

**Toward a Vineyard Sacramental Theology:  
The Pneumatic Relationship between the “Not Yet” and the “Now”**

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## I. Introduction

### A. Abstract.

This dissertation argues for the necessity of a Vineyard sacramental theology, written from the perspective of a Vineyard pastor and aspiring theologian.<sup>1</sup> After exploring the value and importance of constructing Vineyard theology, I provide a number of clarifications about my integrative methodology as well as a brief section suggesting a number of theologians and traditions that would prove helpful for the Vineyard to engage. This leads to further suggestions related to *why* sacramental theology and in *what ways* Vineyard theology would benefit. After providing a number of areas in which Vineyard theology would become enriched by sacramental theology, including pneumatology, ecclesiology, and doxology, I analyze the five Vineyard core values and demonstrate how each *is* and *can be* connected to sacramental theology. I then engage a number of concerns and/or criticisms that arise in regards to a Vineyard sacramental theology before providing a number of concluding reasons as to why this matters for the Vineyard.

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<sup>1</sup> As there is no such thing as a purely objective theological approach because all authors have their own influences, presuppositions, and agendas that shape their work, I must acknowledge a few personal items that influence this dissertation. First, I essentially “grew up” in the Vineyard movement as my parents began attending a Vineyard church when I was a child and I have been attending Vineyard churches for most of my life. Second, I am a pastor at a Vineyard church located in the state of Wisconsin in the United States. Third, I have been an active member in the Society of Vineyard Scholars since 2011, having presented several academic papers along with a number of reviews on the SVS website (<http://vineyardscholars.org>). Fourth, I am an Area Leader overseeing four Vineyard churches in the Midwest North region. Fifth, I am a leader in the Small Town USA church planting partnership as well as serve in a variety of roles with Multiply Vineyard, the national church planting group for Vineyard USA. Lastly, I am a certified Vineyard coach that regularly coaches and consults for Vineyard pastors and leaders. This is all to suggest that I write as a “critical insider,” one who is quite familiar with Vineyard theology, praxis, and history.

## B. The Vineyard Movement.

The Vineyard movement is a Christian denomination<sup>2</sup> that was primarily developed under the leadership of John Wimber.<sup>3</sup> While the loose-knit “pastoral network of collegiality and support” was formally organized in 1983,<sup>4</sup> the Vineyard has grown from a few churches in southern California to a global denomination with over 1,500 churches worldwide.<sup>5</sup>

The Vineyard is both known for and characterized by its worship music,<sup>6</sup> emphasis on “signs and wonders” (or “power evangelism”)<sup>7</sup> as well as centering its biblical theology and praxis on the kingdom of God, for “Vineyard kingdom theology determines kingdom practice.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The Vineyard tends to use the word “movement” as opposed to “denomination” in how it describes the association of churches. For John Wimber’s discussion on the Vineyard as a “denomination,” see Christy Wimber, *Everyone Gets to Play: John Wimber’s Writings and Teachings on Life Together in Christ* (Boise: Ampelon Publishing, 2008), Kindle Electronic Edition: Kindle Locations 206-414; cf. Bill Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle: A History of the Vineyard* (Cape Town: Vineyard International Publishing, 1999), Kindle Electronic Edition: Kindle Locations 2366-2394, 4846-5136; Alexander Venter, *Doing Church* (Cape Town: Vineyard International Publishing, 2000), Kindle Electronic Edition: Kindle Locations 667-731; Donald E. Miller, “Routinizing Charisma: The Vineyard Christian Fellowship in the Post-Wimber Era,” *Pneuma* 25:2 (2003), 237-239.

<sup>3</sup> While John Wimber is often credited as the “founder” of the Vineyard, this designation technically belongs to Kenn Gulliksen, though he turned over leadership to Wimber early in the movement’s history; cf. Thomas W. Higgins, “Kenn Gulliksen, John Wimber, and the Founding of the Vineyard Movement,” *Pneuma* 34 (2012): 208-228; Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle*, Kindle Locations 1142-1146.

<sup>4</sup> Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle*, Kindle Locations 1267.

<sup>5</sup> “About Vineyard,” Vineyard USA, last modified May 5, 2015, <http://www.vineyardusa.org/site/about-vineyard>.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle*, Kindle Locations 1769-1772, 1895-1897; Matt Redman, “Worshipper and Musician,” in *John Wimber: His Influence and Legacy*, ed. David Pytches (Guildford: Eagle Publishing, 1998), 62-70.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Don Williams, *Signs, Wonders, and the Kingdom of God: A Biblical Guide for the Reluctant Skeptic* (Ann Arbor: Servant, 1989); John Wimber and Kevin Springer, *Power Healing* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991); Gary Best, *Naturally Supernatural: God May Be Closer than You Think* (Cape Town: Vineyard International Publishing, 2006); John Wimber and Kevin Springer, *Power Evangelism*, Revised and Updated with Study Guide (Ventura: Regal 2009); Alexander Venter, *Doing Healing: How to Minister God’s Kingdom in the Power of the Spirit* (Cape Town: Vineyard International Publishing, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Don Williams, “Theological Perspective and Reflection on the Vineyard Christian Fellowship,” *Church, Identity, and Change: Theology and Denominational Structures in Unsettled Times*, eds. David A Roozen and James R. Nieman (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 184. Furthermore, John Wimber was and the Vineyard still is heavily influenced by George Eldon Ladd’s inaugurated eschatology that produced a “now and not yet” understanding of the kingdom; cf. Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle*, Kindle Locations 711-714; Derek Morpew, *Breakthrough: Discovering the Kingdom* (Cape Town: Vineyard International Publishing, 2006); Don Williams, *Start Here: Kingdom Essentials for Christians* (Ventura: Regal, 2006). Also see Mark Saucy’s observations in *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus: In 20<sup>th</sup> Century Theology* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1997), 304-306. For Ladd’s inaugurated eschatology, see George Eldon Ladd, *Crucial Questions about the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), *The Gospel of the Kingdom: Scriptural Studies in the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,

As one of several denominations that grew out of the Jesus movement,<sup>9</sup> the Vineyard traces its theological development back to the Evangelical<sup>10</sup> and Charismatic<sup>11</sup> traditions. This has led the Vineyard to wrestle with the tensions caused by embracing an emphasis on both Word and Spirit.<sup>12</sup> Bill Jackson, author of the first “official” Vineyard history, explained this as follows:

... the Vineyard is a search for the balance between Word and Spirit... the Vineyard rose up to represent a more aggressive affirmation of the present-day ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Vineyard is an attempt to marry the life of the Spirit with solid exegesis and the fierce pragmatism that reflects John Wimber’s years as a church growth consultant... The Vineyard, as is historically the case, is in a tremendous struggle to find the point of balance as the Evangelical and Pentecostal sides in the Vineyard endeavor to critique one another.<sup>13</sup>

Rich Nathan and Ken Wilson have proposed the term “Empowered Evangelicals” as the best label to describe people of the Vineyard, “who regularly heal the sick in the power of the Holy Spirit, cast out demons, have a low-key perspective regarding tongues, and regularly

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1974), *A Theology of the New Testament*, Revised Edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993). Ladd’s influence upon the Vineyard cannot be emphasized enough.

<sup>9</sup> Another well known North American denomination that traces its roots to the Jesus movement would be the Calvary Chapel denomination. Calvary Chapel, in a sense, also birthed the Vineyard movement; see Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle*, Kindle Locations 1030-1199. For an excellent summary of the Jesus movement, see Larry Eskridge, *God’s Forever Family: The Jesus People Movement in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>10</sup> For the history of Evangelicalism, see David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 20-45; Alister McGrath, *Evangelicalism & the Future of Christianity* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 19-36; W. R. Ward, *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 296-352; Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 76-99; Randall Balmer, *The Making of Evangelicalism* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2010), 9-27; Mark Hutchinson and John Wolffe, *A Short History of Global Evangelicalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); John D. Woodbridge; Frank A. James III, eds., *Church History Volume 2* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 403-416.

<sup>11</sup> Throughout this dissertation I shall use “Charismatic tradition” to broadly refer to those who align with Pentecostalism, the Charismatic movement, and Third Wave theology. For an excellent survey of these movements, see Allan Heaton Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: A Global Charismatic Christianity*, Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); also see Stanley M. Burgess, ed., *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Revised and Expanded Edition (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Sam Storms, *Convergence: Spiritual Journeys of a Charismatic Calvinist* (Kansas City: Enjoying God Ministries, 2005); Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 67.

<sup>13</sup> Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle*, 39-40.

receive prophecies”<sup>14</sup> while maintaining “an emphasis on the written Word of God as the chief gift of the Holy Spirit to the church.”<sup>15</sup>

As the Vineyard has grown and expanded globally, the influences and approaches, both theologically and practically, have also grown and expanded. While the early Vineyard leaders were primarily *conservative* Evangelicals and Charismatics, the current landscape indicates that the movement is even more diverse. Vineyard church members, pastors, and scholars are influenced by a variety of epistemic approaches,<sup>16</sup> a variety of hermeneutical approaches,<sup>17</sup> and an even wider variety of theological influences and resources.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, as the Vineyard has become a *global* movement, as well as more intentional in pursuing ethnic diversity, cultural influences are also becoming more diverse.<sup>19</sup>

The ecumenical ethos, as well as global perspective, of the Vineyard likely owes much to Wimber’s own background of influence in that he was converted, discipled, and entered into ministry amongst the Quakers,<sup>20</sup> worked as a consultant with “27 denominations... nine parachurch organizations and hundreds of local churches,”<sup>21</sup> spent time with and among the

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<sup>14</sup> Rich Nathan and Ken Wilson, *Empowered Evangelicals: Bringing Together the Best of the Evangelical and Charismatic Worlds*, Revised and Updated Version (Boise: Ampelton Publishing, 2009), Kindle Electronic Edition: Kindle Locations: 66-67.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, Kindle Locations 2023-2024.

<sup>16</sup> In the Vineyard, you will find advocates of Foundationalism, Post-Foundationalism, and everything in between or beyond in terms of epistemology.

<sup>17</sup> E.g., historical-grammatical, literary, theological, redemptive-historical, and canonical, to name just a few. For introductory essays on these models, see Stanley E. Porter and Beth M. Stovell, eds., *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2012). For an example of a Vineyard perspective on hermeneutics, see Beth M. Stovell, “A Kingdom Pneumatic Hermeneutics,” in *Holy Spirit: Unfinished Agenda*, ed. Johnson T. K. Lim (Singapore: Genesis Books, 2015), 8-11.

<sup>18</sup> One simply needs to consider the work being done within the Society of Vineyard Scholars, where papers are presented advocating conservative, progressive, and theologically liberal approaches, along with interaction with numerous traditions, including Evangelicalism, Pentecostalism, Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism, etc.

<sup>19</sup> E.g., the Vineyard USA 2015 National Conference title was “The Vineyard Movement: A Global Family,” emphasizing the *global* nature of the Vineyard in both the featured speakers (from Europe, Africa, North America, Central America, and South America) and the topics addressed in the main talks.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Carol Wimber, *John Wimber: The Way it Was* (London: Hodder & Stroughton, 1999), 59-99; Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle*, Kindle Locations 525-668.

<sup>21</sup> Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle*, Kindle Locations 693-694.



Renewal movements, both inside the United States and the United Kingdom,<sup>22</sup> and even, as an “empowered evangelical,” ministered *alongside* of charismatic Roman Catholics.<sup>23</sup> Via Wimber’s legacy, Vineyard churches, leaders, and members are encouraged to “take the best and go.”<sup>24</sup> This dissertation is an attempt to “take the best and go” in that I seek to construct a Vineyard theology influenced by sacramental theology.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., Kindle Locations 3448-3475.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., Kindle Locations 1959-1961. The ecumenical ethos of John Wimber and the Vineyard was a serious criticism of John MacArthur in *Charismatic Chaos* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 148. For a Vineyard response to MacArthur, see Rich Nathan, “A Response to Charismatic Chaos,” *Vineyard Position Paper* #5, April 1993.

<sup>24</sup> Christy Wimber, *The Way In is the Way On: John Wimber’s Teachings and Writings on Christ* (Boise: Ampelon Publishing, 2006), Kindle Electronic Edition: Kindle Location 1272.

<sup>25</sup> Careful readers will note that I am suggesting this is *an* approach, not *the* Vineyard approach. Furthermore, perhaps it is helpful to suggest that this study may, in fact, lead to Vineyard sacramental *theologies* rather than a sacramental approach.

### C. Constructing Vineyard Theology: Engaging, Integrating, and Creating.

While the Vineyard movement is still relatively young, the Vineyard has entered the stage in its own history where developing its own theology, *in dialogue with other traditions*,<sup>26</sup> *theologians, and theological approaches*, as well as with an eye toward the growing global Christian landscape,<sup>27</sup> is important to both its health, growth, and ecclesiological identity. Given that the Vineyard movement shares much in common with its older cousin, Pentecostalism, D. Lyle Dabney's observation that "Pentecostals are now engaging other bodies of Christians in a qualitatively new way" is relevant to the Vineyard as well because in these ecumenical discussions, the Vineyard is "being challenged to rise to a new level of theological maturity."<sup>28</sup> Again, this theological engagement is important to Vineyard health, growth, and the formation of its unique ecclesiological identity.

Building a constructive theology implies certain methodological decisions, of which I would like to clarify. First, my approach is a constructive theology<sup>29</sup> that values Scripture and tradition, along with experience<sup>30</sup> and reason, as articulated by the Wesleyan Quadrilateral.<sup>31</sup> If

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<sup>26</sup> I am convinced that constructive theology for the Vineyard *must* posture itself with an ecumenical eye toward the Church Universal. My approach in developing a Vineyard sacramental ecclesiology will take ecumenism seriously. Cf. Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers, and Cornelis van der Laan, eds., *Studying Global Pentecostalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 286-306; Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology: Ecumenical, Historical & Global Perspectives* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002), Kindle Electronic Edition: Kindle Locations 1371-1376; see also Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 11–15; Hans Kung and Jürgen Moltmann, eds., *Fundamentalism as an Ecumenical Challenge* (London: SCM Press, 1996); Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 3–5.

<sup>27</sup> For support on why being aware of trends in global Christianity matter, see Soong-Chan Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009) and Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, Third edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>28</sup> D. Lyle Dabney, "Saul's Armor: The Problem and the Promise of Pentecostal Theology Today," *Pneuma* 23:1 (2001), 115-146.

<sup>29</sup> It should be noted that scholars differ on whether constructive theology is the same as or similar to systematic theology. My use of these terms, however, is interchangeable in this work.

<sup>30</sup> In this case, my appeal to "experience" is found in my work as a pastor and aspiring Vineyard theologian. This has significantly shaped my quest toward a Vineyard sacramental theology, why it matters, and what steps can be taken in its development.

the discipline of constructive theology explores the relationship between doctrines, beliefs, and everyday life,<sup>32</sup> the Wesleyan Quadrilateral becomes a helpful method of theological development. After all, Paul Tillich stated that “theology... is a constructive task”<sup>33</sup> and Gordon D. Kaufman argued that “theology is, and always has been, an activity of “imaginative construction” by persons attempting to put together a comprehensive and coherent a picture as they could of humanity in the world under God.”<sup>34</sup> The Wesleyan Quadrilateral provides helpful guidance toward how these resources function and are inter-related.

One of the concerns in developing a constructive theology *for the Vineyard* is that the Vineyard holds to a high view of Scripture.<sup>35</sup> Thus, in constructing a Vineyard theology, Scripture must be considered a formative and functional authority.<sup>36</sup> This, I believe, will chasten one’s “imaginative construction” in that there is not freedom to create theology without a sense of concern for the role of Scripture or the role of tradition.<sup>37</sup> As Donald G. Bloesch notes, “The challenge that presently confronts us is to discover a new way of doing theology that will

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<sup>31</sup> For a Vineyard approach to the Wesleyan Quadrilateral, see Thomas Lyons, “Authorities for Discernment: The Wesleyan Quadrilateral in the Ministry of John Wimber,” (paper presented at the annual meeting for the Society of Vineyard Scholars, Anaheim, CA, April 19, 2013). For an excellent work on the Wesleyan Quadrilateral, see Don Thorsen, *The Wesleyan Quadrilateral: Scripture, Tradition, Reason, & Experience as a Model of Evangelical Theology* (Lexington: Emeth Press, 2005).

<sup>32</sup> Serene Jones and Paul Lakeland, eds., *Constructive Theology: A Contemporary Approach to Classical Themes, with CD-ROM* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005).

<sup>33</sup> As quoted in Gordon D. Kaufman, *In Face of Mystery: A Constructive Theology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), xviii.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, ix; cf. Kaufman’s *An Essay on Theological Method* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1975, 1979). Some Evangelical theologians would nuance this language based on the potential for misunderstandings or misapplications. These scholars would note that while we certainly subjectively participate in developing theology, Christian theology should be informed and shaped ultimately by the self-revelation of God through Scripture, cf. Robert Duncan Culver, *Systematic Theology: Biblical and Historical* (Ross-shire: Mentor, 2005), xv- xviii; Michael Horton, *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 13-219.

<sup>35</sup> The Vineyard USA Statement of Faith, on “The Sufficiency of Scripture,” states that, “We believe that the Holy Spirit inspired the human authors of Holy Scripture so that the Bible is without error in the original manuscripts. We receive the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments as our final, absolute authority, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.” Cf. *Core Values & Beliefs* (Stafford: Vineyard Publishing, 2012), 12.

<sup>36</sup> While outside the scope of this project, one must note that the phrase “functional authority of Scripture” is a loaded term.

<sup>37</sup> For an excellent discussion on the relationship between theology and tradition, see W. David Buschart and Kent D. Eilers, *Theology as Retrieval: Receiving the Past, Renewing the Church* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2015).

establish its continuity with the catholic tradition.”<sup>38</sup> Constructing theology in continuity with the Great Tradition (i.e., orthodoxy) will take serious the formative and functional authority of Scripture, especially from a Vineyard perspective.

Moreover, constructive theology, in order to remain theologically informed and globally aware, must balance the disciplines of engaging, integrating, and creating. This allows for other traditions, theologians, and theological approaches to inform one’s constructive theology, which, in turn, aids in preventing missteps and uninformed theological reflection. Furthermore, this should also chasten against continuing the trend of what can only be described as “theological colonialism and imperialism” *because* other cultures and global perspectives are considered as equally relevant and useful.<sup>39</sup>

### ***(1) Engaging within My Constructive Theology.***

Vineyard theology and praxis was not developed in a vacuum. Moreover, *no* theology is developed in a vacuum and, “in all academic writing, authors have their own agendas and influences that determine the nature of their work.”<sup>40</sup> Engaging with theologians and traditions is a subjective decision on the part of those constructing a theology. After all, “it is virtually impossible to reach absolute objectivity,”<sup>41</sup> which requires that one acknowledge decisions “in a responsible manner.”<sup>42</sup>

This is an attempt toward a Vineyard sacramental theology. As previously noted, I write as a “critical insider” in dialogue with Christian traditions and theologians outside of the Vineyard movement. These traditions and theologians have been chosen because, notably, they

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<sup>38</sup> Donald G. Bloesch, *A Theology of Word & Spirit: Authority & Method in Theology* Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 13.

<sup>39</sup> On colonialism and imperialism in theological studies, see Anderson, et. al., *Studying Global Pentecostalism*, 51-73. On the subject as a whole, see Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (eds.), *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 66-111.

<sup>40</sup> Anderson, et. al., *Studying Global Pentecostalism*, 14.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

articulate concepts related to pneumatology, ecclesiology, and sacramental theology that I will argue are helpful in developing Vineyard theology.

## ***(2) Integration within My Constructive Theology.***

This work is an *integrative* constructive theology<sup>43</sup> given that my methodology seeks to integrate elements from a variety of theological perspectives and approaches while remaining informed by interdisciplinary approaches provided by, for example, systematic theology, practical theology, historical studies, ecumenism, etc.<sup>44</sup> In other words, I seek to integrate the ideas and arguments provided by non-Vineyard traditions and theologians into a Vineyard sacramental theology by demonstrating the relationship between these perspectives with Vineyard approaches. My methodology provides by interdisciplinary perspective and shares interdisciplinary concerns, though further studies will need to engage the social sciences and humanities.<sup>45</sup>

This is a holistic and broadly informed approach that will reduce the risk of being too specialized to have any practical application yet will take seriously the scholarly contributions of significant theological voices. Furthermore, Christopher A. Stephenson argues that theological method should “incorporate a form of *lex orandi, lex credenda*” and “*regula spiritualitatis*,

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<sup>43</sup> This integrative methodology is very “Vineyard” in that it follows the patterns of previous Vineyard leaders. For example, the first and second National Directors of the Vineyard, John Wimber and Todd Hunger respectively, consulted with pastors, theologians, sociologists, consultants, researchers, and denominational executives, cf. Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle*, Kindle Locations 4753-4756. Thus, when doing theology, to “take the best and go” requires that we both explore and integrate the best (a relative term) in order to “go” and develop constructive theology.

<sup>44</sup> This follows the outline of Anderson, et. al., *Studying Global Pentecostalism*.

<sup>45</sup> There have been a number of studies on the Vineyard under the discipline of social sciences, including a psychiatrist, social anthropologist, and psychological anthropologist, respectively; see John White, *When the Spirit Comes with Power: Signs & Wonders Among God’s People* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1988); David C. Lewis, *Healing: Fiction, Fantasy or Fact?* (London: Hodder & Stroughton, 1989); Tanya M. Luhrmann, *When God talks back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship with God* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012). See also Gary S. Greig and Kevin N. Springer (eds.), *The Kingdom and the Power: Are Healing and the Spiritual Gifts Used by Jesus and the Early Church Meant for the Church Today?* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1993), esp. chapters 12 and 13. Another helpful study is found in Mark J. Cartledge, *Practical Theology: Charismatic and Empirical Perspectives* (Eugen: Wipf & Stock, 2003). Cartledge helpfully provides a thorough *empirical* study that integrates a variety of methodologies and includes research on the Vineyard.

*regula doctrinae*,” which he describes as “the rule of spirituality and the rule of doctrine.”<sup>46</sup> This suggests that, within the Charismatic tradition, theological methodology must “give detailed consideration to the reciprocal relationship between Christian spirituality and doctrine in the process of theologizing.”<sup>47</sup> This reciprocal relationship must be included in my integrative approach because Christian spirituality,<sup>48</sup> and the related discipline of spiritual formation, is an important concern within the Vineyard movement.<sup>49</sup>

### ***(3) Creating within My Constructive Theology.***

Taking cues from James K. A. Smith, the Vineyard must “drink from our own wells”<sup>50</sup> while critically engaging with other traditions and theologians in order to offer constructive approaches to the global Church. Smith argues that “a distinctly pentecostal philosophy has something unique to contribute to wider conversations in Christian philosophy and has gifts to offer that can be received by those not necessarily identified with the pentecostal or charismatic traditions.”<sup>51</sup> I believe this also applies to the Vineyard movement: a distinctly *Vineyard* theology has something unique to contribute to the global Church. However, drinking from Vineyard wells and contributing unique Vineyard theology is not accomplished in a vacuum. In

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<sup>46</sup> Christopher A. Stephenson, “Pentecostal Theology According to the Theologians: An Introduction to the Theological Methods of Pentecostal Systematic Theologians” (PhD diss., Marquette University, 2009), iii. Stephenson writes specifically for Pentecostals, engaging the work of Myer Pearlman, E. S. Williams, French L. Arrington, Steven J. Land, Simon K. H. Chan, Frank D. Macchia, and Amos Yong.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> My understanding of Christian spirituality is that it broadly includes the Christian life, experience, and underlying theology and narrowly tends to refer to one’s personal experience; cf. Simon Chan, *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998).

<sup>49</sup> Two extremely influential scholars amongst the Vineyard are Richard Foster and Dallas Willard. Regular Vineyard reading lists almost exclusively include Richard J Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (New York: HarperCollins, 1978, 1988, 1998) and Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God* (New York: HarperCollins, 1998). It was in the Vineyard where I first discovered spiritual formation via spiritual disciplines. For a scholarly treatment on the subject, see Jeffrey P. Greenman and George Kalantzis, *Life in the Spirit: Spiritual Formation in Theological Perspective* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2010).

<sup>50</sup> James K. A. Smith, *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), Kindle Electronic Edition: Kindle Location 176.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., Kindle Location 312.

order to create and develop a quality Vineyard theology, resourced by sacramental approaches, one must engage, integrate, and create alongside *and in relation to* other perspectives.

#### ***(4) On “Vineyardizing” Theological Approaches.***

Much of what constitutes as Vineyard theology and praxis has simply been borrowed from other existing traditions and been “vineyardized.” This is largely due to the relatively recent development of the Vineyard as an ecclesial tradition as well as the fact that early Vineyard leaders were “borrowed” from other traditions. Rich Nathan<sup>52</sup> makes this suggestion when he writes:

As I looked at our church, and at the Vineyard movement, it was apparent that we had borrowed almost all of our high level leaders from other movements such as InterVarsity, Campus Crusade, other churches, various seminaries, etc. and then we sought to “Vineyardize” them by injecting into these already-formed leaders Vineyard's DNA. I realized that if we were ever going to create a sustainable church and church movement, we had to develop our own leaders from scratch. We need to sow leadership training so that we could reap future leaders.<sup>53</sup>

All new traditions “borrow” from older traditions and there are numerous positives related to such “borrowing.” It must be noted, however, that there are also negative consequences. While “vineyardizing” existing theological models has allowed Vineyard churches and leaders to focus more on “doin’ the stuff”<sup>54</sup> rather than spending time in theory, some of the existing models that have been “vineyardized” actually undermine the unique theological commitments that make the Vineyard what it is! For example, “vineyardizing” Dispensational eschatology (i.e., Pretribulational Premillennialism) may appeal to those who are

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<sup>52</sup> Rich Nathan is the senior pastor of Vineyard Columbus, the largest church in the movement. Nathan also serves on the executive leadership team for Vineyard USA and oversees the Vineyard Institute, which provides theological training to Vineyard leaders.

<sup>53</sup> “Introducing Vineyard Institute,” last modified June 10, 2015, <http://www.richnathan.org/article/introducing-vineyard-institute/>.

<sup>54</sup> This is a popular Vineyard phrase that John Wimber coined in order to encourage Christians to participate in the words and works of the kingdom; cf. Wimber and Springer, *Power Evangelism*, 8-9; Marty Boller, *The Wisdom of Wimber: As I See It* (Woodinville: Harmon Press, 2014), Kindle Electronic Edition: Kindle Locations 208-251.

influenced by *Left Behind* fiction,<sup>55</sup> but the consequence of embracing Classic Dispensationalism requires that the Vineyard abandon crucial aspects of its *sine qua non*: enacted and inaugurated eschatology. The George Eldon Ladd influenced “now and not yet” approach to the kingdom serves as *the* central biblical-theological commitment of the Vineyard.<sup>56</sup>

In that Evangelicalism has influenced Vineyard theology, one must question in what ways that theological influence has been helpful as well as unhelpful. Dabney’s observation regarding the consequence of how Pentecostals/Charismatics have historically related to Evangelicalism raises the very concerns I suggest for the Vineyard:

The consequence of all this has been the furthering of the tendency toward assimilation among Pentecostals in this period as they were educated to conceive of the Pentecostal tradition in non- and even anti-Pentecostal categories – in categories, that is to say, that are often at best ill suited to think in a Pentecostal fashion about Christian theology or at worst make it simply impossible to do so. The confusion concerning Pentecostalism's theological identity has been compounded by this clear tendency for Pentecostals either to define themselves in terms of a kind of American Evangelical version of Reformation theology (Baptists plus spiritual gifts, or, even more narrowly, plus 'tongues') or to integrate themselves into the approaches of the secular university in categories of religious studies, history, sociology, anthropology, and so on.<sup>57</sup>

This tendency to assimilate into Evangelicalism has caused many in the Vineyard to “have absorbed the false and pernicious notion that [the Vineyard] is not a theological tradition

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<sup>55</sup> “Left behind” fiction is based off of Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins, *Left Behind* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishers, 1995). The *Left Behind* series led to sixteen fictional novels and a number of films. Based on Classic Dispensational hermeneutics, the novels are widely popular amongst North American Evangelicals. For critiques of *Left Behind*, see Leanne Snow Flesher, *Left Behind: The Facts Behind the Fiction* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2006); Craig L. Blomberg and Sung Wook Chung (eds.), *A Case for Historic Premillennialism: An Alternative to “Left Behind” Eschatology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009). For general critiques of Dispensational hermeneutics, see William E. Anderson, *Rapture? Sure... but When?* (Holiday: Green Key Books, 2003); Eckhard Schnabel, *40 Questions About the End Times* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2011); Sam Storms, *Kingdom Come: The Amillennial Alternative* (Ross-hire, Christian Focus Publications, 2013).

<sup>56</sup> Venter, *Doing Church*, Kindle Locations 559-667.

<sup>57</sup> Dabney, “Saul’s Armor: The Problem and the Promise of Pentecostal Theology Today,” 121.



at all.”<sup>58</sup> Nothing could be further from the truth. The Vineyard is *theologically* shaped by *theological* values that produce *theological* praxis, as we shall soon see.

Thus, in constructing a theology of sorts, one must be aware of both the *positive* and *negative* consequences of simply “borrowing” from other traditions.

**(5) Notable Theological Interlocutors: Who and Why.**

In relation to constructing a Vineyard sacramental theology, the natural question is *which* traditions and theologians should be interacted with and *why*. Due to my desire to “press beyond the boundaries of current theological thought” within the Vineyard, I acknowledge that “a multiplicity of conversation partners is needed.”<sup>59</sup>

On one hand, selections of this nature are subjective and run the risk of failing to meet the academic standards of some. However, choices must be made and reasonable explanations provided. These traditions and theologians, I believe, must be engaged because they are either highly influential *or* because they could prove to be helpful resources in how the Vineyard develops its theology.<sup>60</sup> In what follows are my brief suggestions and the reasoning behind my selections.<sup>61</sup>

**a) Roman Catholicism & Christian Orthodoxy.** Who can argue with the suggestion that Roman Catholicism and Christian Orthodoxy have *significant* influence upon the sacramental

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Tom Greggs, “Being a Wise Apprentice to the Communion of Modern Saints: On the Need for Conversation with a Plurality of Theological Interlocutors,” in *The Vocation of Theology Today: A Festschrift for David Ford*, eds. Tom Greggs, Rachel Muers, and Simeon Zahl (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2013), 22.

<sup>60</sup> It should be noted that there are *significant* differences related to sacramental subjects such as the Eucharist between the variety of traditions, theologies, and theologians I am engaging. It is outside the scope of this work to address these differences or to fully engage the arguments in support of the various Eucharistic viewpoints. However, readers should take note that the scholars I engage here may or may not hold to vastly different approaches to the Eucharist (e.g., Transubstantiation, Consubstantiation, Reformed Spiritual Presence, Memorial). Moreover, these theologians and traditions offer distinct approaches to pneumatology, ecclesiology, and many other important areas. I have chosen to selectively identify areas of *similarity* in regards to sacramental theology and have attempted to demonstrate how those areas can both shape and solidify a Vineyard sacramental theology.

<sup>61</sup> This follows similar suggestions I made in an essay I submitted on February 4, 2015, “Toward a Vineyard Sacramental Ecclesiology: My Proposed Research Methodology,” for the Research Methods in Evangelical and Charismatic Studies module, led by Professor Allan Anderson.

life?<sup>62</sup> After all, at the heart of Catholic theology is “the sacramental economy of the Church, and the theology and practice of its seven sacraments.”<sup>63</sup> For Catholics, “sacraments are ritualized expressions of ecclesiology.”<sup>64</sup> Considering that Wimber and other Vineyard leaders have both done ministry alongside Catholics and turned to Catholics as a theological resource, it would seem fitting to engage with a some of Catholicism’s brightest theologians, including Augustine, Thomas Aquinas,<sup>65</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx,<sup>66</sup> Henri de Lubac,<sup>67</sup> Karl Rahner,<sup>68</sup> and Hans Küng.<sup>69</sup>

Orthodox Christianity will also provide a way to explore the role of mystery found within a sacramental perspective to theology, especially via the theological work of Alexander Schmemmann.<sup>70</sup>

These theologians are widely regarded as having made significant contributions within their respective tradition *and* toward sacramental theology, pneumatology, and ecclesiology. Additionally, having an eye toward ecumenical dialogue also makes these voices attractive if one

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<sup>62</sup> Though highly polemical, Gregg R. Allison convincingly demonstrates this in *Roman Catholic Theology and Practice: An Evangelical Assessment* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2014).

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, Kindle Location 5063.

<sup>64</sup> Richard P. McBrien, *The Church: The Evolution of Catholicism* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), 332; cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1097.

<sup>65</sup> *Summa Theologica* still stands as one of the most influential Christian theologies written; cf. Norman L. Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 725–727; Karlfried Froehlich, “Aquinas, Thomas,” ed. Donald K. McKim, *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 979–985.

<sup>66</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1962) and *The Eucharist* (London: Burns & Oates, 1968).

<sup>67</sup> Henri de Lubac’s numerous contributions to Catholic theology would likely prove profitable to engage, esp. *The Mystery of the Supernatural* (Danvers: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1998), *Augustinianism and Modern Theology* (Danvers: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2000), and *The Splendor of the Church* (San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 1986). For a serious Catholic theologian’s work on sacramentalism, pneumatology, and ecclesiology, de Lubac is an important voice.

<sup>68</sup> E.g., Karl Rahner, *The Spirit in the Church* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1979).

<sup>69</sup> Küng “has been... one of the most productive and creative post-conciliar theologians of the Roman Catholic Church,” Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology*, Kindle Locations 1079-1080. I recommend time is spent engaging with Hans Küng, *The Church* (New York: Burns and Oats, 1968, 2001), widely considered one of his most influential books.

<sup>70</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1963).

is concerned with a *global* perspective. Furthermore, including Charismatic Catholics bridges the theological gap between Rome and Anaheim<sup>71</sup> in helpful ways.

**b) N. T. Wright.** Wright's influence within the Vineyard is incalculable, especially his book *Surprised by Hope*.<sup>72</sup> While my experience may be consider too anecdotal, I have had conversations with *dozens* of Vineyard pastors and leaders who have indicated the tremendous influence of Wright upon their theology. The former Bishop of Durham has written extensively on the New Testament and biblical theology<sup>73</sup> and is considered by some to be "the most prolific biblical scholar in a generation" and "the most important apologist for the Christian faith since C. S. Lewis."<sup>74</sup>

Furthermore, I briefly explore Wright's thoughts on the nature of God's people, the mission, and pneumatology in order to explore how one might envision a sacramental theology. While Anglicanism has tended to avoid certain aspects of sacramentalism due its strong ties to the Protestant Reformation,<sup>75</sup> Wright articulates what I consider a balanced approach to the subject. Engaging with this Anglican voice will be helpful in constructing a Vineyard sacramental theology because Anglicanism has been a seedbed for both charismatic praxis and sacramental appreciation.<sup>76</sup>

**c) Pentecostalism.** In that the Vineyard movement shares much in common with Pentecostalism, especially pneumatology, developing a distinct Vineyard sacramental theology

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<sup>71</sup> John Wimber's original Vineyard Church is located in Anaheim, CA.

<sup>72</sup> N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperOne, 2008).

<sup>73</sup> Edward W Klink III and Darian R. Lockett, *Understanding Biblical Theology: A Comparison of Theory and Practice* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012) provide a great survey of Wright's approach to biblical theology.

<sup>74</sup> "Surprised by N. T. Wright," Christianity Today, last modified May 16, 2015, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2014/april/surprised-by-n-t-wright.html>.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. "Sacramentalism Defined: Anglicanism and Divine Ordinances," last modified January 27, 2015, <http://www.virtueonline.org/sacramentalism-defined-anglicanism-and-divine-ordinances>.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. David Kennedy, *Eucharistic Sacramentality in an Ecumenical Context: The Anglican Eiclesis* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2008); Philip Clifford Owen, "A Study of the Ecumenical Nature of Charismatic Renewal: With Particular Reference to Roman Catholic and Anglican Charismatic Renewal in England" (PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 2007).

must dialogue with this growing global Christian tradition. In fact, if “the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements... constitute the fastest growing churches within Christianity today,”<sup>77</sup> all constructive theology must engage with this tradition.

The primary Pentecostal scholars that I am most interested in engaging are Simon Chan,<sup>78</sup> Chris E. W. Green,<sup>79</sup> Frank Macchia,<sup>80</sup> Daniel Tomberlin,<sup>81</sup> and Wolfgang Vondey,<sup>82</sup> not to mention others.<sup>83</sup> Each of these Pentecostal scholars has contributed significantly toward developing a sacramental identity within Pentecostalism and its corresponding spirituality.

**d) Jürgen Moltmann.** Of contemporary Protestant theologians, Jürgen Moltmann stands among giants in that he is considered one of the most influential and widely read systematicians of his time.<sup>84</sup> Due to “the fact that he draws from so many different sources,” Moltmann’s theology is “not only contemporary but also contextually relevant.”<sup>85</sup> As an ecumenical dialogue

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<sup>77</sup> Allan Heaton Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 1.

<sup>78</sup> E.g., In addition to academic essays, Simon Chan has published several influential and helpful books related to the subject of sacraments, pneumatology, and ecclesiology, including *Spiritual Theology; Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshiping Community* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006); *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2011); *Pentecostal Ecclesiology: An Essay on the Development of Doctrine* (Dorset: Deo Publishing, 2011); and *Grassroots Asian Theology: Thinking the Faith from the Ground Up* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2014). Chan is a *significant* Pentecostal voice to engage toward developing a Vineyard sacramental theology and its corresponding pneumatology and ecclesiology.

<sup>79</sup> E.g., Chris E. W. Green, *Toward a Pentecostal Theology of the Lord’s Supper: Foretasting the Kingdom* (Cleveland: CPT Press, 2014). See also Chris E. W. Green, ““Then Their Eyes Were Opened”: Pentecostal Reflections on the Church’s Scripture and the Lord’s Supper,” *Pneuma* 35:2 (2013), 220-234.

<sup>80</sup> E.g., Frank Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006).

<sup>81</sup> E.g., Daniel Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments: Encountering God at the Altar* (Cleveland: Center for Pentecostal Leadership and Care, 2010).

<sup>82</sup> E.g., Wolfgang Vondey, “Pentecostal Ecclesiology and Eucharistic Hospitality: Toward a Systematic and Ecumenical Account of the Church,” *Pneuma* 32:1 (2010), 41-55. See also Wolfgang Vondey and Chris W. Green, “Between This and That: Reality and Sacramentality in the Pentecostal Worldview,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 19 (2010), 243-264.

<sup>83</sup> E.g., Kenneth J. Archer, “Nourishment for Our Journey: The Pentecostal *Via Salutis* and Sacramental Ordinances,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 13:1 (2004), 79-96; Peter D. Neumann, *Pentecostal Experience: An Ecumenical Encounter* (Eugene, Pickwick Publications, 2012). Charismatic theologians would also be helpful dialogue partners, including William L. De Arteaga, *Forgotten Power: The Significance of the Lord’s Supper in Revival* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002).

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann* (London: T&T Clark, 1995), ix-xi; Geiko Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power: The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 11-13; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The Holy Spirit – In Biblical Teaching, through the Centuries, and Today* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 400-411.

<sup>85</sup> Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology*, Kindle Locations 1374-1375.

participant,<sup>86</sup> Moltmann's engagement with the Eastern Orthodox Church, especially Eastern spirituality, has had tremendous influence upon his pneumatological development.<sup>87</sup>

Additionally, Moltmann's prestigious academic career has included serious interest in the contribution of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements.<sup>88</sup> In that Moltmann's proposed "Messianic ecclesiology" is robustly pneumatological, containing common points of interest with current Pentecostal theologies addressing the Spirit and the Church, engaging his work will prove helpful.<sup>89</sup>

*e) Hans Boersma.* Boersma, a Reformed theologian, has written two books that will serve toward constructing a Vineyard sacramental identity: *Heavenly Participation*<sup>90</sup> and *Eucharistic Participation*.<sup>91</sup> Given that Boersma argues for a "sacramental ontology,"<sup>92</sup> building on his work will prove helpful in constructing a Vineyard theological identity connected to sacramental perspectives.

*f) Vineyard voices.* The Vineyard voices that I have selected to engage, and believe would be helpful in further engagements, are prominent thinkers and publications that are widely read and considered influential within the Vineyard movement. This includes theologians, pastors, and denominational leaders, both popular writings and those of a more academic nature.

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., Kindle Locations 1371-1376; see also Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 11–15; Kung and Moltmann, eds., *Fundamentalism as an Ecumenical Challenge*; Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 3–5.

<sup>87</sup> Beck notes this pneumatological development, as admitted in Moltmann's own writings, as quite significant; see T. D. Beck, *The Holy Spirit and the Renewal of All Things: Pneumatology in Paul and Jürgen Moltmann* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2007), 226-227.

<sup>88</sup> Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology*, Kindle Locations 1374-1375; cf. Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 3–5; Jürgen Moltmann, "A Response to My Pentecostal Dialogue Partners," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 4 (1994), 59-70.

<sup>89</sup> This section on Moltmann is adapted from a previous essay I submitted on January 14, 2015, "Spirit Renewed Ecclesiology: The Contribution of Moltmann's Pneumatology for the Church," for the Contemporary Theology of the Holy Spirit module, led by Professor Mark Cartledge.

<sup>90</sup> Hans Boersma, *Heavenly Participation: The Weaving of a Sacramental Tapestry* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011).

<sup>91</sup> Hans Boersma, *Eucharistic Participation: The Reconfiguration of Time and Space* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2013).

<sup>92</sup> Boersma, *Heavenly Participation*, Kindle Location 258.

My decisions are broadly based and include Vineyard perspectives that represent the common values and theology found within the Vineyard mainstream.<sup>93</sup>

While these are not the only Christian traditions, theologians/scholars, and authors that I engage or believe would be helpful in future Vineyard theological development, they stand out as voices I believe *should* be engaged. Space limitations prevent me from extensively engaging each of these suggestions in a critically constructive manner, yet attention should be given to their ideas if the Vineyard continues the trend of developing its theological identity and approach in an ecumenical and globally informed manner.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> While these decisions make me vulnerable to charges of selectivity, once again I must acknowledge that pure objectivity is an impossible endeavor. However, I have done my best to read widely from within the Vineyard movement and provide a summary of what I have discovered in both popular writings as well as scholarly works. In the future I believe the Vineyard will have more diversity from *outside* of North American and Europe and will include a variety of multi-cultural voices as well as more involvement from Vineyard women. I address this more fully in following sections of this dissertation.

<sup>94</sup> Due to space limitation, I have overlooked a number of influential pastors and theologians that should be engaged more fully, including St. Augustine, John Calvin, John Wesley, Karl Barth, and Donald Bloesch. I am especially interested in how Barth could influence Vineyard theological method.

## II. Toward A Vineyard Sacramental Theology

As we move from *methodology* toward a sacramental approach to Vineyard theology, questions related to terminology arise. What is meant by “sacrament” or “sacramental”? How might Vineyard theology and praxis connect to sacramental theology? What are the challenges, if any, to a Vineyard approach to theology that is resourced by sacramental theology? To these questions we turn.

### A. What is “Sacramental Theology”?

Defining terms is crucial in theological discourse. With the use of words such as “sacrament” or “sacramental,” one must acknowledge that definitions vary, largely depending upon the tradition influencing one’s theology. In the same way that differences exist toward defining and understanding Baptism<sup>95</sup> and the Eucharist,<sup>96</sup> perspectives regarding the definition and understanding of sacramental theology exist as well.

*(1) Sacrament vis-à-vis Sacramental vis-à-vis Sacramentalism.* Before one can explore an understanding of sacramental theology, a definition for the word “sacrament” must be explored. The word itself traces its history back to the New Testament. As Eugene R. Schlesinger states, “the Latin term... *sacramentum*, was used to translate the Greek term used in the New Testament for a previously hidden but now revealed truth about God.”<sup>97</sup> This foundation influenced the way in which the Church used the word, as “prior to the Reformation,

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<sup>95</sup> Cf. John H. Armstrong, ed., *Understanding Four Views on Baptism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007) and David F. Wright, ed., *Baptism: Three Views* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009).

<sup>96</sup> Cf. John H. Armstrong, ed., *Understanding Four Views on the Lord’s Supper* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007) and Gordon T. Smith, ed., *The Lord’s Supper: Five Views* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008).

<sup>97</sup> Eugene R. Schlesinger, “Sacraments,” ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2012, 2013, 2014). Schlesinger directs readers to Rom 11:25; 16:25; 1 Cor 15:51; Eph 1:9; 3:1–9; 5:32; 6:19; Col 1:26–27; 2:2; 4:3; 1 Tim 3:9, 16; Rev 10:7 as examples of texts using *mystērion* (μυστήριον).

“sacrament” denoted a variety of rites that were thought to lead to experiences of God’s grace in ways that exceeded the limitations of human understanding.”<sup>98</sup>

Augustine stated that sacraments are “an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace.”<sup>99</sup> While much debate exists regarding the *nature* of the sacraments and what constitutes as being “sacramental,” two common understandings of what a sacrament accomplishes are (1) the sign bestows or contains the grace and (2) the sign depicts, represents, or symbolizes the grace.<sup>100</sup> These competing definitions are so common that even the *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* suggests that one definition of a “sacrament” is “a Christian rite (as baptism or the Eucharist) that is believed to have been ordained by Christ and that is held to be a means of divine grace *or* to be a sign or symbol of a spiritual reality.”<sup>101</sup> This “either/or” approach is standards amongst theological views pertaining to the sacraments.<sup>102</sup> Yet one must question whether an “either/or” approach is helpful for the Vineyard.

A Vineyard approach to these two understandings might suggest that rather than elevating one over the other, a “both/and” approach will prove helpful.<sup>103</sup> Rich Nathan and Insoo Kim suggest:

From beginning to end, the Bible is a Both-And book. The God of the Bible is portrayed as the God of both creation and covenant. He cares about all the nations and he enters

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<sup>98</sup> Richard L. Pratt Jr., “Reformed View: Baptism as a Sacrament of the Covenant,” in *Understanding Four Views on Baptism*, ed. John H. Armstrong, 59.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. Augustine of Hippo, “On the Catechising of the Uninstructed,” in *St. Augustin: On the Holy Trinity, Doctrinal Treatises, Moral Treatises*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. S. D. F. Salmond, vol. 3, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series (Buffalo: Christian Literature Company, 1887), 312.

<sup>100</sup> Schlesinger, “Sacraments,” *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*.

<sup>101</sup> Frederick C. Mish, “Sacrament,” *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003), emphasis mine.

<sup>102</sup> E.g., Schlesinger, “Sacraments,” *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, which notes that “[a] person’s view of the relationship between symbolism and realism affects his or her view on the relationship between the sacrament and the grace it signifies.” Cf. Sinclair B. Ferguson and J.I. Packer, *New Dictionary of Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 606–608; Kevin J. Vanhoozer et al., eds., *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 709–711.

<sup>103</sup> The concept of embracing “tension” and “paradox” are arguably crucial to Vineyard ontology; cf. Rich Nathan and Insoo Kim, *Both-And: Living the Christ-Centered Life in an Either-Or World* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013).



into a special relationship with his people. He is God over both the secular and the sacred, both the material realm and the spiritual realm... Both-And is what makes a church great. Both-And is what makes a church alive, healthy and vibrant... Both-And is what makes a church great. But Both-And is also the source of most of the conflicts that we experience as a church.<sup>104</sup>

What if a sacramental approach understood the sacraments to be both a sign that “bestows and contains” grace as well as a sign that “depicts, represents, or symbolizes” grace? Might this be a helpful way to bridge the gap? Avoiding the pitfalls of an “either/or” approach, this “both/and” perspective emphasizes both the *mediatory* relationship of sacraments as well as the *sign and symbol* identity of sacraments.

Thus, my working definition of a sacrament is that it is *a means by which people can proclaim and remember, experience and encounter, as well as be sealed by the transformative power of God’s grace through the mediation of the Spirit.*<sup>105</sup> This approach is not unique, for the Heidelberg Catechism answers the question, “What are the Sacraments?” by stating that “the sacraments are visible holy signs and seals appointed by God for this end, that by their use He may the more fully declare and seal to us the promise of the Gospel, namely, that of free grace He grants us the forgiveness of sins and everlasting life for the sake of the one sacrifice of Christ accomplished on the cross.”<sup>106</sup> This definition suggests that sacraments are a *means* of grace as well as signs and symbols that *point* to grace. Similar statements, embracing the “both/and” approach, can be found in *The Westminster Confession of Faith*<sup>107</sup> as well as the Church of England’s *Thirty-Nine Articles*.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 17-20.

<sup>105</sup> The most convincing treatment of the mediatory work of the Holy Spirit that I have read is found in Mark Cartledge, *The Mediation of the Spirit: Interventions in Practical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015).

<sup>106</sup> Heidelberg Catechism, Question 66.

<sup>107</sup> E.g., chapter XXVII, which reads, “Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, (Rom. 4:11, Gen. 17:7,10) immediately instituted by God, (Matt. 28:19, 1 Cor. 11:23) to represent Christ and His benefits; and to confirm our interest in Him... There is, in every sacrament, a spiritual relation, or sacramental union, between the sign and the thing signified: whence it comes to pass, that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the

With this definition in mind, that which is “sacramental” is “relating to, or having the character of a sacrament.”<sup>109</sup> Therefore, “sacramental,” according to my definition, “is related to” and could be considered “having the character of” that which is “*a means by which people can proclaim and remember, experience and encounter, as well as be sealed by the transformative power of God’s grace through the mediation of the Spirit.*” Vineyard sacramental theology is focused on the *message* and *reminder*, as well as the *experience* and *encounter*, of God’s Spirit through specific *means* of grace.

Due to the debatable and pejorative understanding that *sacramentalism* is the “belief that the sacraments are inherently efficacious and necessary for salvation,”<sup>110</sup> this dissertation will avoid using that term *except* when used by theologians and traditions I am engaging.

**(2) Look to the Eucharist.** One way in which we may both *discover* sacramental ontology and *illustrate* the implications of the sacramental life is in the theology and practice of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is considered “the sacrament of primacy”<sup>111</sup> and receives a high view within Catholic,<sup>112</sup> Orthodox,<sup>113</sup> Reformed,<sup>114</sup> and most recently, Pentecostal<sup>115</sup> traditions,

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other...” Furthermore, “The grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments rightly used, is not conferred by any power in them; neither doth the efficacy of a sacrament depend upon the piety or intention of him that doth administer it: (Rom. 2:28–29, 1 Pet. 3:21) but upon the work of the Spirit, (Matt. 3:11, 1 Cor. 12:13) and the word of institution, which contains, together with a precept authorizing the use thereof, a promise of benefit to worthy receivers.” There is no doubt that the Westminster Divines understood the sacraments through a “both/and” approach.

<sup>108</sup> E.g., chapter XXV, which reads, “Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God's good will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in him.” Similar to the Westminster Divines, this represents a “both/and” approach as well.

<sup>109</sup> Mish, “Sacramental,” *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*.

<sup>110</sup> Mish, “Sacramentalism,” *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*.

<sup>111</sup> Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology*, Kindle Locations 183-184.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Jeffrey Gros, “The Roman Catholic View,” in *The Lord’s Supper*, ed. Smith, Kindle Locations 116-325.

<sup>113</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2003).

<sup>114</sup> Richard C. Barcellos, *The Lord’s Supper as a Means of Grace: More than a Memory* (Ross-shire, UK: Christian Focus Publications, 2013).

<sup>115</sup> Daniel Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments: Encountering God at the Altar* (Cleveland: Center for Pentecostal Leadership and Care, 2010); cf. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, “The Pentecostal View,” in *The Lord’s Supper*, ed. Smith, Kindle Locations 1184-1375.

not to mention the various other Evangelical perspectives. Thomas Aquinas wrote in his *Summa Theologica* that “Christ's body is miraculously contained [within the Eucharist] and thus it is included under God's omnipotence, like all other miracles which are ascribed to God's almighty power.”<sup>116</sup> John Calvin’s high view of the Lord’s Supper “insisted... that the Holy Spirit genuinely lifts believers up into the heavenly realm to receive the Lord’s body and blood.”<sup>117</sup> Simon Chan writes that church communion (*koinonia*) is “first and foremost an essentially eucharistic communion.”<sup>118</sup>

Given the high priority to the Eucharist, we must consider what sacramental theology has to offer the Vineyard in regards to developing a theological approach in light of how Communion is both understood and celebrated. This is to suggest that the Eucharist can serve both as a *resource* and an *illustration* in constructing a Vineyard sacramental theology. Most recently, within the Vineyard, focus on the Eucharist has become more explicit,<sup>119</sup> which is considered, via a pneumatic approach, an experiential encounter where God’s presence, grace, and work is made available by receiving the Bread and Cup as God’s people gather around the Lord’s table.<sup>120</sup>

**(3) Inaugurated Reality.** Vineyard theology is explicitly related to the inauguration of the kingdom of God through the life and ministry of Jesus. As Vineyard theologian Derek Morphey writes:

It is now common in theological circles to speak of the ministry and message of Jesus as “inaugurated eschatology”... Jesus came announcing the kingdom. His parables explained the kingdom, and his miracles bore witness to its presence. In fact, the theme of the kingdom as preached by Jesus Christ unites the whole flow of biblical truth, from

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<sup>116</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (Claremont: Coyote Canyon Press, n.d.), Kindle Electronic Edition: Kindle Location 44138.

<sup>117</sup> James J. Buckley, *The Church in a Postliberal Age: George A Lindbeck* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 66.

<sup>118</sup> Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 29.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. Luke T. Geraty, *Come to the Table* (Stafford: Vineyard Publishing, 2015).

<sup>120</sup> This is largely influenced by the Reformed Spiritual Presence view and Pentecostal theologians who embrace a more sacramental perspective than the Memorial view.

Moses, through the Prophets, the Writings, the Gospels, the Epistles and the Revelation of John.<sup>121</sup>

This Vineyard emphasis on *inaugurated eschatology*, the “now and not yet,” provides a stepping-stone toward what I am creatively referring to as an *inaugurated reality*. While the theory of “reality” is certainly “capable of multiple meanings,”<sup>122</sup> exploring sacramental theology in relation to an *inaugurated reality* is useful when we begin to explore what is *real* and, correspondingly, what is meant by *symbol* or *experience*. This is, after all, the significant issue of debate regarding the Eucharist. Is the Bread *really* the Body of Christ? Is the Wine *really* the Blood of Jesus?

Moreover, what specifically constitutes what is *real*? Must that which is part of our reality be physical or does the spiritual realm offer a reality that is *just as “real”* as that which we can touch and hold? While these questions are obviously involved in areas of metaphysics, phenomenology, and obviously rehash the first century issues of Gnosticism,<sup>123</sup> for Vineyard theology (and praxis), this raises concerns related to the influence of Platonic dualism. Just what *is* reality and what results as being considered *real*?<sup>124</sup>

When the Western Church largely embraced a perspective that *minimized* and *undervalued* the *reality* of symbols/signs,<sup>125</sup> Alexander Schmemmann suggests that the very nature of sacramental reality was weakened. Schmemmann’s example is the problematic term “real

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<sup>121</sup> Morpheus, *Breakthrough*, 7-8.

<sup>122</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, vol. 5 (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1999), 36.

<sup>123</sup> E. M. Yamauchi, “Gnosticism,” ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 414-418.

<sup>124</sup> For a scholarly critique of the epistemological issues related to these topics, see Craig S. Keener, *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts*, Volumes 1 and 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), Kindle Electronic Edition, esp. Kindle Locations 3280-5030.

<sup>125</sup> It is important to note that not *all* of Christian Church had embraced a perspective that minimized or undervalued the reality of signs/symbols. Rather, this appears to be a consequence of Enlightenment thinking and connected to the epistemic assumptions of foundationalism.

presence,” which tends to be contrasted with “symbolic presence,” related to the Eucharist. This is an unfortunate, though popular, false assumption, for Schmemmann directs us to “St. Maximus the Confessor, the sacramental theologian *par excellence* of the patristic age” who referred to “the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist *symbols* (“*symbola*”), *images* (“*apeikonismata*”) and *mysteria* (“*mysteria*”).”<sup>126</sup> According to Schmemmann (and St. Maximus!), symbolic ontology is just as real as the material elements that we can hold in our hands. Symbolic “is not only *not* opposed to “real,” but embodies it as its very expression and mode of manifestation.”<sup>127</sup> The consequences of embracing a symbolic vis-à-vis real approach is tragic, as Schmemmann powerfully articulates:

For sacramental theology this “dissolution” of symbol had truly disastrous consequences. By changing the very notion of sacrament it radically transformed also that of theology, provoking finally a crisis whose real scope and depth we are beginning to realize only today. It must be clear by now, we hope, that the theme of “real presence” which we mentioned above and whose appearance in a way inaugurated the post-patristic period in sacramental theology was born out of theological doubt about the “reality” of symbol, i.e., its ability to contain and to communicate reality.<sup>128</sup>

Fortunately, this impasse between “symbol” and “reality” appears to be slowly becoming less of a polarizing issue. As Frank Macchia notes, “even the concept of a sacramental symbol tends to imply the capacity of symbol to bring to realization that to which the symbol points.”<sup>129</sup>

These ontological concerns toward reality must be addressed and sacramental theology is a helpful way to introduce that concept of reality. How might a Vineyard sacramental perspective to theology address *inaugurated reality*? Inspired by Schmemmann’s emphasis on

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<sup>126</sup> Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, Kindle Locations 1993-1995.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, Kindle Locations 1995-1996, emphasis in original.

<sup>128</sup> Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, Kindle Locations 2038-2042.

<sup>129</sup> Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, Kindle Locations 1231-1232. For further evidence of this move, Macchia points readers to Karl Rahner, “Theology of the Symbol,” *Theological Investigations*, vol. 4, *More Recent Writings*, trans. Kevin Smyth (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 221–52.

what I refer to as “symbolic reality,” which does not suggest a non-*physical* or non-*localized* reality, I suggest six areas to explore.

a) *The Reality of Presence*. Presence is a powerful theme within sacramental theology, which suggests that God is *present* via the sacramental life. In that a key concern within the Vineyard is *how* and *where* God is present and, correspondingly, how might the Vineyard become present for the sake of the kingdom, sacramental theology’s suggestion of how God’s presence can and should be experienced is valuable. After all, “the Vineyard has,” writes Bill Jackson, “always tried to “bless what the Father is doing” and will continue to invite the Holy Spirit to come.”<sup>130</sup> This attempt to “bless what the Father is doing” is an outworking of the assumption that “our call is to participate with Jesus in destroying the works of the devil (1 John 3: 8) and, like Jesus, our desire” should be “to do what the Father is doing (John 5: 19) at any given time.”<sup>131</sup> In order to “do what the Father is doing,” discerning his work, i.e., God’s presence, becomes a priority.

If a key concern is related to *discerning* God’s presence, it follows that subsequent investigation and value would be placed upon the means by which God’s presence is encountered and how these encounters are to be understood in relation to one’s perception of reality.

Recently, attention has been given to the subject of phenomenology in Douglas R. Erickson’s dissertation, “The Kingdom of God and the Holy Spirit: Eschatology and Pneumatology in the Vineyard.”<sup>132</sup> Erickson convincingly demonstrates that within the Vineyard movement, the kingdom of God is understood as a “present *reality*” and that one of the subjects

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<sup>130</sup> Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle*, Kindle Locations 4304-4305.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., Kindle Locations 1390-1391.

<sup>132</sup> Douglas R. Erickson, “The Kingdom of God and the Holy Spirit: Eschatology and Pneumatology in the Vineyard” (PhD diss., Marquette University, 2015).

that must be explored and given further reflection is “the phenomenology of Vineyard charismatic experience.”<sup>133</sup> Vineyard theology incorporates the reality of presence, specifically pneumatological presence, via its focus upon an inaugurated and enacted eschatological understanding of the Holy Spirit’s coming. As Erickson writes, “The works of the Spirit require the foundation of inaugurated eschatology; the theology of the kingdom must be enacted by the works in order to maintain its own inherent logic.”<sup>134</sup> Reality within the Vineyard is connected to the theology of the kingdom.

David G. Benner suggests that through the sacramental life, one faces the possibilities of encountering God *through* and *in* everyday life.<sup>135</sup> This suggestion presupposes both the *existence* of God as well as the ontological *reality* of presence, reasonable assumptions that the Vineyard shares.<sup>136</sup> How might the Vineyard understand and articulate the connection between God’s existence and reality? Perhaps George Steiner argument for God’s transcendence would prove helpful in the Vineyard. Steiner argues for the validity of God’s reality and presence especially through the arts, writing that in “the art-act and its reception... there is in the experience of meaningful form, a presumption of presence.”<sup>137</sup> In the Vineyard, this is of interest for one reason: the emphasis on lyrics found within Vineyard worship music. After all, the Vineyard theology of worship *is* sacramental, as Vineyard theologian Jon Stovell writes: “... worship in the Vineyard functions sacramentally, as a space in which one can enter the presence of God and experience his blessings and grace in a unique and powerful way, and is consciously

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 171-224.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 224.

<sup>135</sup> David G. Benner, *Presence and Encounter: The Sacramental Possibilities of Everyday Life* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2014).

<sup>136</sup> While outside of the scope of this project, for a defense of the existence of God, see Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism* (New York: Penguin Group, 2008); William Lane Craig, *On Guard: Defending Your Faith with Reason and Precision* (Colorado Springs: David C. Book, 2010).

<sup>137</sup> George Steiner, *Real Presences: Is There Anything in What We Say?* (New York, New York: Open Road Integrated Media, 1989), 214.

understood and practiced as a means of communion with God that anticipates the eschatological communion that is the goal of salvation.”<sup>138</sup> If the Vineyard understands music in a sacramental manner, Steiner’s approach to the reality of presence in language and arts is especially helpful toward establishing the reality of *presence* in Vineyard theology and praxis. This raises questions related to the nature of how Vineyard worship is *experiential* along with how “space” is understood within Vineyard doxology. While it may be that “the world is full of presence,”<sup>139</sup> the challenges for the Vineyard comes in understanding the *nature* of *God’s* presence and its relationship to sacramental theology. In the Vineyard this is often overlooked, especially when the sacraments are reduced simply to memorials or signs. After all, “[minimizing sacramental realism] has implications for sacramentality, in that God chooses to work and be found in natural objects and actions, such as bread and wine and their offering in the Eucharist, rather than humans finding God through their own human efforts of mind and action.”<sup>140</sup> Nevertheless, the reality of presence is axiomatic to Vineyard pneumatology and, by proxy, Vineyard theology.<sup>141</sup> Thus, the Vineyard must “thicken” its understanding of *reality* by integrating sacramental theology within its pneumatological approach.

b) *The Reality of Life*. Over and against the suggestion that the Christian life is a fragmented collection of experiences, the Vineyard seeks to include and integrate the variety of pneumatological encounters that shape its theology. In the same way that Vondey and Green

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<sup>138</sup> Jon Stovell, “To Dwell in the House of the Lord: Vineyard Soteriology and Its Praxis in Worship, Discipleship, and Evangelism,” (paper presented at the annual meeting for the Society of Vineyard Scholars, Minneapolis, MN, April 27, 2012), 1.

<sup>139</sup> Benner, *Presence and Encounter*, 1-2.

<sup>140</sup> Brian Douglas, “Pusey’s ‘Lectures on Types and Prophecies of the Old Testament’: Implications for Eucharistic Theology,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 14:2 (2012), 206.

<sup>141</sup> This is not intended to overlook the reality of the *absence* of God’s “manifest presence,” a subject that has increasingly become a focus within discussions of Vineyard theology. Theologically this is articulated as the “not yet” of Inaugurated Eschatology. Cf. Jon Stovell, “Seeing What the Father is Doing When the Glory Doesn’t Come: Healing a Theological Blind Spot in Our Inaugurated Eschatology,” (paper presented at the annual meeting for the Society of Vineyard Scholars, Anaheim, CA, April 4, 2013).



“suggest that sacramentality is not an optional but a necessary and foundational component for a fuller understanding of Pentecostalism,”<sup>142</sup> in order for the Vineyard to develop its pneumatological theology, the language of sacramental theology *must* be consulted. The reality of Vineyard “life” is rooted in the shared pneumatological experiences that occur in the midst of worship and kingdom charismatic practices such as healing, prophecy, and glossolalia.<sup>143</sup> Sacramental reality is the context in which heaven and earth come together as the “middle reality,” which Green and Vondey suggest “serves as the space in which the divine life touches creaturely life.”<sup>144</sup>

Tantamount to this sacramental reality, often a shared pneumatological experience, Vineyard theology must also develop its theological anthropology in its quest to construct and articulate a unique approach. Surveying the relevant literature on theological anthropology leads me to conclude that after nearly two thousand years of theologizing, Christians are still unclear in regards to what it means to be human!<sup>145</sup> While Vineyard leaders point to Jesus as *the* example *par excellence* of what it means to be *fully* human, we are still left with questions related to human ontology. What does it mean to be *alive* as a *human being*? How does inaugurated eschatology influence and shape Vineyard theology?

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<sup>142</sup> Green and Vondey, “Between This and That: Reality and Sacramentality in the Pentecostal Worldview,” 245.

<sup>143</sup> See Erickson, “The Kingdom of God and the Holy Spirit: Eschatology and Pneumatology in the Vineyard” for a sustained treatment that demonstrates the Vineyard’s commitment to these charismatic practices in relation to the theology of the kingdom.

<sup>144</sup> Green and Vondey, “Between This and That: Reality and Sacramentality in the Pentecostal Worldview,” 258.

<sup>145</sup> This is seen, I believe, in how many Christians discuss the controversial subject of homosexuality and the questions and challenges raised in regards to identity, ontology, and other subjects tangentially related to theological anthropology. Conversations about LGBTQ issues tend to reveal a need for Christian theologians to do more work in theological anthropology. This has been a subject addressed in the Society of Vineyard Scholars, as the 2015 annual conference had an entire panel of papers on “Eschatological Anthropology.” For helpful studies on theological anthropology, see Charles Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1996); Hans Schwarz, *The Human Being: A Theological Anthropology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013); the forthcoming Marc Cortez, *Christological Anthropology in Historical Perspective: Ancient and Contemporary Approaches to Theological Anthropology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016). I am indebted to conversations with Dr. Doug Erickson for this insight.

An intriguing relationship exists between pneumatology and anthropology in that, as Clark Pinnock notes, “the Spirit as life-giver and universal divine presence, while not an oft-repeated theme, *is nonetheless a weighty concept in the Bible.*”<sup>146</sup> Humanity (and all of Creation) would not exist in Christian theology apart from the work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>147</sup> Moreover, the Church is born as a work of the Spirit. As Moltmann writes: “The Spirit calls [the Church] into life; the Spirit gives the community the authority for its mission, the Spirit makes its living powers and the ministries that spring from them effective; the Spirit unites, orders and preserves it.”<sup>148</sup> Vineyard theology cannot be developed apart from pneumatological and anthropological reflection and a distinctly Vineyard sacramental theology must consider how a Spirit empowered and christologically influenced understanding of regenerated humanity shapes its theology. In my estimation, there are several ways in which these two areas would influence Vineyard sacramental theology. First, inaugurated eschatology informs a Vineyard theological anthropology by saying, “you *are* and *are not yet* what we will be.”<sup>149</sup> The outpouring and indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a *down payment, guarantee, or pledge* (ἀρραβών),<sup>150</sup> of our realized and enacted eschatological promise,<sup>151</sup> to be consummated in the future. The reality of life within a Vineyard framework acknowledges the eschatological tensions at work, even within our anthropology. This acknowledgement of and turn toward the “now and not yet” will significantly influence the way in which the very concept of “experience” is also understood. In

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<sup>146</sup> Clark Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 51.

<sup>147</sup> Cf. Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993).

<sup>148</sup> Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 294.

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Thomas Creedy, “You are Not Yet What We Will Be: The Relational-Eschatological Turn and its Contribution for a Vineyard Theological Anthropology,” (paper presented at the annual meeting for the Society of Vineyard Scholars, Media, PA, April 16, 2015).

<sup>150</sup> William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 134; cf. Gordon D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994), 806–808.

<sup>151</sup> Cf. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 5:5; Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:14.

that Vineyard worship is sacramental, providing space in which human beings engage with God, how might awareness of and being resourced by the “not yet” chasten a theology of experience? Must a pneumatological experience always be discernable to those who appear to *not* have had a said experience? A Vineyard sacramental view must take these questions into account and should, I believe, suggest a robustly pneumatological experience that acknowledges that sacramental encounters may or may not always be discernable by natural means. Yet the eschatological promise *must* impact the anthropological assumptions, as N. T. Wright states that “... a Christian in the present life is a mere shadow of his or her future self, the self that person will be when the body that God has waiting in his heavenly storeroom is brought out, already made to measure, and put on over the present one—or over the self that will still exist after bodily death.”<sup>152</sup> Wright also states that “if you are in the Messiah, indwelt by the Spirit, you are at the moment just a shadow of your future self: there is a more glorious, more physical, more REAL ‘you’ than anything you presently experience, and God intends to create you as this new person in the resurrection.”<sup>153</sup> Sacramental theology will help the Vineyard articulate these truths.

Second, the “fullness of life,” to build on Moltmann’s theological anthropology language, is encountered by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit as the agent by which redemption is experienced. This “now and not yet” redemption, a progressive on-going experience, is deeply connected to and a byproduct of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus’ work on the Cross. Salvation, a pneumatologically christological experience, transforms human beings and transfers them into

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<sup>152</sup> Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, 154.

<sup>153</sup> “Ask N. T. Wright: November Q & A,” N. T. Wright Author page, Facebook, last modified May 22, 2015, <https://www.facebook.com/notes/n-t-wright/ask-n-t-wright-november-q-a/578180515568343>.

the community of the kingdom.<sup>154</sup> The reality of life, an experience toward a sense of anthropological fullness, is christological, pneumatological, and related to ecclesiology. Life, according to and in the sense of being Vineyard, must be framed through these different perspectives and influences.

Third, and related to these previous suggestions, Vineyard theology will seek to integrate into the ‘lived experience’ a sense of depth in both understanding and articulating what constitutes as reality. Again, the reality of human life and experience must be understood in terms over and against Platonic dualism. The lack of *observable* and/or *cognitive* and *emotional* experiences should not automatically be categorized as fantasy or fiction. A theology that is resourced by sacramental theology will suggest that reality is far more robust than the compendious suggestions found within deficient and inept approaches that reject the influence of the Holy Spirit on Christian experience.

c) *The Reality of Symbol*. As Schmemmann suggests, the dissolution and low view of symbol has had tremendously negative affects upon Christian theology. Yet if we reject this reductionistic and shallow understanding of symbol, fully embracing the idea that symbols do, in fact, have the pneumatologically empowered ability to contain and communicate theological reality, a Vineyard sacramental theology will embrace both the reality of *presence* and the reality of *symbol*. After all, as Schmemmann states, “we live in a world that is symbolical, for the world can be considered a *signum rei sacrae* (sign of sacred thing).” How is the world symbolical? By “virtue of its being created by God,” which “belongs thus to its ontology,” leading us to properly “perceive and understand reality, a means of cognition... a means of *participation*.”<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Colossians 1:13. Cf. Howard A. Snyder, *The Community of the King*, Revised Edition (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004).

<sup>155</sup> Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, Kindle Locations 2002-2004, emphasis in original.

According to Schmemmann, Christian sacraments are not unique because they are supernatural (miraculous) “exceptions to the natural order of things created by God” that go about “proclaiming His glory,” nor in the “ontology as sacrament.” Rather, sacraments are unique because of “the specific “res” which it “symbolizes,” i. e., reveals, manifests, and communicates—which is Christ and His Kingdom.” This leads Schmemmann to state that these symbols are to be “understood in terms not of total discontinuity but in those of fulfillment.”<sup>156</sup> In other words, Christian symbols (sacraments) provide realistic experiences by their very nature of fulfilling those enacted promises and participatory aspects of presence.

While Schmemmann’s arguments toward the reality of symbol are extremely valuable for Vineyard sacramental theology, I would suggest that we approach the reality of symbol without overlooking the reality of presence. Employing a *both/and* perspective, sacramental theology within the Vineyard recognizes the power and reality of symbols and pneumatological presence. The “signs” and “symbols” are concrete phenomena in the same way that the Spirit’s presence, and the associated pneumatic experiences, are *expected, welcomed, and integrated* into the Vineyard shared worldview.

*d) The Reality of Mystery.* Pinnock writes that “there are depths of the mystery [of God] that cannot be accessed by reason alone.”<sup>157</sup> As the Vineyard movement historically dealt with, and continues to deal with, what can be defined by some as “unexplained phenomena,”<sup>158</sup> a sense of acknowledging and embracing mystery should transition from that which is implicit to that

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid., Kindle Locations 2005-2009.

<sup>157</sup> Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 13.

<sup>158</sup> E.g., the “Toronto Blessing” and associated phenomena; cf. Frank D. Macchia, ““The Toronto Blessing”: No Laughing Matter,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 8 (1996), 3-6; David Hilborn, ed., *‘Toronto’ in Perspective: Papers on the New Charismatic Wave of the Mid-1990s* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2001); Margaret Poloma, *Main Street Mystics: The Toronto Blessing and Reviving Pentecostalism* (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2003).

which is made explicit.<sup>159</sup> Mystery has a vital role within the Vineyard movement. After all, “the Holy Spirit is the divine mystery beyond this world and is the incomparable, majestic One who dwells in unapproachable light,”<sup>160</sup> and Vineyard theology explicitly postures itself as a Christian tradition that envisions the presence of the Holy Spirit as central to its theology and praxis.<sup>161</sup> Should not the Vineyard articulate itself as embracing the reality of mystery? This appears especially relevant considering that the Vineyard already embraces a sense of mystery in its understanding of other tenants of orthodoxy, namely the Incarnation. As Barth notes, the incarnation is a mystery that “can be contemplated, acknowledged, worshipped and confessed as such, but it cannot be solved, or transformed into a non-mystery.”<sup>162</sup>

Sacramental theology rightly suggests that sacramental presence “will always remain an elusive mystery— beyond our control and beyond our exhaustive knowing.”<sup>163</sup> Sacramental *Vineyard* theology, infused by pneumatology and inaugurated eschatology, suggests orientation around “the triumphant Lamb,” an eschatological hope, that requires theology and praxis to “focus on the mystery and majesty of God, his otherness, and his plan to turn this sin-ridden earth into a new garden of Eden.”<sup>164</sup> Vineyard sacramental theology embraces this sense of

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<sup>159</sup> While outside the scope of this study, a survey of works written by pastors/leaders, theologians, and biblical scholars associated with the Vineyard produces very little emphasis on “mystery” within the Vineyard tradition. This, of course, raises numerous questions related to epistemology and the Vineyard’s historical and theological influences.

<sup>160</sup> Tae Young So, “Pentecostal Spirituality as Nurturing Vitality for Human Lives,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 18 (2009), 252.

<sup>161</sup> Erickson, “The Kingdom of God and the Holy Spirit: Eschatology and Pneumatology in the Vineyard,” esp. chapter three, “The Work of the Spirit in the Vineyard Movement,” chapter four, “The Phenomenology of Vineyard Charismatic Experience,” and chapter five, “Extending Vineyard Kingdom Theology,” 112-264. Erickson demonstrates that the distinct pneumatological approach that the Vineyard takes is central to its overall eschatological understanding of theology.

<sup>162</sup> Karl Barth, Geoffrey William Bromiley, and Thomas F. Torrance, *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of the Word of God*, Part 1, vol. 1 (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 122-32.

<sup>163</sup> Benner, *Presence and Encounter*, 17.

<sup>164</sup> Michael F. Bird, *Evangelical Theology: A Biblical and Systematic Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 809.

mystery and eschatological hope while pointing to the enacted pneumatic experiences tied to the in-breaking of God's kingdom.

e) *The Reality of Ritual*. Sacramental theology has a rich relationship with liturgical praxis. If “our ultimate love/ desire is shaped by practices, not ideas that are merely communicated to us,”<sup>165</sup> the reality and effectiveness of liturgical habits must be given significant weight within Vineyard theology. While churches within the Charismatic tradition may indeed be guilty of loose and unplanned liturgy, with an emphasis on spontaneity and organic praxis,<sup>166</sup> developing a thicker understanding of and engagement with liturgical theology would prove helpful toward properly appreciating the role of habits in doxological rituals. As Simon Chan notes, “There is a rich and deep primary theology in the liturgy of Word and sacrament,” though “for many evangelicals who have virtually no experience of liturgical worship, the primary theology needs to be explicated and reflected upon before it can be fully entered into.”<sup>167</sup> If James K. A. Smith and Chan are correct in their assessment on the formative reality of habits and rituals, the Vineyard movement would be wise to reflect on how a more robust and richer approach to worship, influenced by the connection between sacramental and liturgical theology, might strengthen its theology of worship. After all, “to discover the shape of liturgy,” Chan writes, “is to discover the true way of worship or the way of reorienting the church toward the Christian world-view.”<sup>168</sup> A movement that prides itself on being a worship movement would greatly benefit in explicitly articulating its theology of worship in light of an

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<sup>165</sup> James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 27.

<sup>166</sup> Chan's explanation of the fact that Charismatic spontaneity still has “liturgy” are helpful in *Liturgical Theology*, especially chapter six, “The Sunday Liturgy,” Kindle Locations 2425-2881.

<sup>167</sup> Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, Kindle Locations 2878-2879.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, Kindle Locations 1115-1117.

awareness that habits “are the hinge that “turns” our heart, our love... to be aimed in certain directions.”<sup>169</sup>

Sacramental theology identifies these formative habits and suggests that they should become normative patterns toward spiritual development. Vineyard theology is rooted in a pneumatological experience and approach and shares much in common with how sacramental theology understands the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the reality of ritual becomes *more* focused, appreciated and implemented in a theology that is aware of this dynamic.<sup>170</sup>

*f) The Reality of Liminality.* Liminality, within theological dialogue, is related to the transitional stage(s) between states. This invokes eschatological questions in a way that the Vineyard’s “already and not yet” approach to the kingdom of God may both appreciate and begin asking. On an anthropological level, related to ontology, how might the reality of liminality explain the concept of *simul justus et peccator* (simultaneously righteous and sinful) in relation to the eschatological tension exhibited in the statement that “you *are* and *are not yet* what we will be”? In what ways might the reality of liminality, viewed through a Vineyard sacramental lens, produce fruitful theological reflection?

Bethany Joy Kim, a Vineyard theologian, writes that “to be created is to be marked by two kinds of liminality,” suggesting that we are marked by (1) an experience of interdeterminate liminality in regards to how we relate to the rest of creation and (2) doxological liminality, “our peripheral awareness of our dependence on the One in whom “we live and move and have our being.”” Kim suggests that a way in understanding both the difference *of* and relationship *between* these two kinds of liminality is that “interdeterminate liminality is experienced in our

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<sup>169</sup> Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 56.

<sup>170</sup> Cf. Dallas Willard, “Spiritual Formation as a Natural Part of Salvation,” in *Life in the Spirit: Spiritual Formation in Theological Perspective*, ed. Jeffrey P. Greenman and George Kalantzis (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2010).



efforts to grasp at meaning in the face of ambiguity and disorientation, whereas doxological liminality is experienced when our efforts to “grasp at” meaning slip into being “grasped by” the Beauty that elicits and exceeds our meaning-making.”<sup>171</sup>

These suggestions are helpful toward constructing a Vineyard sacramental theology in that they raise both questions and explanations related to the space(s) between the “already” and the “not yet,”<sup>172</sup> the “active presence of God” and the “absence of God’s discernable presence,” the “sacred space” (via pneumatological experiences) and the experiences in which space is found to be more “earthy.”<sup>173</sup> If, as Stovell suggests, “worship in the Vineyard functions sacramentally, as a space in which one can enter the presence of God and experience his blessings and grace in a unique and powerful way,” how might we better understand and explain the times in which we *do not* experience God’s presence in a discernable way? What response should be given to questions about why God doesn’t heal all people or speak to everyone in the same manner? The reality of liminality provides a starting point and, in my estimation, should be connected to a sacramental perspective of Vineyard theology.

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<sup>171</sup> Bethany Joy Kim, “Liminal Witness: Theological Anthropology Between the ‘Already’ and the ‘Not Yet,’” (paper presented at the annual meeting for the Society of Vineyard Scholars, Media, PA, April 16, 2015), 1-2.

<sup>172</sup> Kim powerfully articulates this as the “eschatological present,” where “the pneumatically transfigured humanity of the eschatological Body of Christ shall not be overcome, but rather we are empowered to join in Jesus’ ministry and to partner with him in doing what the Father is doing,” *ibid.*, 10.

<sup>173</sup> I intentionally avoid the use of “secular” in order to avoid the false dichotomy between the “sacred” and “secular” realm.

## B. Connecting the Vineyard to Sacramental Theology.

Vineyard theology connects with and should be resourced by sacramental theology in a number of ways and for a variety of reasons. In what follows I briefly suggest three areas of connectivity between the Vineyard and sacramental theology with the intended purpose of suggesting these areas for future dialogue and research.

(1) *Pneumatology*. The Vineyard leans pneumatological. Eleanor Mumford, a national leader of Vineyard UK, identifies one of the Vineyard distinctives as being “people of the Spirit” and suggests that “Come Holy Spirit” is the Vineyard’s favorite prayer.<sup>174</sup> Carol Wimber wrote that during the Vineyard’s inception, “The Holy Spirit came with great power”<sup>175</sup> and John Wimber wrote that “in the Vineyard, we place a priority on being empowered by the Holy Spirit.”<sup>176</sup> In that Pentecostal scholar Chris Green suggests that a pneumatologically formed (shaped and influenced) people must develop “a theologically robust sacramental practice,”<sup>177</sup> the Vineyard movement must explore sacramental theology for the simple fact that its theological praxis and assumed values *are* pneumatic and sacramental despite the average Vineyard member being unaware of this. To be robustly Spirit empowered, the sacramental life must be considered. As Wright observes, “the Holy Spirit and the sacraments become enormously important since they are precisely the means by which Jesus is present.”<sup>178</sup>

(2) *Ecclesiology*. Vineyard ecclesiology, while underdeveloped, provides a fascinating connection between sacramental theology because its understanding of the Church is rooted strongly in an understanding that God’s people are pneumatically formed and the Church is a

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<sup>174</sup> Eleanor Mumford, “Session 1,” (lecture, Vineyard National Conference, Columbus, OH, July 6, 2015).

<sup>175</sup> Carol Wimber, “A Hunger for God,” *The Vineyard Newsletter*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (1987): 1.

<sup>176</sup> Wimber, *The Way In is the Way On*, Kindle Location 1669.

<sup>177</sup> Green, ““Then Their Eyes Were Opened”: Pentecostal Reflections on the Church’s Scripture and the Lord’s Supper,” 224.

<sup>178</sup> N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, 114.

space where God's grace is experienced. In fact, if "human nature becomes consubstantial with the deified humanity, united with the person of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit" and "this union is fulfilled in the sacramental life,"<sup>179</sup> the Vineyard would be wise in developing its ecclesiology with a sacramental approach.

Moreover, Vineyard ecclesiology, influenced by sacramental theology, could develop an ecclesiological approach that understands and *embodies* itself in a way that is self-aware of being a means of grace for the world around it. Such an approach, I believe, would develop into a thicker ecclesiology, a robustly pneumatologically influenced understanding of God's community, and a missiological commitment to being "for the redemption of God's creation"<sup>180</sup> because "God is a missionary God who has a plan for the world he created."<sup>181</sup>

(3) *Doxology*. Matt Redman states that "one of the greatest and most notable distinctives of the Vineyard movement has been its worship music."<sup>182</sup> Worship, both in music and life, is imbedded in Vineyard identity.<sup>183</sup> According to Don Williams, one of the most influential Vineyard theologians to date, "the heart of biblical worship is surrender"<sup>184</sup> because "worship is not getting; worship is giving... worship is the basis for a life of self-giving; it is surrendering ourselves to God."<sup>185</sup> Building on this understanding of worship, Williams writes that "the verb "worship" in Hebrew means to surrender" and that "worship goes on in all of our lives" because

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<sup>179</sup> Karkkainen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology*, Kindle Locations 186-187.

<sup>180</sup> Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 23.

<sup>181</sup> Gary Tyra, *The Holy Spirit in Mission: Prophetic Speech and Action in Christian Witness* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2011), Kindle Electronic Edition: Kindle Locations 239.

<sup>182</sup> Matt Redman, "Worshiper and Musician," in *John Wimber: His Influence and Legacy*, 62.

<sup>183</sup> It is important to note that the Vineyard movement does not assume that 'worship equals music.' Don Williams states that it would be "reductionistic" to suggest that 'worship equals music,' see Don Williams, "Theological Perspective and Reflection on the Vineyard Christian Fellowship," 181-182.

<sup>184</sup> Don Williams, *Start Here: Kingdom Essentials for Christians*, 23-24.

<sup>185</sup> Don Williams, "Worship for a Liberated Church," *Worship Update* Volume VII, Number 4 (N.d.), 3-4.

“worship is the spiritual part of our surrender, submission and attachment to many things.”<sup>186</sup>

This, in a sense, could be said to be the Vineyard’s *prolegomena* for any discussion on worship and is foundational to a Vineyard theology of worship,<sup>187</sup> which raises the subject of doxology.

Doxology, “a form of words that offers praise to God,”<sup>188</sup> shares a strong relationship with liturgy and liturgy shares a strong relationship with sacramental theology.<sup>189</sup> While these concepts, doxology and liturgy, are largely outside of the Vineyard tradition, the opportunities for constructive dialogue exist. For example, as Pentecostal scholar Frank Macchia observes, “tongues, the laying on of hands for healing, and foot washing have functioned in Pentecostal services in ways analogous to such in-depth sacramental experience.”<sup>190</sup> The Vineyard is not known for its emphasis on foot washing but would certainly add prophetic speech and music to its list of sacramental experiences.

Yet questions still remain in relation to *how* and *in what ways* will sacramental theology serve to strengthen Vineyard doxology and its overall approach to worship. How might the Vineyard articulate its liturgy in a more theological informed and unique way? What relationship exists between doxologies, which are “short, spontaneous ascriptions of praise to God,”<sup>191</sup> and the spontaneous words of prophecy and expressions of glossolalia that exist within Vineyard worship gatherings? How might the Vineyard express “prophetic worship” that is influenced by its commitment to inaugurated eschatology?

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<sup>186</sup> Don Williams, “We Become Like What We Worship,” *The Heart of Worship Files*, Kindle Locations 273-276.

<sup>187</sup> I discuss my concerns as to whether this biblical-theological understanding of worship is as formative in the Vineyard below.

<sup>188</sup> Martin H. Manser, *Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies* (London: Martin Manser, 2009).

<sup>189</sup> Cf. Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980); Chan, *Liturgical Theology*; Melanie C. Ross, *Evangelical Versus Liturgical: Defying a Dichotomy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014).

<sup>190</sup> Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, Kindle Locations 4966-4967.

<sup>191</sup> Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid, eds., *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 69.

### C. Exploring the Relationship between Vineyard Values & Sacramental Theology

In order to provide further suggestions toward a constructive Vineyard sacramental theology, in what follows I will explore the relationship between Vineyard values and the sacramental experience, engaging a variety of non-Vineyard theologians in dialogue with Vineyard voices.

In order to understand the importance of these values in the Vineyard, one must understand how values function. Alexander Venter, a Vineyard pastor, writes that “values determine what you think and what you do” and that “values guide and inform your decision-making.”<sup>192</sup> Additionally, Venter suggests that:

The way the word ‘values’ is used in the Vineyard philosophy of ministry refers to the underlying non-negotiables in the form of a few core principles or beliefs that make us who we are. These beliefs are not Biblical doctrines per se, they are rather a mix of historical doctrine and current sociological factors, and that which God has quickened to us. In that sense they are both Biblically and contextually determined. They function as the criteria and principles by which we evaluate and measure what we do and say. Thus they determine what we do—our priorities—and they also affect the way we do things—our style, or what we call our practices.<sup>193</sup>

Values, within the Vineyard, are vital because they exist in a manner which functions to guide and shape theology and praxis. Phil Strout, the current National Director of Vineyard USA, writes that “[the Vineyard] Core Values give meaning to all that we do” and that “they also drive our purpose, define what is central to us, position the Vineyard in the larger body of Christ and remove ambiguity in mission.”<sup>194</sup>

The five Vineyard values are: (1) *The Theology and Practice of the Kingdom of God*, (2) *Experiencing God*, (3) *Culturally Relevant Mission*, (4) *Reconciling Community*, and (5)

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<sup>192</sup> Venter, *Doing Church*, Kindle Locations 1145-1151.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., Kindle Locations 1152-1156.

<sup>194</sup> Phil Strout’s forward in *Core Values & Beliefs*, ii.

*Compassionate Ministry*. What relationship exists between these values and sacramental theology? To this question we turn.

(1) *The Theology and Practice of the Kingdom of God*. As has been previously stated, the Vineyard movement considers the kingdom of God to be the primary biblical-theological focus of Scripture and the foundation upon which the church continues Jesus' ministry. Reflecting on John Wimber's theological influence, Venter writes that "one of the main influences in [John Wimber's] life, if not the major influence, was the theology of the Kingdom of God."<sup>195</sup> Derek Morphey, another notable Vineyard theologian, in his highly influential *Breakthrough*, writes that "the subject [of the kingdom of God] is so fundamental to scripture and to our spiritual genesis that we cannot allow a single generation, church or group of churches to miss it."<sup>196</sup> After all, the Vineyard "is a movement distinctively centered in a renewed understanding of the centrality of the kingdom of God in biblical thought" that views the "kingdom of God as the overarching and integrating theme of the Bible."<sup>197</sup> This kingdom commitment traces back to its beginnings in John Wimber, who was influenced by George Eldon Ladd's inaugurated eschatology. As Jackson notes, "Ladd's understanding of the kingdom of God gave Wimber the theological ground he needed to explain the combination of evangelism and the miraculous."<sup>198</sup>

The Vineyard approach to kingdom shapes both theology *and* praxis, word and works. This causes Vineyard leaders to emphasize both the *proclamation* and *demonstration* of the kingdom, similar to how the Gospel of Luke records the ministry of Jesus.<sup>199</sup> As *Core Values & Beliefs* states:

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<sup>195</sup> Venter, *Doing Church*, Kindle Locations 559-560.

<sup>196</sup> Morphey, *Breakthrough*, 7.

<sup>197</sup> *Core Values & Beliefs*, 4.

<sup>198</sup> Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle*, Kindle Locations 713-714.

<sup>199</sup> Cf. Roger Stronstad, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke: Trajectories from the Old Testament to Luke-Acts*, Second edition (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1984, 2012).

From our beginnings Vineyard has been committed to the proclamation of the kingdom of God and to bearing witness to the deeds of the kingdom through healing (physical, emotional, and social), doing justice, and delivering those held captive by evil. Since the kingdom of God is the future reign of God breaking into the present through the life and ministry of Jesus, we are a forward-leaning movement emphasizing the ever-reforming nature of the church engaging the world in love.<sup>200</sup>

What are the relationships between the Vineyard's theology of the kingdom and sacramental theology? While there are numerous ways in which theologians can structure a connection between these, I suggest two be immediately considered. First, the theology of the kingdom is connected to sacramental theology through its emphasis on, theology of, and quest for the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

The Vineyard understands the inauguration of the kingdom to have begun with the life and ministry of Jesus. Reading from Isaiah 61, Jesus announced (and explained) "his new covenant-inaugurating and Spirit-empowered ministry"<sup>201</sup> with the following words:

The Spirit of the LORD is upon me,  
for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released,  
that the blind will see,  
that the oppressed will be set free,  
and that the time of the LORD's favor has come."  
(Luke 4:18-19 NLT)<sup>202</sup>

This eschatological announcement is followed by Jesus' explanation of his primary message: "I must preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God in other towns, too, because that is why I was sent" (Luke 4:43 NLT). While the *message* is clearly important to the biblical authors, we must also pay attention to the *method* in which Jesus proclaims and demonstrates the kingdom of God. Jesus, the divine word worker, carries out his ministry "full of the Holy Spirit."

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<sup>200</sup> *Core Values & Beliefs*, 4.

<sup>201</sup> Clinton E. Arnold, "The Kingdom, Miracles, Satan, and Demons," *The Kingdom of God*, eds. Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2012), 157.

<sup>202</sup> Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishers, 2013).

After all, Jesus situates the announcement of his ministry by quoting Isaiah's words, "The Spirit of the LORD is upon me."

Moreover, the in-breaking of the kingdom in Jesus' ministry is demonstrated and experienced through the miracles that followed him, such as Matthew 12:28's acknowledgement that demonic deliverance was evidence that the Spirit of God was at work ("But if I am casting out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has arrived among you," NLT).

If we understand a connection between the kingdom of God and pneumatology, it is reasonable to draw a connection between kingdom and sacramental theology. In fact, as the Vineyard looks for the in-breaking of the kingdom of God in its desire for God's presence in signs and wonders, whether they are gifts of healings or words of prophecy, the Vineyard should look for in-breakings of the kingdom that are experienced as encounters with God's grace. Sacramental theology provides a framework toward developing a richer theology of the kingdom, and the corresponding *experience* of that kingdom, as well as a context in which the kingdom comes (again and again) as the Church celebrates baptism, the Eucharist, and other sacramental acts. If, as Macchia suggests, healing prayer is sacramental, the Vineyard would be wise to explore the sacramental tradition(s) in order to better understand how healing should be present in the liturgy and spirituality of the local church, not to mention the wider Vineyard movement.

Second, the kingdom of God is connected to sacramental theology through the Eucharist. While this challenges those Vineyard churches that have a low-view (or low celebration of) the Eucharist, a sacramental theology in the Vineyard would likely begin to correct this weakness. As *Come to the Table* notes, when people in Vineyard churches receive Communion, they "express adoration to King Jesus and invite his kingdom to come" as well as experience "an



encounter with King Jesus.”<sup>203</sup> The Lord’s Supper is a means of experiencing God’s grace as King Jesus is present through the Holy Spirit. Or, as Calvin suggests, the Holy Spirit spiritually/truly lifts the hearts and minds of God’s people to heaven to feast on the risen Christ. The unifying theme within a Vineyard approach to the Eucharist is that the Holy Spirit is at work making the king and kingdom known and experienced.

In addition to these two approaches toward exploring how the kingdom of God relates to sacramental theology, theologians who associate with sacramental theology provide other helpful insights and concepts that should be explored. In what follows I would like to suggest several observations and thoughts concerning how these theologians may be considered helpful toward developing a Vineyard sacramental theology.

Moltmann states that the sending (and coming!) of the Holy Spirit is the sacrament of the kingdom.<sup>204</sup> If the Holy Spirit is understood as an active participant in the celebration of the Eucharist, Moltmann’s suggestion that the Holy Spirit is the sacrament of the kingdom raises a valid constructive challenge to Vineyard churches that do not regularly celebrate the Lord’s Supper. If the Eucharist is a means of experiencing the Holy Spirit and the in-breaking of the kingdom, as well as a context in which the charismatic gifts are ministered,<sup>205</sup> why not celebrate this sacrament on a more regular basis?

Furthermore, Moltmann notes that the Catholic tradition largely interprets the primacy of the sacraments through an *ecclesiological* lens while the Protestant tradition largely interprets the primacy of the sacraments through a *christological* lens.<sup>206</sup> His suggestion, in order to move beyond that impasse, is to suggest a “Trinitarian understanding of the eschatological gift of the

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<sup>203</sup> Geraty, *Come to the Table*, 4, 17.

<sup>204</sup> Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 199.

<sup>205</sup> Geraty, *Come to the Table*, 16-17.

<sup>206</sup> Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 199-202.

Holy Spirit”<sup>207</sup> as a solution to questions of sacramental primacy. In other words, rather than create a sacramental hierarchy that pits Jesus against the Church, the Holy Spirit provides a unifying approach that avoids creating what some would understand as mutually exclusive approaches toward an understanding and application of sacramental theology. This pneumatological emphasis in relation to sacramental theology, as advocated by Moltmann, is similar in direction to Pentecostal theologians Macchia and Chan.<sup>208</sup> What strikes me as particularly helpful is in how Moltmann, Macchia, and Chan articulate a pneumatic sacramental theology that is not at odds with a high christology or ecclesiology. In fact, Chan has argued for an “ecclesial pneumatology” that suggest that Christ is present in the Church “sacramentally,”<sup>209</sup> i.e., through the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit is understood in the sense of being a sacrament of the kingdom, Vineyard theology could become sacramentally rich by developing a robustly informed pneumatology that considers these contributions. In simpler terms, the kingdom of God connects to pneumatology which connects to sacramental theology. However, these steps, or connections, must not be skipped. In order to avoid some of the extremes of sacramentalism, theologians must understand the crucial relationship between these three related areas.

(2) *Experiencing God*. This Vineyard value is so intricately connected to the theology and practice of the kingdom that all that has been stated above applies. Yet there are certain aspects of the value of experiencing God that resonate well with a sacramental theology.

The concept of experiencing God is rooted in an awareness of the transformative power of encountering God. As *Core Values & Beliefs* states, “we value the life-changing power of the

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<sup>207</sup> Ibid., 202.

<sup>208</sup> This is not to suggest there are differences in how these theologians approach these subjects; cf. Chan’s constructive criticism of and dialogue with Moltmann in *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, esp. 83ff.

<sup>209</sup> Simon Chan, “Mother Church: Toward a Pentecostal Ecclesiology,” *Pneuma* 22:2 (2000), 180-191.

experience of His presence” and yet “the primary place where that relationship is nurtured and developed is in the act of worship.”<sup>210</sup>

This, of course, raises questions concerning both the expectations of when God’s presence is experienced as well as what is meant by “act of worship.” When do members of Vineyard churches expect to experience God’s presence? Does the Vineyard movement *really* understand worship to be much more than music? In order to understand why the Vineyard sees such an integral relationship between “worship” and “music,” awareness of the movement’s beginnings need to be taken into consideration. Carol Wimber wrote the following summary of the beginnings of the Vineyard:

We began worship with nothing but a sense of calling from the Lord to a deeper relationship with him. Before we started meeting in a small home church setting in 1977, the Holy Spirit had been working in my heart, creating a tremendous hunger for God. One day as I was praying, the word “worship” appeared in my mind like a newspaper headline... After we started to meet in our home gathering, I noticed times during the meeting - usually when we sang - in which I experienced God deeply. We sang many songs, but mostly songs about worship or testimonies from one Christian to another. But occasionally we sang a song personally and intimately to Jesus, with lyrics like “Jesus, I love you.” Those types of songs both stirred and fed the hunger for God within me... I began asking our music leader why some songs seemed to spark something in us and others didn’t. As we talked about worship, we realized that often we would sing about worship yet we never actually worshipped - except when we accidentally stumbled onto intimate songs like “I love you, Lord,” and “I lift my voice.” Thus we began to see a difference between songs about Jesus and songs to Jesus... About that time we realized our worship blessed God, that it was for God alone and not just a vehicle of preparation for the pastor’s sermon.<sup>211</sup>

This extended quote explains *why* the Vineyard has such a strong commitment to music. In scanning the writings and sermons of Vineyard leaders, this is a common understanding of

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<sup>210</sup> *Core Values & Beliefs*, 5.

<sup>211</sup> Carol Wimber, “Worship: Intimacy with God,” *Equipping the Saints* 1, no. 1 (1987): 4-5, as quoted by Boller, *The Wisdom of Wimber*, Kindle Locations 602-622.

worship and how it relates to experiencing God's presence.<sup>212</sup> This commitment to experiencing God through music is what caused Carol Wimber to write that "after learning about the central place of worship in our meetings, there were many instances in which all we did was worship God for an hour or two."<sup>213</sup>

In reading through influential Vineyard books (e.g., *Empowered Evangelicals*, *Power Points*, *Breakthrough*, *The Way In is the Way On*, *Everyone Gets to Play*, and many more), the impression readers are left with is that experiencing God most often occurs in the Vineyard through the context of music,<sup>214</sup> singing songs of praise and worship *to* God, not simply *about* God. There is much to commend about this Vineyard distinctive. Yet judging by the writings of leading Vineyard voices, my hunch is that, borrowing from Vineyard philosopher and theologian Joseph E. Gorra, the Vineyard needs a "thicker" understanding of worship in both theology and praxis.<sup>215</sup> Gorra asks, "Does our typical worship experiences and practice of worship suffer (more often than not) from a "thin" view of worship?"<sup>216</sup> While most Vineyard leaders would agree that worship is much more than music, much of what is stated around the concept of experiencing God comes across in language that suggests the answer to Gorra's question is, quite frankly, "Yes." In the Vineyard, music appears to be the primary means by which people experience God's presence. If the Vineyard hopes to develop its theology and praxis of

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<sup>212</sup> Cf. *What is Worship? Experiencing the Life-Changing Presence of God* (Stafford, TX: Vineyard Publishing, 2015); Dan Wilt, *How to Experience God: Encountering God in Worship* (Stafford, TX: Vineyard Publishing, 2013). While these two recent Vineyard publications do not make the mistake of suggesting that worship is *only* music, the centrality of music is still clear. However, a recent Vineyard published discipleship booklet is helpful in balancing this emphasis: Robert E. Logan, Charles R. Ridley, and David J. DeVries, *Experiencing and Worshipping God* (Stafford, TX: Vineyard Publishing, 2014).

<sup>213</sup> Carol Wimber, "Worship: Intimacy with God," *Equipping the Saints* 1, no. 1 (1987): 4-5.

<sup>214</sup> This is not to suggest that God is not experienced in healing or words of prophecy; rather, these spiritual encounters appear to be connected to how the Vineyard largely approaches worship (i.e., in relation to music).

<sup>215</sup> Cf. Joseph E. Gorra, "Worship, Ecclesiology and the Public: Implications of Thick vs. Thin Concepts," (paper presented at the annual meeting for the Society of Vineyard Scholars, Minneapolis, MN, April 27, 2012). Gorra suggests that the common "phenomenological description of worship" in the Vineyard is largely connected to music.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

worship,<sup>217</sup> a sacramental approach would help in this area because sacramental theology demands a fair amount of theological reflection. For example, sacramental theology suggests a “living encounter with and entrance into that “epiphany” of reality which the symbol is.”<sup>218</sup> As sacramental theology begins to shape and influence Vineyard theology, these “living encounters” become available in other contexts beyond music. One of Gorra’s suggestions is that the Vineyard needs to reform its “commonly experienced “worship language” use and propagate thick concepts of worship.”<sup>219</sup> Resourcing itself by sacramental theology and the corresponding sacramental language will, I believe, thicken Vineyard worship and the related experiences of God’s presence.

(3) *Culturally Relevant Mission.* The Vineyard movement, according to *Core Values & Beliefs*, understands that it “exists for the sake of those who are exiled from God” and that they “are called to bring the gospel of the kingdom to every nook and cranny of creation, faithfully translating the message of Jesus into language and forms that are relevant to diverse peoples and cultures.” This has led the movement “to plant churches that are culturally relevant in a wide variety of settings locally and internationally” and to encourage local Vineyard churches “to reach those in its community not already reached by existing churches.” These commitments are embodied by an ecclesial culture that encourages, supports, and promotes “a creative, entrepreneurial and innovative approach to ministry that is faithful to Jesus and expressive of His heart to reach those who are far away from God.”<sup>220</sup>

The fact that the Vineyard has been on the forefront of the modern development of culturally relevant ministry is attested by many. As Donald E. Miller writes:

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<sup>217</sup> Gorra’s observation is that the Vineyard’s current approach *is* formative, though that formation needs to be thickened as we articulate a stronger theology of worship and praxis.

<sup>218</sup> Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, Kindle Locations 2022-2023.

<sup>219</sup> Gorra, “Worship, Ecclesiology and the Public,” 18.

<sup>220</sup> *Core Values & Beliefs*, 6.

... there is little question that the Vineyard has contributed to creating a new paradigm of culturally relevant churches. Vineyard music is sung throughout the world, and hundreds of non-Vineyard churches welcome the Holy Spirit into their worship in ways that did not occur prior to the renewal conferences of John Wimber. In addition, the Vineyard has been at the forefront of a movement to equip laypersons for ministry and, quite literally, to give the ministry back to the people.<sup>221</sup>

John Wimber “believed that Christians must always be adjusting the model to fit the message, taking into account cultural changes that are occurring.”<sup>222</sup> As the Vineyard has followed Wimber’s lead, both in theory and praxis, toward culturally relevant mission, how might sacramental theology inform Vineyard missiology? As previously indicated, a relationship exists between sacramental theology and the Vineyard’s missiology in that sacramental approaches provide a way toward strengthening Vineyard ecclesiology. If the Holy Spirit is understood in light of Moltmann’s suggestion that the Spirit is the sacrament of the kingdom, and the church is the community of the kingdom, envisioning the Church *also* through a sacramental lens becomes possible. In light of my working definition of “sacrament,” I imagine that the Church could be understood as “*a means by which people can proclaim and remember, experience and encounter, as well as be sealed by the transformative power of God’s grace through the mediation of the Spirit.*” These proclamations, remembrances, experiences, and encounters are not phenomenologically possible apart from a robust pneumatology. Thus, sacramental theology, with this robust pneumatic approach, challenges the Church to both *be* and work to *become* the means by which the world experiences redemption.<sup>223</sup> As Pinnock writes, “the church, filled with

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<sup>221</sup> Donald E. Miller, “Routinizing Charisma: The Vineyard Christian Fellowship in the Post-Wimber Era,” 216.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, 232.

<sup>223</sup> This concept regarding a sacramental ecclesiology owes much to the biblical-theology of N.T. Wright. E.g., *Surprised by Hope*, 189-289; *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006), 143-240; *After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters* (New York: HarperCollins, 2010). Furthermore, the biblical-theology of G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004) goes in a similar direction related to the *Missio Dei* and its implications for ecclesiology. Therefore, I suggest that a Vineyard sacramental ecclesiology would be an important concept to explore.

the Spirit, is agent of God's coming kingdom and sacrament for the world," for "God touches the world when the church speaks the truth, proclaims good news, performs Jesus-actions, identifies with pain, builds community, shares and forgives."<sup>224</sup> This, I believe, is a path toward developing a sacramental ecclesiology for the Vineyard. After all, "if Christians faithfully embrace the rigors of discipleship and become "sacraments" of Christ in the world, *the church will truly be a community of salvation that presents a way of life that is rich in grace and full of hope.*"<sup>225</sup>

Therefore, pneumatology becomes *crucial* in this sacramental ecclesiology because it is anchored to the assumption that "the whole creation is a field of the Spirit's operations and thus sacramental of God's presence."<sup>226</sup> As the Holy Spirit is understood to be at work in creation, especially in different cultures,<sup>227</sup> pursuing culturally relevant mission becomes central toward embodying the sacramental nature of the *Missio Dei*.<sup>228</sup>

My own observation on this issue is that the Vineyard is already resourced to embrace this theological perspective implicitly because Vineyard leaders regularly discuss doing kingdom ministry as the Spirit leads or is already at work. As Bill Jackson recalls, "In ministry John Wimber taught us to preach the words and do the works of Jesus in the same way Jesus did: he depended completely on the power of the Holy Spirit (e.g., Luke 5: 17) and only did what he saw the Father doing (John 5: 19)."<sup>229</sup> Members of Vineyard churches are encouraged to keep their spiritual eyes and ears open to what God is doing around them and to join God and bless what he

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<sup>224</sup> Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 143.

<sup>225</sup> Paul J. Wadell, *Becoming Friends: Worship, Justice, and the Practice of Christian Friendship* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2002), 12, emphasis mine.

<sup>226</sup> Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 63.

<sup>227</sup> A number of helpful theologians can be considered on this issue; cf. esp. Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005); Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religion* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2014); Simon Chan, *Grassroots Asian Theology: Thinking the Faith from the Ground Up* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2014).

<sup>228</sup> Concerning a pneumatological missional ecclesiology, consider the reflections of Kärkkäinen in *An Introduction to Ecclesiology* on Lesslie Newbigin's "Missionary Ecclesiology," chapter 14, Kindle Locations 1673-1782.

<sup>229</sup> Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle*, Kindle Locations 5092-5094.

is doing. Therefore, a sacramental theology, informed by these pneumatological approaches, will continue to pursue culturally relevant mission *because* it is assumed that the Holy Spirit is at work *around* and *within* the various cultures in the world.

(4) *Reconciling Community*. While sharing significant overlap with the Vineyard commitment to mission, the value of being “committed to becoming healing communities engaged in the work of reconciliation wherever sin and evil hold sway” suggests an intentional focus toward and awareness of the necessity for Vineyard churches to reflect the diversity of *heaven* over and against the fragmented nature of our broken world. This causes Vineyard churches to “seek to be diverse communities of hope that realize the power of the cross to reconcile what has been separated by sin,” which “requires [the Vineyard] to move beyond [its] personal preferences to engage those who are perceived to be unlike us and to actively break down barriers of race, culture, gender, social class and ethnicity.” This commitment is driven by the belief that “the church, locally, nationally and globally, is meant to be a diverse community precisely because Jesus is Lord over every nation, tribe and tongue.” Therefore, the Vineyard is “not satisfied with the status quo when it doesn’t reflect this kingdom reality, but [is] eager to pray for the coming of God’s kingdom here and now and to realize this mark of the kingdom in our midst.”<sup>230</sup> Kingdom theology, as understood in the Vineyard, has much to offer in conversations about social justice and human rights.<sup>231</sup>

Planting churches in *every* culture is foundational to a Vineyard approach to missions. As Jackson states, “We aim to plant these churches not only in our culture but in other cultures as well. We embrace the world mission of the church to see the kingdom advance in every ethnic

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<sup>230</sup> *Core Values & Beliefs*, 6.

<sup>231</sup> For an excellent Vineyard perspective on the way kingdom theology speaks to human rights, see Derek Morphew, *Kingdom Theology and Human Rights* (Bergvliet: Derek Morphew Publications, 2015). Morphew’s study is important due to his work in South Africa working against apartheid and because he is such a widely respected Vineyard theologian.



group on earth that the end might come (Matthew 24: 14),” which is why the Vineyard “is also committed to cross cultural church planting.”<sup>232</sup> This cross cultural church planting commitment is born out of a desire to create and shape reconciling communities. Yet this has not always been as obvious or as intentional as one would hope.

Historically the Vineyard movement in North America (and Europe) has been dominated by white members.<sup>233</sup> While the Vineyard has intentionally focused on planting churches amongst ethnic groups across the globe, Vineyard churches in the United States have not been as intentional toward developing ethnically diverse local churches in their own cities. Even after Martin Luther King Jr. famously stated that the most segregated hour in America was during Sunday morning worship,<sup>234</sup> the Vineyard has historically been less intentional (and effective) at seeing ethnic reconciliation occur in its churches.<sup>235</sup> In addition to a robustly articulated and embraced theology shaped by *Imago Dei*, what other resources might the Vineyard turn to in order to correct this? How else can the Vineyard become more intentional at creating, shaping, embracing, and expressing reconciling communities?<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle*, Kindle Locations 1431-1433.

<sup>233</sup> Miller notes that during an interview with John Wimber and Bob Fulton (a senior Vineyard leader and Wimber’s brother-in-law), they “acknowledged... that the Vineyard’s model and message are geared *primarily* to Anglo baby boomers,” ““Routinizing Charisma: The Vineyard Christian Fellowship in the Post-Wimber Era,” 234, emphasis mine.

<sup>234</sup> As quoted in Joseph Barndt, *Becoming the Anti-racist Church: Journeying Toward Wholeness* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 1; Martin Luther King Jr. preached these words in a sermon at the National Cathedral in Washington D.C. on March 31, 1968.

<sup>235</sup> This trend appears to be changing. There are currently a number of focus groups or task forces addressing ethnic diversity. Furthermore, a historic moment took place during the 2015 Vineyard National Conference when Dr. Charles Montgomery, an African-American pastor, preached on the subject of ethnic diversity, cultural hermeneutics, etc. This talk led to a time of corporate repentance and much discussion related to how the Vineyard can move forward. While the challenge of ethnic reconciliation and diversity remains, these are positive developments; cf. Jeff Heidkamp, “The Maturing of the Vineyard: Reflections on the 2015 Conference,” last modified September 1, 2015, <http://www.vineyardusa.org/site/articles/vineyardglobalfamily>.

<sup>236</sup> While outside the scope of this paper, it should be noted that though the Vineyard movement nationally encourages the *full* participation of women in *every* area of ministry (e.g., senior pastors and denominational leadership), the fact of the matter is that women still represent a minority of influence in relation to senior leadership within Vineyard churches as well as within scholarly theological conversations. This has led to focus groups, task forces, and more intentionality. While this is a welcomed improvement, questions still remain as to whether there

I suggest that a compelling resource to influence and strengthen the Vineyard's commitment toward reconciling communities is found in sacramental theology. In the same way that Hans Boersma states that "the church's well-being depends on the recovery of this sacramental tapestry,"<sup>237</sup> the church's ontological identity as a community of reconciliation also depends on this recovery. Imbedded within Boersma's "sacramental tapestry" is the suggestion that sacramental theology provides a framework wherein the earthly realm participates with heaven. Considering that "heavenly participation means that life on earth takes on a heavenly dimension,"<sup>238</sup> one needs only to consider the vision of Revelation 7:9 in order to develop a commitment to pursue ethnic diversity expressed on earth. This heaven-inspired vision would intentionally seek communities that include people "from every nation and tribe and people and language." "Christians are pilgrims on earth," writes Boersma, "since their citizenship is in the heavenly city of God."<sup>239</sup> Incidentally, not only are *all* human beings created in the image of God, those who consider heaven to be their home will also be eschatological neighbors, regardless of ethnicity. Furthermore, perhaps this sacramental approach will influence a rereading of 1 Corinthians 12 that suggests in addition to the diversity of spiritual gifts, Paul means to encourage ontological diversity within the Body of Christ. Because "the church is a body primarily because the church is connected to the sacramental, Eucharistic body of Christ" and "Christ's body in the Eucharist... leads to the reality of Christ's body in the church,"<sup>240</sup> sacramental theology understands the Eucharist to *demand* the Vineyard to intentionally pursue

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are more effective ways in which the largely white male dominated landscape can become more diverse ethnically as well as in relation to gender. This, I believe, is related to being committed to reconciling communities!

<sup>237</sup> Boersma, *Heavenly Participation*, Kindle Location 42.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, Kindle Location 101.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, Kindle Location 117.

<sup>240</sup> Boersma, *Eucharistic Participation*, Kindle Locations 665-667.

ethnic diversity and radically seek for the creation, development, and renewal of reconciling communities.

The necessity for the Vineyard to intentionally pursue reconciliation is crucial for its own survival. In fact, Don Williams noted that this is one of the “major issues” that must be addressed when he wrote that the Vineyard must seek for:

... American multiracial and multiethnic churches that share Vineyard theology and values but not “Vineyard” (American) culture and the demand for justice for oppressed minorities. If the Vineyard is locked into seventies’ and eighties’ white, middle-class ministry and fails the post-modern challenge, it will be apostate from its own mandate to be culturally current. It will also be apostate from its own kingdom theology which sees the Spirit moving and the kingdom coming in and for each generation in time and space. The Vineyard must learn again, as Wimber would say, to “see what God is doing and bless it,” and then, of course, jump in with both feet.<sup>241</sup>

(5) *Compassionate Ministry*. While the concept of “compassionate ministry” shares much in common with previous Vineyard values, of particular interest for a Vineyard sacramental theology is how many in the Vineyard approach the Eucharist.

Derek Morphew writes that, in the Vineyard, the way Communion is celebrated “is probably different from what most people expect and different from what occurs in most traditions.”<sup>242</sup> Influenced by inaugurated eschatology, Morphew states that “when we break bread we are receiving blessing, grace, and the coming of the kingdom” and that “we are that blessed community who know the visitation of the Messiah.”<sup>243</sup> This serves to demonstrate his commitment to a kingdom oriented biblical-theology and how it shapes praxis. Yet in addition to the Eucharist being a meal shared by the “blessed community who know the visitation of the

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<sup>241</sup> Williams, “Theological Perspective and Reflection on the Vineyard Christian Fellowship,” 186. I would also want to suggest that in addition to Williams’ thoughtful challenge to the Vineyard, the Vineyard needs to be aware that the “Vineyard (American)” culture that he speaks of is not as monolithic as one may assume. In fact, the United States is becoming increasingly diverse and to be “American,” culturally speaking, should not be equated with Anglo (white) culture.

<sup>242</sup> Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Kindle Location 3666.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, Kindle Location 3740.

Messiah,” Morphew acknowledges that “we learn about the breaking of bread from the meals Jesus had with sinful people and the miracles of multiplying food during his ministry.”<sup>244</sup> This leads him to state that “Jesus had meals with sinners where he extended to them the grace of the kingdom of God” and that “[Jesus’] meals were not just for the sake of eating.”<sup>245</sup> If the Eucharist is “*a means by which people can proclaim and remember, experience and encounter, as well as be sealed by the transformative power of God’s grace through the mediation of the Spirit,*” why must the Communion meal be celebrated in a closed or fenced setting? Might the Lord’s Supper be the means by which lost women and men, young and old, come to encounter the transforming presence of God? Could receiving the Bread and the Cup be the means by which fallen human beings come to experience God’s compassion, highlighted by a remembrance of Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross?

The value of compassionate ministry, when resourced by sacramental theology, is multi-directional. Pointing both to the compassion of God and the compassion that God’s people extend to those in need, a Vineyard sacramentally informed theology explores the additional ways in which God’s mercies are experienced. If, as Morphew argues, the Eucharist is “for the poor in spirit and the lost who need to be healed,” sacramental theology is the foundation behind this unique approach to Communion. “Every time we participate in [Communion],” writes Morphew, “we should re-experience that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost.”<sup>246</sup> Perhaps some will experience that salvation the first time that they receive the Eucharist.

Furthermore, the Vineyard emphasis on healing prayer, a sacramental encounter, is founded upon the reality that when Jesus saw crowds of sick people, he had compassion on them

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., Kindle Location 3731.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid. Also see Tim Chester, *A Meal with Jesus: Discovering Grace, Community, and Mission around the Table* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2011); Craig L. Blomberg, *Contagious Holiness: Jesus’ Meals with Sinners*, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2005).

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

and healed them (Matt. 14:14). It is no wonder that because John Wimber “was compassionately driven,” the Vineyard has such a strong emphasis on healing, largely due to the assumption that “healing ministry... delivers compassion in a kingdom context.”<sup>247</sup> This, I would argue, is a sacramental delivery of compassion, experienced through the mediatory work of the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>247</sup> Williams, “Theological Perspective and Reflection on the Vineyard Christian Fellowship,” 172-173.

#### **D. Addressing Critiques & Challenges to Vineyard Sacramental Theology.**

As with all attempts to develop and construct theology, critiques and challenges will arise. While my proposed Vineyard sacramental theology is *an* approach and hopefully the beginning of many future conversations, this proposal will likely raise several areas of critique. In order to help facilitate healthy and helpful dialogue, in what follows I seek to address several of these concerns.

(1) *Over-Realized Ecclesiology*. The implications of a Vineyard theology influenced by sacramental theology is a vigorously articulated ecclesiology. At least that is one byproduct and, I hope, natural consequence. Yet I would be naïve to ignore the fact that in a movement like the Vineyard, with such an undeveloped ecclesiology, the pendulum may swing from one extreme to the other. Thus, critical reflection would likely raise concerns over the possibility of moving from very *little* ecclesiology to far *too much* ecclesiology. After all, my argument concerning the sacramental *possibilities* of Vineyard theology is to suggest that this approach connects the Church to Christ and the Spirit via an acknowledgement that the Church participates alongside heaven. Simon Chan articulates this potential concern when he acknowledges that “to conceive of the church in this manner usually makes evangelicals nervous” because “there is the fear that to affirm the church’s identification with Christ would give too much power to the church” and that “evangelicals for historical reasons are wary of such things as church hierarchy and, worse, a theologically sanctioned hierarchy.”<sup>248</sup> However, as Chan persuasively argues, an ecclesiology that is ontologically shaped by christology must acknowledge the *headship* of Christ.<sup>249</sup>

Moreover, a sacramental theology that develops into and shapes a sacramental ecclesiology understands the Church to be a *means* that ultimately points to Jesus. The Church is

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<sup>248</sup> Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, Kindle Locations 392-395.

<sup>249</sup> Cf. Eph. 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:15-20; 2:8-19.

*never* an end in and of itself; rather, the Church is empowered by the transforming presence of the Spirit to witness to and testify for Jesus.

(2) *Over-Developed Pneumatology*. A Vineyard sacramental approach to theology, as has been argued, is built on a substantial pneumatology. Critics may inquire as to whether the aforementioned commitment goes too far. In other words, does a pneumatically infused sacramental approach to theology lead to an over-developed pneumatology, guilty of ignoring the implications of Trinitarian theology (e.g., christology) or soteriological concerns?

While this question raises necessary concerns for the Vineyard, which holds to an orthodox doctrinal commitment to the Trinity, I must agree with Chris Green, who writes that “part of the answer... lies in a vibrant theology of the Spirit as the Freedom that liberates God’s people (and God’s Scriptures and the church’s sacraments) from the contingencies of history, and so allows them to be participants in that history in a new, creative way.”<sup>250</sup> Moreover, Green directs us to Jenson, Yong, and Chan in order to demonstrate that a robust pneumatology is *crucial* to developing the charismatic tradition’s theology (and praxis). After all, “the Spirit *fre*es an actual human community... to be apt to be united with the Son and thus to be the gateway of creation’s translation into God,”<sup>251</sup> which is very similar to my previous arguments related to the Church being understood through a sacramental lens. Green also notes that Chan’s work “appeals to a strong theology of the Spirit as the life and enlivener of the liturgy as well as the church’s reading and performance of Scripture.”<sup>252</sup> Therefore, while an over-realized pneumatology may be a concern some have, I would suggest that these concerns would be better

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<sup>250</sup> Green, ““Then Their Eyes Were Opened”: Pentecostal Reflections on the Church’s Scripture and the Lord’s Supper,” 230.

<sup>251</sup> Robert W. Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2: *The Works of God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 179.

<sup>252</sup> Green, ““Then Their Eyes Were Opened”: Pentecostal Reflections on the Church’s Scripture and the Lord’s Supper,” 230.

placed in addressing *deficient* pneumatology, which breeds weak christology and ecclesiology! A robust pneumatology *strengthens* Christian theology, especially within the Charismatic tradition.

(3) *Either/Or Theological Commitments*. Jason Clark, a Vineyard pastor and theologian in the U.K., challenges my proposal when he writes that the “sacramental turn makes too much of the church and is ultimately unable to fulfill its own ambitions to compete with the imaginations of cultural liturgies.”<sup>253</sup> This leads Clark to conclude that rather than making the “sacramental turn,” he chooses to “remain a Pentecostal Charismatic.”<sup>254</sup> Clark’s concerns are similar to that which I outlined above, namely an over-realized ecclesiology. Clark suggests “how a pneumatological understanding of sacramental worship practices is needed” in order for the Vineyard to “get beyond the Eucharist and the sacramental turn.” “We need to understand,” writes Clark, “where God is in the practices of worship beyond the Eucharist” because “such an understanding allows for us to better understand how the Spirit is poured out on all moments and locations, where believers re-capitulate and instantiate the Christ event by the Spirit.” Furthermore, Clark asks a powerful question: “how are our Charismatic worship practices *affective* in competing with rival cultural liturgies in terms of experience, and spiritual reality?”<sup>255</sup>

This approach strikingly appears very similar to my sacramental suggestions!<sup>256</sup>

Considering the significant “turn” of Pentecostal, Charismatic, and Third Wave theologians toward engaging sacramental theology and sacramental theologians, it would seem that Vineyard

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<sup>253</sup> Jason Clark, “Beyond Sacramentalism: The Church as the Public of the Holy Spirit (or why I am still a Pentecostal Charismatic),” (paper presented at the annual meeting for the Society of Vineyard Scholars, Media, PA, April 17, 2015), 2. Clark’s paper addresses both the “sacramental turn” as well as “post-Church ecclesiologies,” though the former is most relevant here.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>256</sup> Perhaps the difference in our language, and Clark’s hesitance to embrace a sacramental approach, owes more to the ecclesial cultural context in which we both pastor. I am squarely within North American aspects of the evangelical and charismatic traditions and Clark is within the U.K., surrounded by Anglicanism. Though speculative, I would venture to guess that may have more to do with our unique concerns.



theology should have no problem remaining well within the Charismatic tradition while also embracing the aspects of sacramental theology that provide helpful language toward understanding the nature and function of worship, the Spirit, ecclesiology, and beyond. What would happen if we continued to approach our theological development less with an “either/or” theological commitment to embrace a “both/and” perspective? Might the Vineyard movement benefit from “drinking from our own wells” in addition to engaging these sacramental perspectives? I believe the answer is an emphatic “Yes!” Clark’s concern for what I have previously referred to as “over-realized ecclesiology” must be chastened by an acknowledgement that there could very well be either an “over-developed pneumatology,” or, more likely, an “under-developed pneumatology.” These concerns have a way of serving metaphorically as “mirrors” to reveal areas that need to be further engaged, explored, and considered in a critically constructive manner. Perhaps “over-realized ecclesiology” is balanced by “over-developed pneumatology” in a manner that produces a legitimate theology that values the Church, the Spirit, and seeks to understand the nature of the relationships therein.

These three concerns/criticisms are by no means exhaustive; rather, they are the concerns or questions that have most often been raised in my own personal conversations and theological interaction. I certainly hope that further reflection raises other questions and that the subsequent discussions that occur will further serve toward developing a rich theological approach in the Vineyard movement.

### III. The Implications of a Vineyard Sacramental Theology.

#### A. Conclusion.

In conclusion, I would like to set forth a number of reasons as to why I believe the Vineyard must develop its own theological approach in a way that is resourced by and engaged with sacramental theology. In other words, *why does this matter?* Attentive readers will have already noted the previous suggestions I have made, yet I conclude with the following three reasons and implications of a sacramental Vineyard theology.

(1) *A Vineyard sacramental theology moves in an ecumenical direction.* As the Vineyard owes much of its history to John Wimber, we must realize that “Wimber was ecclesiastically driven”<sup>257</sup> and that he loved the Church<sup>258</sup> because, he stated, “God loves all of it.”<sup>259</sup> Wimber was “a grassroots ecumenist” which was “evident in his worldwide renewal conferences.”<sup>260</sup> Sacramental theology will continue to encourage an intentional ecumenical focus in that many of the most articulate sacramental theologians are found *outside* of the Evangelical and Charismatic traditions. Moreover, a number of these perspectives are found *outside* of western Christianity.<sup>261</sup> Perhaps sacramental theology will condition the Vineyard to maintain Wimber’s “generosity of spirit”<sup>262</sup> that made him such an effective ecumenical leader.

(2) *A Vineyard sacramental theology serves to better explain and understand the heavenly nature of reality.* In that Scripture states that Christians have been blessed with every

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<sup>257</sup> Williams, “Theological Perspective and Reflection on the Vineyard Christian Fellowship,” 173.

<sup>258</sup> Boller writes, “Wimber was primarily a churchman. He was a man who absolutely loved the church of Jesus Christ and wanted it to be all Jesus envisioned it to be.” (*The Wisdom of Wimber*, Kindle Locations 1225-1226).

<sup>259</sup> John Mumford, “Vineyard Movement Founder,” in *John Wimber: His Influence and Legacy*, 195.

<sup>260</sup> Williams, “Theological Perspective and Reflection on the Vineyard Christian Fellowship,” 173.

<sup>261</sup> E.g., the global south is home to some very influential sacramental theologians, esp. South America; cf. Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1973, 1988). Furthermore, engaging Juan Luis Segundo, John Mbiti, and Mercy Oduyoye, to name just a few global south theologians, would be of interest, especially toward exploring a relationship between culturally relevant mission, social justice, and liberation theology and how these relate to sacramental theology.

<sup>262</sup> Gerald Coates, “The Ecumenist,” in *John Wimber: His Influence and Legacy*, 156.

spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms,<sup>263</sup> are seated with Christ in the heavenly realms,<sup>264</sup> and share in Jesus' heavenly calling,<sup>265</sup> attention to a heavenly vision and understanding of theology that connects heaven and earth, the sacred and secular, the supernatural and natural,<sup>266</sup> is crucial. Sacramental theology provides the way that the Vineyard can (and should) develop this area of theology. As Vineyard theology seeks to connect heaven and earth, similar to the way that Jesus taught his disciples to pray for the unity of heaven and earth,<sup>267</sup> a sacramental approach demands a sense of sacramental reality. This leads to a "sacramental tapestry" which, according to Boersma, is a "carefully woven unity of nature and the supernatural, according to which created objects are sacraments that participate in the mystery of the heavenly reality of Jesus Christ."<sup>268</sup> Sacramental theology will both strengthen and shape the Vineyard's understanding of the in-breaking of the heavenly kingdom.

(3) *A Vineyard sacramental theology serves to "thicken" the development of Vineyard theology as a whole.* While John Wimber is said to have been "theologically driven,"<sup>269</sup> questions about the theological depth of the common Vineyard pastor, leader, or church member are often asked with the assumption that theological depth in the Vineyard is self-contradictory. In the same way that Pentecostalism has been accused of being theologically ignorant,<sup>270</sup> the

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<sup>263</sup> Ephesians 1:3.

<sup>264</sup> Ephesians 2:6.

<sup>265</sup> Hebrews 3:1.

<sup>266</sup> Schememann states that "Christ came not to replace "natural" matter with some "supernatural" and sacred matter, but to restore it and to fulfill it as the means of communion with God," *Of Water and the Spirit: A Liturgical Study of Baptism* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974), 49. This is a helpful way of understanding a sacramental function in theology.

<sup>267</sup> Matthew 6:10.

<sup>268</sup> Boersma, *Heavenly Participation*, Kindle Locations 144-145.

<sup>269</sup> Williams, "Theological Perspective and Reflection on the Vineyard Christian Fellowship," 173.

<sup>270</sup> While many early Pentecostals were anti-intellectual, this generalization is no longer helpful or accurate. With the formation of Pentecostal universities and seminaries along with scholarly societies and academic journals, Pentecostalism has become an experiential *and* theological tradition. For a history of Pentecostalism that covers these changes, see Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*. For a sustained treatment on the intellectual contribution that Pentecostalism has to offer, see Smith, *Thinking in Tongues*. For a treatment on the experiential and theological commitment of Pentecostalism, see Neumann, *Pentecostal Experience*.

Vineyard is not given primary place amongst Christianity's top intellectual traditions.<sup>271</sup> While these assumptions are inaccurate and do not reflect the Vineyard's value for and commitment toward "equipping the saints,"<sup>272</sup> one must acknowledge that the relative newness of the Vineyard *has* influenced its lack of theological sophistication and development. In many ways the Vineyard is still "discovering itself."

A sacramental perspective in relation to Vineyard theology, as I have argued, will serve to shape a more pronounced understanding of the Holy Spirit, ecclesiology, doxology, and the Vineyard's commitment to spiritual formation. These are just a few of the inter-connected areas of theology that may prove to be discursive subjects leading to further creative engagement. If sacramental theology is helpful in constructing a unique Vineyard approach, what additional areas of theology will be affected? How can sacramental theology be incorporated into the *praxis* of the local Vineyard church? In what ways might Vineyard scholars use sacramental theology and language to better understand and articulate the unique approach to theology and spirituality that the Vineyard holds? Why has the Vineyard been remiss to appropriate a sacramental approach or sacramental language in its history? How might the "sacramental tapestry" further serve to articulate the liminal space(s) between the "already" and "not yet"? In what ways would

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<sup>271</sup> The most common response in conversations where I refer to the Society of Vineyard Scholars is, "Isn't that [Vineyard scholars] an oxymoron?" Most often this is the response of Vineyard *pastors*(!), though also stated in conversations I have with people outside of the Vineyard as well.

<sup>272</sup> Boller notes that according to Wimber, the Vineyard "genetic code" included a commitment of "equipping the saints in areas such as discipleship, ministry, serving, giving, finances, family, etc." (*The Wisdom of Wimber*, Kindle Locations 282-283). Erickson states that "while the Vineyard has yet to develop a formally accredited college or seminary, it has had several theological training programs that have served to educate pastors and laity alike," which has included "over 60 courses taught and written by over 20 Ph.D.'s from four countries" including notable scholars such as Dr. Don Williams, Dr. Derek Morphew, Dr. Peter Davids, Dr. Ben Witherington, Dr. Gordon Fee, and Dr. Craig Keener. Furthermore, Erickson notes that "in 2010 the Vineyard witnessed a new stage in its theological development: for the first time, established scholars, graduate students, and pastors joined together for the inaugural meeting of the Society of Vineyard Scholars, an organization designed to foster scholarly interaction on issues relevant to Vineyard. This meeting included academics from not only biblical studies and theology, but from the fields of philosophy, linguistics, anthropology, and even biology and chemistry. This conference has become an annual gathering" ("The Kingdom of God and the Holy Spirit: Eschatology and Pneumatology in the Vineyard," 38-40). All this is to say that while the Vineyard is relatively young, the Vineyard has been and is a theological movement!

sacramental theology serve the Vineyard in its collective mission “to join God’s mission in the world by building a community of churches that are proclaiming and practicing the full message and reality of the kingdom of God”?<sup>273</sup> Many questions remain and further study, along with theological dialogue both *in* and with those *outside* of the Vineyard, will likely prove helpful. At the very minimum, a Vineyard sacramental theology powerfully explains the Holy Spirit’s role in relating the “not yet” to the “now” and creates numerous opportunities for the Vineyard to articulate its sacramental ontology in a more explicit manner.

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<sup>273</sup> *Core Values & Beliefs*, 2.

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