispanic Protestant Church in the USA, 1921-2013 Compiled and Edited by Clifton L. Holland

Introduction

The lack of historical and statistical information at the national level regarding the origin and development of the Hispanic Protestant Church in the USA has been a serious obstacle to anyone interested in gaining a comprehensive overview of this reality. However, a partial picture has emerged with the appearance of regional studies, including my own **The Religious Dimension in Hispanic Los Angeles: A Protestant Case Study (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1974 – 554 pages)**, as well as denominational studies, biographies of key leaders, and historical overviews of specific religious movements, such as Hispanic Pentecostalism.

However, a partial picture has emerged within specific time frames since 1930 that enables us to begin to visualize the origin and development of the Hispanic Protestant Church in the USA. These momentary and partial glimpses of the Hispanic Church nationally have been complemented by the compilation of “A Chronology of Significant Hispanic Protestant Beginnings or Events in the USA, 1829-2000” (see chapter 5 in this book) that fills in some of the blanks in the historical record. Although this chronology is incomplete, it is a good starting point to build

on during the next decade as we gather additional information and correct any mistakes and distortions that may have been made. There is some duplication in the text below between the chronology chapter and this one in the documentation of historical and statistical data at the national level on the Hispanic Protestant Church in the USA.

A historical overview of how Hispanic work began in the USA among Protestant denominations and church associations - some of the known variables of the beginning of Hispanic ministry

- ✦ Returned Protestant missionaries from Latin America led the way for their respective denominations to begin outreach ministries in the USA among Hispanics (examples: Northern and Southern Baptists, Congregational Church, Disciples of Christ, Presbyterians, Methodists, etc.).
- ✦ Evangelism and compassion ministries among Hispanics were begun by Anglo denominations as part of their Home Missions development, as well as to other ethnic groups (mainly immigrants).
- ✦ Some autonomous denominations and church associations were formed that were not related to any Anglo denomination, such as the Apostolic Assembly of Faith in Jesus Christ – Asamblea Apostólica de la Fe en Cristo Jesús (Southern California, 1906-1914), a “Jesus Only” (Oneness) Pentecostal group.
- ✦ Splits and divisions within existing Hispanic denominations led to the formation of new Hispanic denominations in the USA; for example, at

least four denominations were founded as splits from the Latin American Council of Christian Churches – Concilio Latino-Americano de Iglesias Cristianas (CLADIC), founded in 1923 by the Rev. Francisco Olazábal and his associates.

- ✦ Latin American immigrants to the USA (mainly Mexicans and Puerto Ricans) who were Protestant believers sought out churches in the USA that were similar to those they attended in their home countries.
- ✦ Some evangelical pastors from Latin America immigrated to the USA in search of better economic opportunities for their families; they began to establish new Hispanic congregations in the USA, or served as pastors of existing Hispanic churches or Hispanic Departments in Anglo churches.
- ✦ Some Anglo denominations invited Latin American pastors in their respective mission fields to relocate in the USA and help with Hispanic ministries.
- ✦ Some Latin American pastors came to the USA for advanced studies in universities, seminaries and Bible institutes; during their studies or after graduating, some began to pastor local Hispanic churches and remained in the USA (this represented a leadership drain on churches in Latin America).
- ✦ Some Protestant denominations in Latin America began to send their own pastors and missionaries to the USA to serve their migrating church members in major U.S. cities and other areas

with high concentrations of Latin American immigrants; Puerto Rican denominations were major participants in this process.

- Individual Hispanics (native-born in the USA or immigrants) were converted to the Protestant faith and started their own churches and/or denominations.

A historical and statistical overview of the emergence and development of the Hispanic Protestant Church in the USA

1921 -**Rodney W. Roundy, Associate Secretary of the Home Mission Council**, reported that Protestant denominations had at least 300 Spanish-speaking churches and missions in the USA, with a paid staff of 250 ministers and Christian workers, in addition to 157 mission school teachers; also, that there were more “preaching points” than the number of reported churches and missions.

1930 -**The Rev. Robert McLean** reported the existence of 367 Protestant Spanish-speaking congregations in the USA with an estimated 26,600 members; his report did not include any Pentecostal denominations or local churches (McLean, *The Northern Mexican*, 1930).

1960 -**Leo Grebler, et al.**, in **The Mexican-American People: the nation's second largest minority** (New York: The Free Press, 1970), reported the existence of 1,535 Spanish-speaking churches in the USA with an estimated 113,130 members, based on a survey by Glen W. Trimble for the National Council of Churches; this report included only one Pentecostal denomination: the Assemblies of God; other

non-Pentecostal denominations (such as the Church of the Nazarene) were omitted from the report. PROLADES estimates that there were at least 2,200 Spanish-speaking churches in the USA in 1960, based on its own research.

Table 20.1. Distribution of Protestant Religious Efforts Among the “Spanish” by Denomination, 1960

Denomination	Total Number of Members	Total Number of Spanish Churches in USA	Percentage of Spanish Churches that are in the West & Southwest	Denominational Institutions serving the Spanish pop.
Assemblies of God	29,054	392	77%	3
Methodist Church	28,000	221	81.7%	18
Southern Baptist Convention	28,000	559	95.3%	3
American Baptist Churches in USA	7,950	106	54.7%	6
United Presbyterian Church USA	6,604	94	74.5%	30
Seventh-Day Adventist Church	5,000	68	64.7%	8
Presbyterian Church in the US	2,842	38	100%	1
Disciples of Christ	1,851	18	50%	2
Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod	1,245	7	100%	3
Evangelical United Brethren	972	14	78.6%	10
United Lutheran Church	604	4	0	n.a.
Congregational Church-Christian Churches	543	7	71.4%	n.a.
Church of God (Anderson, IN)	465	7	100%	n.a.

TOTAL	113,130	1,535	81.4%	84
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Source: p. 488, chapter 20, "Protestants and Mexicans," in *The Mexican-American People: the nation's second largest minority*, edited by Leo Grebler, Joan W. Moore and Raloph C. Guzman (New York: The Free Press, 1970).

Other denominations with Hispanic churches in existence in 1960 not included in the table above:

- Apostolic Assembly of Faith in Jesus Christ
- Assembly of Christian Churches (NYC)
- California Yearly Meeting of Friends
- Christian & Missionary Alliance
- Church of God (Cleveland, TN)
- Church of the Nazarene
- Conservative Baptist Association
- Damascus Christian Church
- Defenders of the Faith
- Episcopal Church
- Free Methodist Church
- International Church of the Foursquare Gospel
- Latin American Council of Christian Churches
- Latin American Council of Pentecostal Church of God
- Independent Pentecostal churches
- The Salvation Army

1960 - **Frederick Whitam reported there were 460 Protestant churches in New York City** with "some form of ministry to Spanish-speaking people," which included 16 denominations as well as independent churches and missions. These included Adventist, Baptist, Congregational, Christian, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, New York City Mission Society, Presbyterian, Salvation Army and other non-Pentecostal denominations. The Pentecostal denomina-

tions reported to exist were the following: Spanish Eastern District Council of the Assemblies of God (40 churches and 5,400 members), Latin American Council of the Pentecostal Church of God (32 churches and 2,325 members), Assembly of Christian Churches (26 churches with 1,600 members); the others had fewer than 10 churches each, including Damascus Christian Church, Defenders of the Faith, and the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) Spanish District Council for the East.

1974 - **The Religious Dimension in Hispanic Los Angeles: A Protestant Case Study**, authored by **Clifton L. Holland**, was published by the William Carey Library in Pasadena, CA. This study was based on two years of field research by Holland while a graduate student at the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA. The book includes a history of over 20 Protestant denominations with Hispanic ministry and a directory of 227 Hispanic churches in the Los Angeles and Orange counties.

1983 - **Ildefonso Ortiz of World Team produced a "Directory of Churches, Organizations and Ministries of the Hispanic Evangelical Churches in Miami-Dade,"** with technical assistance provided by PROLADES, that included 222 Hispanic churches and missions, distributed as follows: Southern Baptist Convention (37), independent Pentecostal churches (31), Assemblies of God (17), other independent churches (15), United Methodist Church (14), independent Baptist churches (13), Church of God-Cleveland, TN (9), Lutheran churches (9), Presbyterian churches (8), Episcopal churches (6), and the Pentecostal Church of God (6).

1986 - **Lou Cordova, a staff member of the Institute for Latin American Studies (ILAS)** at the U.S. Center for World Mission in Pasadena, CA, produced a **“Directory of Hispanic Protestant Churches in Southern California”** for the Hispanic Association for Theological Education (known as AHET in Spanish), with technical assistance provided by PROLADES. A total of 1,048 Hispanic churches were listed in nine counties: Los Angeles county (687), Orange (80), San Diego (75), San Bernardino (65), Riverside (52), Ventura (29), Kern (26), Imperial (22) and Santa Barbara (12); the denominations with the largest number of churches and missions were: Assemblies of God (124), Apostolic Assembly (108), American Baptist Churches (97), Seventh-day Adventist (68), Southern Baptist Convention (67), Four-square Gospel (48), Church of God-Cleveland, TN (45), Church of the Nazarene (40), Conservative Baptist Association (24), United Methodist (19), Presbyterian Church USA (18), and the Assembly of Christian Churches (16).

1988 - **Graduate student Stewart Stout** produced **“A Guide to Hispanic Protestant Churches in the San Francisco Bay Area”** as part of a National Study of Hispanic Church Growth in the USA, sponsored by PROLADES. The study lists 157 Hispanic churches in six counties, with the denominations with the largest number of churches being: Assemblies of God (28), Southern Baptist Convention (16), Seventh-day Adventist (9), American Baptist Churches (8), and the Church of God-Cleveland, TN (7); 49 churches were unaffiliated.

1988 - **Dr. Everett Wilson** reported the existence of at least **2,159 Hispanic Pentecostal churches in the USA** in

his article on “Hispanic Pentecostals” in the Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements (1988), edited by Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee.

1990 - PROLADES staff member Andrew Toth (a missionary on loan from the Presbyterian Church in America) in “The Hispanic Protestant Church in the USA, 1990” reported the following:

Various polls show steady Hispanic Protestant church growth in the last three decades. In 1972, Gallup reported about 16% of the Hispanic population as Protestant. In 1986, the figure was 18% (Gallup and Castelli 1987:140). Tom Smith of the National Opinion Research Center reported that in 1989 23% of the Hispanic population was Protestant (Smith & Chandler 1989: F-18).

One area in which the growth of Hispanics Protestant churches can be documented is in Southern California. In 1970, Clifton Holland listed 225 Hispanic Protestant churches and departments in the greater Los Angeles area (Holland 1974:440). It is estimated that this represented about 70% of the total number of Hispanic churches in Southern California at that time, or a total of about 320 churches. In 1986, AHET’s Directory of Hispanic Protestant Churches in Southern California documented 1,022 Hispanic churches and missions in eight southern counties (AHET 1986). Another study not yet released had preliminary estimates of 1,450 Hispanic Protestant churches in Southern California (IDEA 1991), and the pace of church planting efforts by the larger denominations is still accelerating as more culturally relevant strategies for growth are implemented.

What does this tell us? For the last three decades the

Hispanic Protestant Church has seen a steady 10% annual growth rate in Southern California. The national opinion polls indicate an 11.25% annual growth rate for the Hispanic Protestant population for the same period, which accurately reflects the growth in numbers of Protestant churches in Southern California. Based upon a total Hispanic population of 24.7 million in 1990, and using the more conservative 10% growth figure documented for Southern California, we should have about 5.4 million Hispanic Protestants in the USA. This is 22% of the Hispanic population and well within the range given by Catholic sources.

Sources

Gallup and Castelli. *The American Catholic People*. New York City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1987, p 139.

Smith, Tom W. "America's Religious Mosaic in American Demographics, June 1984: Vol. 6, No. 6, p.18.

Smith & Chandler. *Los Angeles Times*, Saturday, December 2, 1989; F-18.

Holland, Clifton L. *The Religious Dimension in Hispanic Los Angeles: A Protestant Case Study*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1974, p. 499.

AHET. *Directory of Hispanic Protestant Churches in Southern California*. Pasadena, CA: AHET and In-Depth Evangelism Associates, 1986.

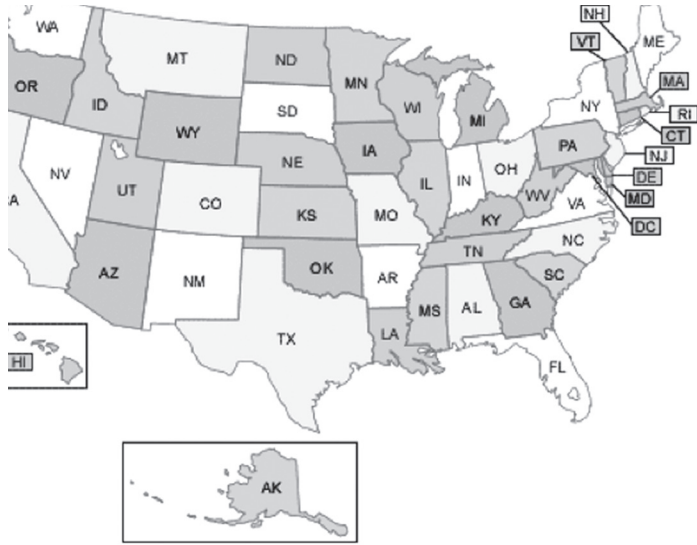
IDEA (In-Depth Evangelism Associates). Church Growth Studies Program. Southern California Hispanic Protestant Church Directory Up-Date. Pasadena, CA; IDEA, 1991.

1993 - PROLADES reported the creation of a national database of Hispanic churches in the USA with 6,837 listings, which was developed as a support service for the Hispanic Association for Bilingual-Bicultural Ministries (HABBM). The distribution of Hispanic churches and missions by state was as follows (only 8 largest listed): California (2,388), Texas (1,799), Florida (643), New York (353), Illinois (277), Arizona (231), New Mexico (173), and New Jersey (118). The largest denominations in terms of number of churches and missions were: the Assemblies of God (1,268), Southern Baptist Convention (759), other Baptists (447), Apostolic Assembly (444), Seventh-day Adventists (283), Christian Churches / Churches of Christ (248), Church of God-Cleveland, TN (227), United Methodist Church (199), Presbyterian Church USA (143), Church of the Nazarene (129), American Baptist Churches (124), International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (113), Evangelical Lutheran Church (111) and the Christian & Missionary Alliance (102); the total number of Hispanic churches and missions in the USA was estimated to be over 10,000 in 1993.

Table of the Distribution of Known Hispanic Protestant Congregations by States and Census Regions, 1993

Alabama – 12	Kentucky – 3	North Dakota – 2
Alaska – 1	Louisiana – 15	Ohio – 53
Arizona – 231	Maine – 0	Oklahoma – 31

The Hispanic Evangelical Church in the United States



Arkansas – 5	Maryland – 12	Oregon – 35
California – 2,388	Massachusetts – 68	Pennsylvania – 75
Colorado – 90	Michigan – 50	Rhode Island – 10
Connecticut – 80	Minnesota – 11	South Carolina – 5
Delaware – 8	Mississippi – 2	South Dakota – 0
District of Columbia – 19	Missouri – 18	Tennessee – 13
Florida – 643	Montana – 2	Texas – 1,779
Georgia – 17	Nebraska – 17	Utah – 16
Hawaii – 3	Nevada – 231	Vermont – 0
Idaho – 21	New Hampshire – 1	Virginia – 18
Illinois – 277	New Jersey – 118	Washington – 64
Indiana – 30	New Mexico – 173	West Virginia – 0

Appendix II

Iowa – 5	New York – 353	Wisconsin – 22
Kansas – 17	North Carolina - 11	Wyoming – 10

TOTAL = 6,837 (October 13, 1993)

BY MAJOR CENSUS REGIONS:

West Region = 3,071

Midwest Region = 502

Northeast Region = 693

South Region = 2,571

States with the largest number of hispanic protestant churches:

California – 2,388

Texas – 1,779

Florida – 643

New York – 353

Illinois – 277

Nevada – 231

New Mexico – 173

New Jersey – 118

**Source: IDEA / Church Growth Studies Program / PROLADES:
National Survey of Hispanic Protestant Churches in the USA, 1993**

2003 - **The document, Hispanic Churches in American Public Life: Summary of Findings**, published in March by the University of Notre Dame's Institute for Latino Studies and edited by Drs. Gaston Espinoza, Virgilio Elizondo and Jesse Miranda, reported that the nation's Hispanic population had increased from 22.4 million in 1990 to 37 million in 2000. The religious affiliation of the Hispanic population in 2000 was reported as: 70% Catholic, 23% Protestant, 6% none and 1% other religions.

2006 - According to research conducted by the **Pew Forum in 2006**, the religious affiliation of the Hispanic population in the USA was as follows:

HISPANIC RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION IN THE USA - 2006	PERCENT	NUMBER
Roman Catholic	68.0%	32,876,738
Protestant/Evangelical	20.0%	9,669,629
Other religions	4.0%	1,933,926
No religious affiliation	7.0%	3,384,370
No answer	1.0%	483,481
NATIONAL TOTAL	100.0%	48,348,144

According to our calculations, the following is estimated to be true regarding Hispanic Protestant adherents in the USA in 2006, based on the Pew Forum results of 2006 and previous research conducted by PROLADES between 1985 and 1995.

Estimated total Hispanic Protestant membership nationally: Spanish-speaking only.	1,565,434	3.2 (%)
Estimated total Hispanic Protestant membership nationally: bilingual and English-speaking.	1,565,434	3.2 (%)
Estimated total Hispanic Protestant membership nationally (all language groups).	3,130,868	6.4 (%)
Estimated total Hispanic Protestant attendance nationally: Spanish, Bilingual and English-speaking congregants.	6,261,736	12.9 (%)
Estimated total Hispanic Protestant adherents nationally.	9,669,629	20.0 (%)
Estimated nominal Hispanic Protestant adherents nationally.	3,407,893	7.1 (%)

2013 - **The 2013 Hispanic Values Survey**, “How Shifting Religious Identities and Experiences are Influencing Hispanic Approaches to Politics” by Robert P. Jones, Daniel Cox and Juhem Navarro-Rivera, of the Public Religion Research Institute, reported the following religious affiliation of the nation’s Hispanic population: 53% Catholic, 25% Protestant, 12%

none, and 6% other religions. This survey indicated a notable decline in the size of the Hispanic Catholic population (from 70% in 2000 to 53% in 2013), a small increase in the size of the Hispanic Protestant population (from 23% in 2000 to 25% in 2013), a large increase in the size of the Hispanic non-affiliated population (from 6% in 2000 to 12% in 2013), as well as a large increase in the size of the Hispanic population that claims to belong to “other religions” (from 1% in 2000 to 6% in 2013).

2013 - **Gallup Poll:** Hispanics have become less likely to identify as Catholic over the past five years, while the percentage saying they are Protestant has stayed roughly the same. Source: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/160691/catholic-hispanic-population-less-religious-shrinking.aspx>

Religious Preferences Among U.S. Hispanics, 2008 vs. 2012

	2008	2012*
	%	%
Catholic	58	54
Protestant	27	28
Other religion	4	3
None/Don't know/Refused	11	15

*Includes January 2013

GALLUP®

Because of differences in public opinion polling methodologies, these two polls conducted in 2013 revealed slightly different results regarding religious affiliation among Hispanics. The Public Religion Research Institute reported the religious affiliation of the nation’s Hispanic population as follows: 53% Catholic, 25% Protestant, 12% none, and 6% other religions.

Usually, there is a plus or minus 3% error factor in most public opinion polls, so this may help to explain the differences between the 2013 Gallup poll and Public Religion Research Institute poll reported above.

2010-2012 PROLADES Research on the Hispanic Protestant Church in the USA

My preliminary conversations with Hispanic leaders in Southern California during late 2009 resulted in the impetus needed to launch a “National Study of the Hispanic Protestant Church in the USA,” with the support of a dozen or more key Hispanic and Anglo leaders who believed that the time had, indeed, come to begin such a study. Consequently, in early January 2010, I took the necessary steps to launch the project with my own funding, forming a support group of Advisors, creating a new website, and beginning the long process of research, writing and production of a series of new documents for the “Online Handbook of Hispanic Protestant Denominations, Institutions and Ministries in the USA” at: www.HispanicChurchesUSA.net

The documents on this website are a compilation of information from many sources as noted in each section of the Home Page and related links. The website and related documents are purposefully designed to be “a work in progress,” so that corrections, additions and updates can be added continuously by participating individuals and organizations.

At long last, a more complete picture is now emerging of the origin and development of the Hispanic Protestant Church in the USA as each piece of the mosaic is added, trimmed, fitted and polished. This is what I previously experienced regionally when I wrote *The Religious Dimension in Hispanic Los Angeles* during 1970-1972. Others authors have added pieces to the

national mosaic by contributing regional and denominational histories of the Hispanic Protestant Church in the USA; see the following web pages for **more information**:

http://www.hispanicchurchesusa.net/history_docs.htm

http://www.hispanicchurchesusa.net/hispanic_regional_studies.htm

Below are some of the progressive results of this study during 2011-2012

1. **As of June 15, 2011**, the PROLADES team had identified 154 Protestant denominations in the USA with Hispanic ministry, which included 21 denominations with more than 10,000 Hispanic church members nationally and 133 denominations with less than 10,000 Hispanic church members: http://www.hispanicchurchesusa.net/denominations/hsusa_encyclopedia_draft.pdf

Below is a table of information about these denominations and church associations:

Name	Members	Churches	Affiliation
Assemblies of god, general council	293,000	1,935	Nae
Southern baptist convention	204,000	3,238	
Seventh day adventist, general council	167,000	1,077	
Independent christian churches / churches of christ (instrumental only)	75,000	750	
United methodist church	63,000	823	Ncc
Church of god (cleveland, tn)	60,000	1,000	Nae

The Hispanic Evangelical Church in the United States

Apostolic assembly of faith in jesus christ (usa) & apostolic church of faith in jesus christ (mexico) related churches	60,000	909	
United pentecostal church international (includes hispanic upc & colombian upc affiliated churches)	50,730	534	
The episcopal church	38,000	400	Ncc
Presbyterian church (usa)	31,000	262	Ncc
International church of the four-square gospel	30,800	250	Nae
American baptist churches in usa	26,757	254	Ncc
Church of the nazarene	26,430	439	Nae
Latin american council of the pentecostal church of new york – clany	20,615	217	
Christian church / disciples of christ	19,000	200	Ncc
Final call church of christ ministries	17,857	75	
Assembly of christian churches	17,100	180	
Lutheran church, missouri synod	14,250	150	
Church of god of prophecy	13,800	230	
Latin american council of christian churches (cladic)	13,000	130	
Evangelical lutheran church in america	10,095	100	Ncc
Subtotals (21 denominations)	1,251,434	13,153	
Subtotals (133 denominations)	314,000	3,305	
Grand total (154 denominations & church associations)	1,565,434	16,458	

2. At that time, the known affiliation of Hispanic Protestant denominations and church associations in the USA in terms interdenominational alliances was as follows: Twenty-eight of the Hispanic Protestant denominations in our Master De-

nominal List are known to be affiliated with the NAE, compared to 10 that are affiliated with the NCC, which means that 116 denominations or church associations are not affiliated with either the NAE or the NCC.

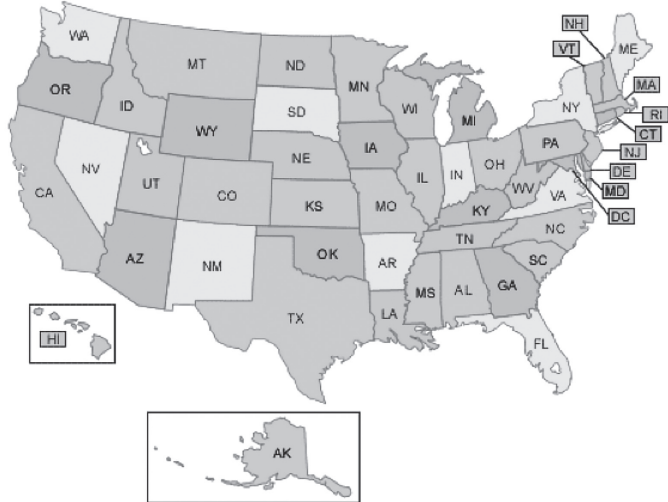
Of the largest 21 Hispanic Protestant denominations in the USA (see #1 above), only the Assemblies of God, Church of God (Cleveland, TN), Church of the Nazarene and the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (four) are affiliated with the NAE, whereas the American Baptist Churches (USA), the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ, the Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (USA), and the United Methodist Church (six) are affiliated with the NCC. The remainder (11 denominations) are not affiliated with either the NAE or the NCC, which includes some of the largest Hispanic denominations (over 20,000 members each): Southern Baptist Convention, Seventh-Day Adventist Church, independent Christian churches/churches of Christ (not a denomination), Apostolic Assembly & Apostolic Church of Faith in Jesus Christ, United Pentecostal Church (USA & Colombian affiliations), and the Latin American Council of the Pentecostal Church of New York (CLANY).

3. The preliminary results of our research on Hispanic Protestant churches in the USA (as of **February 15, 2012**) included 22,340 Spanish-speaking, bilingual and English-speaking Hispanic congregations. Based on our national database of Hispanic Protestant churches, the geographical distribution of these congregations is given in the table below.

NOTE: Our online database of Hispanic congregations in the USA as of **15 July 2012** contains listings for 23,189 local churches: 14,400 local churches are listed

as Spanish-speaking (62%); 8,676 are English-speaking (37%); 67 are bilingual (Spanish & English) and 49 are Portuguese-speaking (the last two combined total about 1%); the majority of the English-speaking churches are located in high-density Hispanic communities. The total number of Hispanic churches in the online database as of **15 July 2012** is slightly higher than the number reported in the table below for **15 February 2012** (23,189 compared to 22,340) because additional listings were found between the two dates by the PRO-LADES research team. See the following link: <http://www.hispanicchurchesusa.net/index-new-model.html>

Prolades Chart of the Distribution of Known Hispanic Protestant Congregations by States and Census Regions, 2011



Alabama – 57	Kentucky – 42	North Dakota – 2
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Appendix II

Alaska – 3	Louisiana – 61	Ohio – 151
Arizona – 663	Maine – 4	Oklahoma – 129
Arkansas – 96	Maryland – 124	Oregon – 157
California – 6,396	Massachusetts – 144	Pennsylvania – 325
Colorado – 371	Michigan – 146	Rhode Island – 62
Connecticut – 201	Minnesota – 66	South Carolina – 99
Delaware – 28	Mississippi – 29	South Dakota – 6
District of Columbia – 37	Missouri – 79	Tennessee – 108
Florida – 1,635	Montana – 6	Texas – 5,655
Georgia – 218	Nebraska – 66	Utah – 45
Hawaii – 12	Nevada – 109	Vermont – 1
Idaho – 52	New Hampshire – 5	Virginia – 133
Illinois – 751	New Jersey – 649	Washington – 244
Indiana – 163	New Mexico – 703	West Virginia – 17
Iowa – 41	New York – 1,553	Wisconsin – 95
Kansas – 112	North Carolina – 243	Wyoming – 13

TOTAL = 22,340 (February 15, 2012)

BY MAJOR CENSUS REGIONS:

West Region = 8,744

Midwest Region = 1,678

Northeast Region = 2,944

South Region = 8,711

PRODUCED BY

Clifton L. Holland, Director of PROLADES

National Survey of Hispanic Protestant Churches in the USA, 2010-2012

March 15, 2012

2012 PROLADES NATIONAL HISPANIC

PROTESTANT CHURCH DATABASE

	Name	Members	Churches	Affiliation
1	Assemblies of god, general council	293000	1935	Nae
2	Southern baptist convention	204000	3238	
3	Seventh day adventist, general council	167000	1077	
4	Independent christian churches / churches of christ (instrumental only)	75000	750	
5	United methodist church	63000	823	Ncc
6	Church of god (cleveland, tn)	60000	1000	Nae
7	Apostolic assembly of faith in jesus christ (usa) & apostolic church of faith in jesus christ (mexico) affiliated churches	60000	909	
8	United pentecostal church intl. (Includes hispanic upc & colombian upc affiliated churches)	50730	534	
9	Episcopal church, the	38000	400	Ncc
10	Presbyterian church (usa)	31000	262	Ncc
11	International church of the four-square gospel	30800	250	Nae
12	American baptist churches in usa	26757	254	Ncc
13	Church of the nazarene	26430	439	Nae
14	Latin american council of the pentecostal church of new york – clany	20615	217	
15	Christian church / disciples of christ	19000	200	Ncc
16	Final call church of christ ministries	17857	75	
17	Assembly of christian churches	17100	180	
18	Lutheran church, missouri synod	14250	150	
19	Church of god of prophecy	13800	230	

Appendix II

20	Latin american council of christian churches (cladic)	13000	130	
21	Evangelical lutheran church in america	10095	100	Ncc
	Subtotals (21 largest denominations)	1,251,434	13,153	
	Subtotals (204 smaller denominations)	951,331	10,034	
	Grand total (225 denominations & church associations)	2,292,765	23,187	

Includes: 225 denominations
& church associations (average
church size = 95 members)

Updated to 15 July 2012

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Jesse Miranda, of Mexican-American descent, has been a pastor, educator and evangelical leader. He is the author of two books, *The Christian Church in Ministry* (translated into 10 languages) and *Leadership and Friendship*. He was the associate director and one of the principal researchers of the project “the Hispanic Church in public life in America” funded by the Pew Charitable Trust Foundation .

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Pablo Polischuk is an Argentine-born US citizen, and the George F. Bennett professor of Pastoral Counseling and Psychology at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts. He has been an instructor in psychology at the department of psychiatry of Harvard Medical School, and a psychologist associated to the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. He obtained his PhD at Fuller Graduate School, of Psychology in Pasadena, CA. His last book, *El Consejo Integral* (Integrative Counseling) is a graduate level textbook in Christian counseling.

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cionales (IVP Academic 2011) cuestiona la suposición de que el ministerio hispano es sinónimo de ministerio en español.

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