

“The Pentecostal Challenge to the concept of Salvation in Liberation Theology.”

Revd. L. A. Amechi

22681308

DMS PGCE MA MTh

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree *Philosophiae Doctum* in *Theology* at the
Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

Supervisor: Prof Byron Evans

Co-supervisor: Prof JM Vorster

April 2014

ABSTRACT

This study was set up to determine how the concept of biblical salvation is understood within liberation theology and how the concept is perceived from Pentecostal standpoint with the aim of developing a theological framework to challenge the dehumanising influences in contemporary society. The central argument of this thesis is that, there are irreconcilable differences between the salvation espoused by liberation theology's praxeological epistemology and the Pentecostal understanding of the concept etymologically and hermeneutically speaking. The study further probes whether Pentecostalism can provide the necessary theological framework that can be used to challenge the perceived dehumanising influences in contemporary society.

The study achieved its purpose by setting meaningful objectives and following the appropriate research methodologies. Firstly, the study employed in-depth textual analysis, historiography, lexicology, and hermeneutic principles to understand the etymology of salvation from previous scholarship. This effort helped to elucidate differences that exist between liberation theology and Pentecostal renderings of the concept. Secondly, the concerns of existing contributors on the subject were evaluated by researching historical, linguistic and textual materials as well as exegetical analysis of relevant texts of Scripture. Thirdly, an in-depth literature analysis was undertaken to ascertain liberation theology's hermeneutic methodologies. This is necessary to establish whether the movement is more interested in promoting its ideologies and preunderstandings rather than biblical salvation.

Fourthly, it was necessary to review the deep concerns expressed by liberation theology epistemology without compromising the message of the Gospel. This was achieved by a thorough analysis of social ministries undertaken by Progressive Pentecostals across the globe. Fifthly, the study evaluated the Pentecostal criticisms of liberation theology to see if there is any justification for that. This was achieved through an in-depth exegetical and hermeneutic analysis using word studies, theological dictionaries, bible

commentaries, and by reviewing scholarly articles on the subject matter. Lastly, by analysing the difference between Pentecostal and liberation theologies, it was clear that their methods of operations are different. This goes to explain why Pentecostalism is growing exponentially while liberation theology is declining. The outcome of this analysis also explains why Pentecostalism is a better alternative in addressing the challenges facing our global community.

Key Words

Biblical Salvation (Soteriology), Liberation Theologies, Pentecostalism, Hermeneutics, Contemporary Challenges

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To God be all the glory for the strength, wisdom, knowledge and understanding to complete this study. Sincere appreciation and acknowledgements are also due to four people who have been instrumental at various stages of this study: first, to Prof Ben Rees whose invaluable contributions helped get the study off the ground in the early stages; second, to Prof Byron Evans (Supervisor) who worked assiduously to ensure that the RP was apt and achievable and continued to guide me with his insightful feedback comments; third, to Prof Koos Vorster (Co-supervisor) of North-West University (Potchefstroom) for his constructive and encouraging comments and fourth, to Prof Dan Lioy for his excellent critiques ranging from theology, grammar and style. Special gratitude goes to Peg Evans of GST for her excellent interpersonal qualities in communicating, providing information and guidance with great precision and sensitivity. Deep appreciation goes to the Board of Trustees of the Community Outreach Ministries for sponsoring the PhD programme. Finally, unfathomable gratitude goes to my family for their unwavering support especially Jordan whose IT skills were invaluable.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	I
KEY WORDS.....	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	II
1.0 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Central Theoretical Argument	5
1.2 Methodology.....	6
2.0 CHAPTER TWO: SALVATION IN BIBLICAL CONTEXTS	8
2.1 Introduction	
2.2 God the Saviour in the Old Testament.....	8
2.2.1 The self-revelation of the God of salvation (Saviour).....	8
2.2.2 The differing conceptions of salvation: Theological, Religious, Cultural & Old Testament Perspectives.....	12
2.2.2.1 Theological conceptions of salvation.....	12
2.2.2.2 Salvation in a Pluralistic World.....	17
2.2.2.3 Religious conceptions of salvation	19
2.2.2.4 Cultural conceptions of salvation	20
2.2.2.5 Old Testament conception of salvation (Jewish).....	22
2.2.3 The nature of sin in relationship to the Old Testament conception of salvation	23
2.3 God the conqueror of Egypt.....	24
2.3.1 The significance of the deliverance from Egypt	24
2.3.2 The Deliverance from Egypt	25
2.4 God the land distributor	25
2.4.1 Preparing to possess the Promised Land.....	25
2.4.2 Possessing the Promised Land.....	26
2.5 God the healer of the sick and the provider for the needy.....	27
2.5.1 Salvation through the healing power of God (Naaman/Hezekiah).....	27
2.5.2 Salvation through faith in the spoken word of God.....	28
2.5.3 Salvation and repentance through the word of the prophet.....	28
2.6 The God of Continuity.....	29
2.6.1 God the Father: The initiator of the Plan, Etymology and Method of salvation in both Testaments	29
2.6.2 God the Son: The object of salvation in the New Testament.....	30
2.6.3 God the Holy Spirit: The upholder of salvation in all ages	31

2.7	God the Saviour of in the New Testament	33
2.7.1	God's promise of a Saviour.....	33
2.7.2	God's fulfilment of the promise of a Saviour.....	33
2.8	Jesus the great teacher of righteousness	34
2.8.1	Jesus teaches righteousness as a means of obtaining salvation	34
2.8.2	Jesus' teachings on the futility of self-righteousness in obtaining salvation	35
2.8.3	Jesus as the archetype of God's righteousness in mediating salvation	35
2.9	Jesus the Saviour from sin (Atonement, Forgiveness and Restoration)	37
2.9.1	Salvation through the Atoning work of Jesus Christ.....	37
2.9.2	Salvation through the forgiveness which Jesus Christ brings.....	40
2.9.3	Salvation through restoration by Jesus Christ.....	41
2.10	Jesus the deliverer from sickness, diseases and demonic powers.....	42
2.10.1	Salvation through healing sicknesses and diseases	42
2.10.2	Salvation through deliverance from demonic powers.....	43
2.11	Jesus the liberator of the oppressed.....	46
2.11.1	Jesus the liberator from political and economic oppression.....	46
2.11.2	Jesus the liberator from religious oppression	47
2.12	Jesus the advocator of the coming Kingdom of God.....	48
2.12.1	Jesus the advocator of the present Kingdom of God: Being saved	48
2.12.2	Jesus the advocator of the eschatological Kingdom of God: Future salvation	52
2.13	The Gospel of salvation in the Epistles.....	52
2.13.1	Pauline Gospel of salvation (Romans – Philemon)	52
2.13.2	The Gospel of salvation according to the General Epistles (Hebrews – Jude)	54
2.14	Summary	55
2.14.1	Summary of analysis.....	55
2.14.2	Areas of concern highlighted by the studies	56
3.0	CHAPTER THREE: SALVATION IN LIBERATION THEOLOGY	
	CONTEXT	58
3.1	Introduction	58
3.2	Historical context of Liberation Theology	58
3.2.1	A historical portrait of liberation theology: Emilio Núñez	58
3.2.2	A historical portrait of liberation theology: Rubem Alves (political humanism).....	61
3.2.3	A historical portrait of liberation theology: Epochal Events (The Second Vatican Council, Medellin and Puebla conferences of 1968 & 1979).....	63
3.3	Theological Agenda of liberation theologies: a new formulation of Christian praxis.....	67
3.3.1	Praxis in liberation theology: Solidarity with the poor and oppressed.....	67
3.3.2	Praxis in liberation theology: The historical concreteness of unjust social structures. ...	71
3.3.3	Praxis in liberation theology: The deconstruction of the unjust social structures	72

3.4	Theological Agenda of liberation theologies: a new reading of history	77
3.5	Theological Agenda of liberation theologies: a new reading of Scripture.....	81
3.5.1	Christological proposals of liberation theologies.....	81
3.5.2	Ecclesiological proposals of liberation theologies.....	86
3.6	Liberation theologies hermeneutical presentation of the Exodus narrative.....	89
3.7	Liberation theologies hermeneutical presentation of the Easter Faith (Christology).....	93
3.7.1	Liberation theologies' hermeneutical presentation of the death of Jesus	93
3.7.2	Liberation theologies' hermeneutical presentation of the resurrection of Jesus	96
3.8	Liberation as salvation.....	98
3.9	Summary	102
 4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: SALVATION FROM THE PENTECOSTAL STANDPOINT		104
4.1	Introduction	104
4.2	The meaning of salvation from the Pentecostal standpoint	105
4.2.1	The history of the Pentecostal movement	105
4.2.3	The theology of the Pentecostal movement	109
4.2.4	Salvation from the Pentecostal standpoint	112
4.3	The source of salvation from Pentecostal standpoint.....	121
4.4	The importance of salvation from the Pentecostal standpoint	123
4.5	Pentecostalism: the relevance of the concept of salvation in a contemporary society ...	129
4.6	Pentecostalism: the proclamation of the Gospel of salvation in a contemporary society	138
4.7	Salvation: Pentecostal standpoint and other traditional Christian faith groups	143
4.8	Summary	151
 5.0 CHAPTER FIVE: PENTECOSTALISM CRITICISMS OF LIBERATION THEOLOGIES: SALVATION OR LIBERATION.....		154
5.1	Introduction: Hermeneutical Background.....	154
5.2	Evolving Pentecostal Hermeneutics.....	160
5.3	God's redemptive work in the Old Testament	163
5.4	Deliverance from Egypt	167
5.5	The definition of sin.....	177

5.6	The consequences of sin.....	182
5.7	The redemptive work of Jesus Christ	186
5.8	The revelation of the Cross.....	189
5.9	The judgement of the Cross.....	194
5.10	Jesus and the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalized.....	196
5.11	The Gospel and salvation.....	201
5.12	Tackling contemporary challenges.....	202
5.13	The missiological mandate of the Church	206
5.14	The role of the Church in the world today	212
5.15	The past, present and eschatological nature of salvation.....	214
5.16	Summary	218
6.0	CHAPTER SIX: PENTECOSTALISM: A THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR DEALING WITH THE DEHUMANISING INFLUENCES OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY.....	220
6.1	Introduction	220
6.2	The nature of contemporary society.....	221
6.3	Dehumanizing influences of contemporary society	223
6.4	Ecclesiological concerns about contemporary society	227
6.5	Ecclesiological responses to contemporary society.....	229
6.6	The failure of liberation theologies in contemporary society	232
6.7	The Bible as a paradigm for dealing with societal issues	243
6.8	Timeless and transcultural epistemology of biblical salvation	249
6.9	Protestant Reformers: salvation & liberation	251
6.10	Anabaptist Radical Reformers: salvation & liberation	259
6.11	The growth of Pentecostalism in Two-Thirds of the world.....	264
6.12	Pentecostalism as a viable theological framework	269
6.13	Evaluation of Pentecostalism in dealing with contemporary issues	272

6.14	Summary	278
7.0	CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION.....	281
7.1	Summary of Content	281
7.2	Revisiting the main objectives	282
7.3	Summary of Findings	283
7.4	The Significance of the Findings.....	286
7.5	The Research and the Future	286
7.6	Suggestions for Future Research.....	287
7.7	Final Thoughts on the Research	287
8.0	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	289

1.0 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The ubiquitousness of the concept of salvation in the Old and New Testaments is indicative of the primacy of the subject in Christian thought and theological discourse (e.g. Ryrie, 1987 and Gutierrez, 1974). The concept, however, is not limited to the Christian faith only but permeates the religious consciousness of other faiths. According to Kerswill (1904:1), it is the most absorbing topic of human thought.

Gutierrez (1974:147), on the other hand, notes that in much contemporary theological discourse, the absence of a profound and lucid reflection on the subject is conspicuous. Notwithstanding, the importance of biblical salvation within ecclesiological and theological circles has attracted many contributors who have continued to grapple with the etymological and hermeneutical challenges posed by the concept. The outcome is the absence of an overarching meaning and application of the concept that satisfies orthodoxy or orthopraxis theological standpoints.

Those on the orthodox¹ side of the debate, (e.g. Erickson, 2013; McGrath, 1995; Keathly, 2004 and Valea, 2009) focus on the depravity of humanity (sin) and how God's plan (renewal and restoration) for their salvation is embodied in Jesus Christ and His work of atonement. The concept of salvation is also prominent in the liberation theologies epistemology (orthopraxis), but at variance with orthodox theology. The main exponents of liberation theologies (e.g. Gutierrez, Bonino, Boff & Boff, Sobrino, Segundo, Dussel, Nunez, Escobar, Alves and Assman) identified by Ellis and Maduro (1989), Schipani (1989) and Gibellini (1980), espouse an epistemology of salvation that is

¹ The concept of orthodox in this thesis should not be confused with its other usages in Church Traditions such as Orthodox traditions and Radical Orthodoxy. In this thesis the concept focuses on how the text of Scripture should be understood hermeneutically and exegetically speaking. The understanding is that, the primacy of the authority of the Holy Scripture must be upheld by all who endeavour to interpret biblical texts. The Pentecostal stance advocates that there is a proper and acceptable way of interpreting the texts of the Holy Scripture that can generally be acceptable to most Christians. This thesis argues that Orthodoxy is that acceptable way to accurately determine what the biblical text means.

synonymous with the notion of liberation. Their perspectives constitute a significant shift in traditional Christian thought, resulting in a new formulation of Christian praxis, a new reading of history and finally, a new reading of Scripture (McGrath, 1995:333).

A different and more radical approach of doing theology is being advocated by Liberation theologies. Their methodology is a critical reflection on historical praxis, thus carrying on theological work starting from the perspective of the poor or the oppressed. In this context, salvation is more than just deliverance from sin, but also 'liberation from a situation of misery and the beginning of the construction of a just comradely society' (Gutierrez, 1974:154). By perceiving Jesus as a liberator and salvation in terms of liberation, a new Christological paradigm has evolved, which subsequently extends salvation beyond its traditional understanding as "redemption" (Sobrinho, 1994:17).

The focus of intense discussion on the subject, as noted by McGrath (1995:616) has been how salvation is possible and in particular how it relates to the history of Jesus Christ; and how "salvation" itself is to be understood. However, not much attention has been given as to how the message of the Gospel of salvation can be applied to address the challenges of contemporary society. Salvation must reflect its true biblical etymology. It must be seen to be both theological and praxeological, not entrenched in a conservatism that closes its eyes to social reality (Nunez, 1985:279). At the same time, it must not be divorced from its true biblical meaning for the sake of critical reflection on historical praxis. The next stage of the debate is to explore a liberation theology framework to challenge the dehumanizing influences in a contemporary society. This is what is lacking and needs urgent attention. Research is needed that will focus on how the Pentecostal perspective of biblical salvation can provide a liberation theology framework to challenge the dehumanizing influences in a contemporary society.

In recent scholarship, theologians of all persuasions (e.g. Sider, 1980; Blue, 1990 and Woudstra, 1980) have commended Liberation theologians for

demonstrating deep concern for the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalised, and also postulating a theological framework to liberate them from such protracted socioeconomic and political predicaments. The same have unequivocally and vehemently criticized the fundamental philosophies underpinning the movement's epistemology and methodologies (e.g. Farnemann, 2004; Rhodes, 2009; Nunez, 1985; Blue, 1990; Pettegrew, 1991; Fawcett, 1994; Schipani, 1989; Padilla, 1989; Costas, 2002; Ratzinger, 1984).

They argue that the orthopraxeological methodologies (Marxism) used by liberation theologians in the hermeneutical process are unbiblical and not in consonance with traditional Christian orthodoxy, which esteems the authority of the Scripture (Pentecostal standpoint). When put under the lens of Pentecostal theology (orthodoxy), liberation theologies' tenets have serious soteriological, anthropological, ecclesiological, Christological, and missiological implications. They interpret the Biblical text with their own doctrinal, philosophical, and cultural presuppositions, making the historical situation the starting point, not the Scripture: thus relegating the Scripture to second place and elevating historical situation as the starting point of theological tasks. So, the issue is not necessarily about presuppositions. The crux of the matter is whether the presuppositions arise from a theological or philosophical perspective. The Pentecostal stance, however, is to approach the issue from the perspective of the authority of Scripture and biblical theological point of departure.

Despite raising these concerns, no satisfactory and robust liberation theological framework has been promulgated to challenge the dehumanising experiences of those in Two-thirds of the world. This is not to say that questions have not been asked, what is lacking is a concerted and deliberate effort to develop a liberation theology framework that will address the historical and socioeconomic situations without compromising the true meaning of Biblical salvation. Redemptive theology with critical reflection can provide the best opportunity to ask the right questions to address the socioeconomic challenges of today's society. Therefore, what is needed is critical analysis and a movement away from the so-called western theological mind-set, which is cast in philosophical idealism and insensitive to everyday socioeconomic and political struggles of

the common people (Boff & Boff, 2008:36). Approaching theological tasks this way will answer the question posed by Padilla (Schipani, 1989:44), “how can God be proclaimed as Father in an inhuman world?” A Pentecostal theology that is embedded in Scripture and reflective of the social and historical situations is therefore long overdue.

In their recent works, Miller and Yamamori (2007) and Martin (2002) confirm the rapid exponential growth of Pentecostalism not only in Latin America but in Africa and Asia where liberation theology is strongly embraced. So, in the light of this discourse, the central question of this thesis is, “How can Pentecostalism provide a liberation theology framework to challenge the dehumanizing influences in a contemporary society?”

The questions that naturally arise from this are:

- What are the concepts of salvation in the Old and New Testaments?
- To what extent do Liberation theologies (praxeological epistemology and exemplaristic hermeneutic methodology) promote liberation ideology and preunderstandings, rather than elucidating an understanding of the concept of biblical salvation?
- How can the deep concerns expressed by liberation epistemology be addressed without compromising the message of the Gospel?
- What justification exists for Pentecostal criticism(s) of liberation theology and what viable alternatives can be offered?
- By examining the differences between Pentecostal and liberation theologies, what new theological framework can be forged to address contemporary socio-economic challenges?
- How does the success of Pentecostalism in Third World countries, where liberation theology is highly influential, serve as a new paradigm to propagate the true message of the Gospel?

The aim of this thesis is to determine how the concept of biblical salvation is understood within liberation theology and how the concept is perceived from the Pentecostal standpoint, with the view to developing a theology framework to challenge the dehumanizing influences in contemporary society.

The objectives of this thesis must be seen in their relationship to the aim. In so doing, this research intends to reach the following objectives:

- To assess critically the existing contributions by scholars on the concepts of salvation in general and to identify and reflect on the areas of concern highlighted by their studies.
- To evaluate the extent to which Liberation theologies promote liberation ideology and preunderstandings, rather than elucidating the concept of biblical salvation and ascertain the theological implications of this stance.
- To determine how the deep concerns expressed by liberation epistemology can be addressed without compromising the message of the Gospel.
- To critically analyse Pentecostal criticism(s) of liberation theology and to explore what viable alternatives can be offered.
- To critically analyse the differences between Pentecostal and liberation theologies in order to posit a new theological framework to address contemporary socio-economic challenges.
- To explore whether the success of Pentecostalism in Third World countries, where liberation theology is so influential, can serve as a new paradigm to propagate the true message of the Gospel.

1.1 Central Theoretical Argument

The central theoretical argument of this thesis is that there are irreconcilable fundamental differences between the salvation (liberation) espoused by liberation theology's praxeological epistemology and the Pentecostal understanding of the concept etymologically and hermeneutically speaking. It is only when salvation is proclaimed and practised in its biblical context (Pentecostal standpoint) can the world experience true liberation from all spiritual, socioeconomic, political and structural enslavement. The power of the Gospel to produce this salvation in the hearts of sinful humanity; the rich and

the poor, the oppressed and the oppressor, the bourgeoisies and the proletariats, is found in Pentecostalism rather, than in liberation theology epistemology.

1.2 Methodology

This theological study will employ the appropriate historiography, lexicology, and textual research tools available in this field of work. As hermeneutical methodology is critical to this work, scholarly works will be consulted (e.g. Jensen, 2007; Stein, 2006; Fee & Stuart 1995; Dryness, 1990; Kirk, 1979; Costas, 2002 and Brown, 1984).

Biblical salvation will be critically analysed in its various contexts, but with particular reference to liberation theology, focusing on the contributions made by McGrath (1995); Rowland, (2007); Kerswill, (1904); Ellis and Maduro (1989); Gibellini (1980) and Schipani (1989). The works of two prominent Liberation theologians Sobrino, (1994) and Gutierrez, (1974) will elucidate liberation theology's concept of salvation. Scholarly articles and publications by Shaull, Nunez, Kirk, Nunez & Taylor, Sider, Blue, Pawcett, and Pettegrew will provide great insights to Orthodox (Pentecostal standpoint) responses, while Ratzinger and Novak will consider Catholic perspectives. Certain historical scholars are claimed to have influenced the liberation movement. Some aspects of their work will be consulted; for example Metz (Rhodes, 1990), Bonhoeffer, Moltmann and Ernst Bloch (Grenz & Olson, 1992:174).

The Bible is self-authenticating regardless of what presuppositions or preunderstandings theologians from either side of the fence approach it. The only way to understand biblical salvation is to look at the text of Scripture and compare it with the Pentecostal and Liberation theology rendering of the concept. Some theologically acclaimed bible commentaries, dictionaries, word studies (e.g. Gerhard & Bromiley, 2014; Archer, 2009; Vanhoozer, 2005; Danker & Bauers, 2001; VanGemeren, 1997; Fowl, 1988; Harris, Archer & Waltke, 1980) and many more will be looked at for elucidation on the subject matter.

In any case, the paradigm for any hermeneutical analysis in this study will stem from the premise that the Scriptures are the authoritative Word of God. This paradigmatic approach corroborates 2 Timothy 3:16-17. If the Holy Scriptures are true and trustworthy, then they can be relied upon for faith and conduct. Every creed, religious opinions, all human conducts, including those emanating from philosophical, psychological, sociological standpoints or from a given worldview, must submit to the authority the Holy Scriptures.

The recent works of Martin (2002), Kay (2009) and Hollenwenger (1997) and in particular, a book and DVD by Miller and Yamamori (2007), will be evaluated to ascertain how Pentecostalism is proclaiming biblical salvation in the Third World without denying the social realities and how not to make the Gospel a social enterprise. Maximum efforts will be made to ensure that an outcome that is objective and unfettered by any preconceived denominational (Progressive Pentecostalism) and ideological (a black man, who has a personal view about slavery, powers of darkness, poverty and diseases in Third World countries) strictures is achieved.

2.0 CHAPTER TWO: SALVATION IN BIBLICAL CONTEXTS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will be focusing on identifying and explaining the concepts of salvation from the Old Testament (OT) and the New Testament (NT) standpoints. The methodology will focus on gaining insights not only from the Bible but from different cultures and other religions. The scholarly works of theologians from contemporary to antiquity will be invaluable (e.g. Pelikan, 1971; Fiddes, 1989; Rybarczyk, 1999; Erickson, 2013 Gundry et al. 1996; Kärkkäinen, 2004 & 2010; Fairbairn, 2007; Feinberg, 1988; Kerswill, 1904; Pohle, 1923; Barth, 1915-1918; Forsyth, 1916; Ziegler, 1791; Schaff, 1858; Ritschl, 1870; Harnack, 1885-89 and Cone, 2010). Lexicological, historiographical, extra-biblical materials and extracts from Ancient and Near East/Hebrew cultural literatures will be consulted and in particular the excellent scholarly works done by (e.g. Gerhard & Bromiley, 2014; Niehaus, 2008; Danker & Bauers, 2001; Walton, 1989; Bentzen, 1948 & 1949 and Noth, 1962).

2.2 God the Saviour in the Old Testament

2.2.1 The self-revelation of the God of salvation (Saviour)

One of the most common designations of God in terms of salvation or redemption, throughout the Old Testament is Saviour (Bruce, 1963:52). This term is not only used to describe God, but also Jesus Christ who was designated at birth as Saviour (Luke 2:11). Bruce (1963:51) also notes that the designation of Christ as 'God and Saviour' belongs to the New Testament (Titus 2:13; 2Peter 1:1). Bruce (1963:51) is absolutely right to conclude from such a designation that Christ is both God and Saviour. In 2 Peter 1:11; 2.20; 3:2, 18, the reference made is 'Our Lord and Saviour' Jesus Christ. Bruce (1963:52), in his exegetical analysis of these references, affirms that "a characteristic

expression of the Pastoral Epistles is 'God our Saviour' (e.g. 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; Titus 1:3 and 2:10; 3:4). He attests that the designation 'Saviour' has been applied to God or Christ in the Pastoral Epistles and 2 Peter over fifteen times and about nine times in the remaining books of the NT. Bruce (1963:51) posits that the increased usage of the title 'Saviour' to the God and Redeemer of the Christians must have stemmed from contemporary conditions and to a body of teaching called 'the knowledge of truth', of Essene affinity in which the idea of 'Saviourhood' played a central part. Notwithstanding this assertion, Bruce is convinced that the concept of God as Saviour is unmistakably a usage from the Old Testament time during which such designation was ascribed to the God of Israel and to the king of Israel.

Deities in ancient Near East (ANE) were known for their heroic efforts in delivering their worshippers. Images or pictures of such deities procuring deliverance and defeating dragons or serpents are there for all to see to elicit faith and belief in their subjects (Bruce, 1963:53). Deliverance activities may be undertaken by different deities (Saviours) in the ANE culture. Bruce argues in support of this view citing examples from the Canaanite pantheons where functions were shared among a wide variety of deities as depicted in the Ugaritic texts where Asherah walks on the sea and Baal rides on the clouds (Bruce, 1963:54).

Even though parallels exist between the OT and ANE practices and beliefs, God as the Saviour of Israel must distinguish Himself as more superior than the other gods. He must reveal Himself as the almighty and the only true God capable of bringing total salvation to His people. From what has been discussed above, it is safe to conclude, that the OT is emphatic, that God is the only Saviour, without whom mankind's salvation is in vain. God's position as Saviour should not therefore be perceived in the same light as those of the divinities of the mystery religions of ANE.

For this reason, one can argue strongly, that the concepts of saviour and salvation, which exist in other religions, are different from the Christian and Biblical perspectives (Is. 43:3; 45:15; 21-22). God as the only Saviour of Israel is well supported (Is. 43:11; Hos. 13:4). Chafer (1945:13-14) is absolutely right

without any equivocation to reiterate that “Salvation is of Jehovah” (Jonah 2:9) and that “Salvation belongs to Jehovah” (Psalm 3:8). He insistently argues that this truth is sustained both by revelation (Scripture) and by reason. Kerswill (1904:115) is not at variance with Chafer (1945:13-14) or Bruce (1963:52) by arguing, that the view the Old Testament believer had of his salvation is inseparably connected with his conception of “Jehovah”. Since Jehovah (Yahweh) is the covenant name of God, whenever this name is mentioned, the person invoking the name expects God to manifest Himself in line with what that name connotes (salvation). Again, Kerswill’s view supports Chafer’s (1945:14-15) hypothesis that salvation is purely by the grace of a Saviour (God). Chafer reasons that, because salvation’s source is the grace of a Saviour; he concludes that salvation comes exclusively and completely from God. This view is sustainable both by reason and by a scriptural account.

The connectivity between the Covenant name of God and salvation identified by Kerswill (1904:115), is further developed by von Rad (1962:181-182). He contends, that in ancient time, a name was not just “noise and smoke”; rather, a close relationship existed between it and its subject. His view is that the subject is in the name, and consequently, the name will also carry with it the nature of its subject or at least the power pertaining to it. According to von Rad (1962:186), the name Jahweh was the embodiment of the saving revelation, but also indicates that sometimes Israel also uses another designation, the “God of salvation”. This confirms the understanding that there were various names or titles attributed to God by the Old Testament believers in accordance with their current disposition and this should not cause any confusion. The self-revelation of God to Moses and the Hebrews was very important to establish faith, confidence, and the trust necessary to execute their salvation (Ex. 3:14, Gen. 15:7-19).

As the Creator and ruler of the universe, God is perceived as “Elohim”. This designation of God helps to unravel the close links between God’s creative activities and His salvation plans. The name (*’ēlōhîm*) is derived from another word (*’lh*), which is synonymous to “God” or “god”. Scott (1980:41) has looked at the arguments surrounding the etymologies of *’ēlōah* (singular) and *’ēlōhîm*

(plural) but has concluded that Elohim is a unique development of the Hebrew Scripture and represents chiefly the plurality of persons in the Trinity of the godhead. Elohim does not therefore represent many gods as in the case of the pagans and other Semitic cultures of the time (Josh. 3:10). Elohim, from the perspective of the Bible is the true God, the only God who is supreme (Josh. 22:22), sovereign and the Creator of all things (Isa. 42:5). Elohim is the chief God whose activities and deeds are in contradistinction to the Akkadian, the Phoenicians, or the Ugaritic false gods. Scott's (1980:41) exposition, strengthens the arguments posited by Bruce, Chafer and Keswill about God's supremacy against the gods of the ANE.

Scott (1980:44) contends that when indicating the true God, *'ēlōhîm* functions as the subject of all divine activity revealed to humankind and as the object of all true reverence and fear from mankind as indicated in Psalm 68:18-19. Elohim is the God of creation, but when it comes to his redemptive and covenant relationship with humanity, He became Jehovah. Kerswill (1904:119) contends that since the Old Testament was written for the religious instruction of all mankind including those of polytheistic conviction, Elohim, which depicted God's creative work (Gen. 1:2; 2:3), was later used in conjunction with Jehovah to signify his covenant relationship with humankind. God thus became "Jehovah Elohim". As Jehovah Elohim, He was also the God who blesses (Gen. 1:22) and curses (Gen. 3:14).

In His redemptive capacity, He blessed and as Elohim, He judged and banished the guilty one from His presence. Sin interrupted the covenant relationship that existed between mankind and the Creator (Gen. 3). In this regard, Merrill (1991:21) argues that salvation implies a deliverance from something to something and is therefore a functional, rather than, a teleological concept. He contends that salvation should lead to a purpose that has been frustrated or interrupted and not a purpose in itself. So God as the Saviour is saving mankind from the position brought about by sin. In salvation, God is undoing everything which sin has brought on mankind.

To understand salvation in the OT context and conceptualise the role of God as Saviour, one must look at how God has continued to intervene in the life of His

people to give them victory over every adversity (Job 26:12; Job 38:8-11; Ps.74:12-14). God's self-revelation as the Saviour of Israel is inextricably linked to the concept, nature, and method of salvation in the Old Testament. In essence, the salvation of the Old Testament believers were embodied in the Covenant, which also guarantees all of Jehovah's promises to them including the Redeemer to come.

2.2.2 The differing conceptions of salvation: Theological, Religious, Cultural & Old Testament Perspectives

Salvation is a concept found in many religions and cultures of the world (Brandon, 1963; Kerswill, 1904; Kärkkäinen, 2004). In order to develop a theology framework to challenge dehumanising influences in contemporary society, an appreciation and analysis of the concept of salvation from different contexts are necessary. This is particularly important (contextualisation) in the face of globalisation and the growth of Christianity in other cultures depicted by these (Costas, 2002; Dryness, 1990; Petrella, 2008) scholarly works.

2.2.2.1 Theological conceptions of salvation

Erickson (2013:829-840) has analysed five prominent conceptions of salvation from different theological perspectives. His work is invaluable in addressing the central theoretical argument of this dissertation because of his ability to accommodate alternative views on a number of issues. Since the etymology of salvation is diverse even within Christianity, his work provides a viable platform to analyse the different etymologies. His scholarly proficiency in systematic theology coupled with his fairly evangelical and moderately Calvinistic background endear him the enviable position in analysing theological concepts systematically.

The Liberation Theologies' conception of salvation stems from their belief that the basic problem of society is the oppression and exploitation of the powerless classes by the powerful. The focus of their epistemology of salvation consists in deliverance (or liberation) from such oppression (Erickson, 2013:830). While acknowledging the bias in their salvation etymology, they also hold that the Bible identifies with the oppressed (Exodus narrative) and that the history of

God's redemptive workings is a history of groups of oppressed people (Gonzalez & Gonzalez, 1980:16). Since the method of salvation (liberation) should be appropriate to the nature of the specific situation, they advocate that "The salvation of all persons from oppression is the goal of God's work in history and must therefore be the task of all those who believe in him, utilizing every means possible, including political effort and even revolution if necessary" (Erickson, 2013:832.) Erickson has merely articulated liberation theologies' tenets of salvation without necessarily agreeing or disagreeing with their stance. It is also clear that the concept of salvation as found in the texts of Scripture is at variance with the liberation stance. Notwithstanding, the liberation concept of salvation should not be ignored but explored further because of the influence their theology has in Third World countries.

Existential Theology is the brainchild of Bultmann and his demythologization programme. Salvation as posited by this school of thought originates from Heidegger's work (Heidegger, 1962:85). This theology (philosophy) focuses on the difference between objective knowledge and subjective knowledge and how they help (objective) or hinder (subjective) the acquisition of scientific data. Bultmann asserts that "the Bible is not essentially a source of objective information about God, but about the human person and condition". He concludes, it gives us "*Geschichte*" rather than "*Historie*" (Bultmann, 1958:40; Erickson, 2013:833).

From the work of Heidegger, Bultmann borrowed the concepts of authentic and inauthentic existence to postulate his concept of salvation (Heidegger, 1962:163-68; Bultmann, 1958:45). Bultmann posits a concept of salvation which is at variance with the traditional view of justification and advocates that salvation is fundamentally an alteration of our *Existenz*, our whole outlook on and conduct of life (Bultmann, 1961:18-19, 30).

The secular society is a post-Christian era in which humanity has unconsciously adopted a lifestyle which has no place for God as science rather than religion becomes more effective in meeting human needs (van Buren, 1963:1-20; Gilkey, 1969:3-29). It rejects traditional meaning of salvation and advocates that "Salvation is not so much through religion. Realising one's capability and

utilizing it, becoming independent of God, coming of age, affirming oneself and getting involved in the world- this is the meaning of salvation” (Erickson, 2013:837.) The secular society’s concept of salvation is indicative of how much our contemporary society is adrift with traditional Christian beliefs. It is no longer accurate for Christians to assume that their concept of God, salvation and spirituality is the norm even in a country that has imbibed Christian traditions in the past. Despite the ostracization of God of by the advocates of secular society, Bonhoeffer (1972:278-80) posits a notion of “religionless Christianity” in which he encourages Christians to use evangelism to make people Christians rather than religious. He avers that through secularization, God is bringing the human race to a point of self-sufficiency.

Credit should be given to Bonhoeffer, especially as he encourages Christians to translate Christianity into the language that contemporary secular persons can understand. However, he is naïve in thinking that the secular society must not be encouraged to become Christians, but be made to understand that they are already Christians (unconscious Christians). It is difficult to conceptualise how a person can become a Christian without knowing. From his assertion, one can deduce that the secular society that Bonhoeffer lived in must be remarkably different from the one that exists today. Bonhoeffer’s hypothesis as presented here is untenable in today’s secular society. God has been dethroned from the daily affairs of humankind generally speaking. The level of independence today’s society has cultivated in terms of God and Christianity in general is far from the one Bonhoeffer contemplated. His opposition to the inward and personal aspect of traditional Christian faith, the final stage of religion is conspicuous. Bonhoeffer’s views are advanced by others (e.g. Robinson, 1963; Altizer, 1966:40-54)

In Catholicism the main source of receiving the grace of God has continued to be the Church, a view famously articulated by Origen and Cyprian dictum (*extra ecclesiam nulla salu*). Worshippers receive the grace of God by participating in the sacraments of the Church, which confers salvation to them. Notwithstanding this conception, other views have emerged in the passage of time. Statements in the Second Vatican Council and the individual opinions of some Catholic

scholars (e.g. Rahner, 1966), which attest to divergence of views, have been published. A noteworthy observation is that in contemporary Catholic thought, while they continue to affirm that all persons can know God (Rahner, 1966:35; Willems, 1965:62) it is also required to insist on the exclusiveness of the Church's role in salvation (Council of Florence 1442, Vatican II *Lumen gentium* # 16 & 49). The Catholic stance is that "union with the Church is necessary for salvation, because the Church possess the necessary means of salvation" (Erickson, 2013:838).

Seeing the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation, Pius XII affirmed (*Mystici Corporis Christi*) that one can "be related to the Church by a certain desire [*in voto*] and wish of which he is not aware". The Catholic doctrine of salvation is inconsistent with orthodox Biblical meaning of the concept. Their interpretation of Rom. 8:9 is one of the basic assumptions for their etymology of salvation and the role the Church plays. If you belong to the Church or have any connection with the Catholic Church, by this affiliation your salvation is secured. This is the essence of Pius XII's statement. Since Rom. 8:9 is interpreted as belonging to Christ is synonymous to belonging to the Church, then one is saved because of their membership of the Church. This is affirmed by the Vatican II statement (*Lumen gentium* # 49): "All who belong to Christ, having His Spirit, coalesce into one Church." Other Scriptures which have been used to support the Catholic etymology of salvation include Rom. 3:29 (St Justin Martyr, *Apology 1:46*) and Rom. 2:14-16. The Bible is absolutely clear about what salvation is and the way to receive it. Rahner is wrong to accept non-Christian faith's ways of receiving salvation.

Packer (1973:110-116) is right when he unequivocally contradicts Rahner's (1966:35), especially for aligning himself with some notable liberal Protestants (Schleiermacher, Tillich, Troeltsch, Hocking, *et al*). These scholars advocate that non-Christian faiths are ways of salvation despite, acknowledging that they [non-Christian faiths] are also disfigured by errors. Packer (1973:115), however, affirms the views espoused by "the older Protestantism and such neoorthodox divines as Barth, Brunner, and Kraemer", whose views he believes are in line with the New Testament.

Okorochoa (1994:59-92) maintains that there is a close correlation between the Evangelical conception of salvation and the orthodox understanding of the human predicament. Salvation is to be understood from a relationship between mankind and God, which has been broken. The Evangelical conception of salvation stems from the fact that mankind sinned. Sin has therefore spoiled the very nature of the person creating in him greater propensity to sin as he inclines more to do evil. God through the process of justification and regeneration works to preserve him (Erickson, 2013:840). Erickson (2013:840) succinctly sums up the Evangelical position as: "This 'total depravity' as it is termed, means that a radical and supernatural transformation of human nature is necessary for forgiveness and restoration to favour with God." The Evangelical position resonates with what is obtainable when the pages of Scriptures dealing with this subject are hermeneutically and exegetically applied. The works of other prominent Evangelical and Pentecostal (Protestant) scholars corroborate Erickson's summation of the Evangelical stance.

Salvation cannot be contemplated within the Evangelical-Pentecostal stance without due consideration to the sin factor. The overwhelming view is that sin disrupted the order, which God instituted at creation including the relationship between humankind and God. Biblical salvation vis-à-vis Evangelical conception of salvation articulates a view that this ill (sin) must be diagnosed and remedied before the relationship between humankind and God the Creator can be restored. Gunton (2002:77) rather puts it more succinctly when he posits that: "The mystery of salvation is that those who have by their unholy living put themselves outside the way to life may through their relation to this man [Jesus Christ] come before God as his holy people." Gunton's epistemology of salvation is underpinned by the work of redemption, which Jesus achieved on the Cross.

It is this work that eradicates the predicament of human failure and earthly corruption. According to Boice, this restoration is not possible without God justifying the sinner. He argues further that salvation is not by justification alone. He is absolutely right to make this distinction affirming that justification means to declare one as righteous (Boice, 1986:419). It is on this proposition he asserts

unequivocally that for salvation to be achieved, it must be underpinned by justification by faith not justification alone. Justification by faith endears the believer to understand that his salvation is as a result of God accepting the finished work of Christ on the Cross rather than on the basis of the believers' own work or achievement. Boice (1986:419) therefore concludes that when salvation hinges on justification by faith, it is God's way of "declaring that he has accepted the sacrifice of Christ as the payment of our debt to the divine justice, and in place of sin he imputes Christ's righteousness to us". Advocating the Evangelical-Pentecostal standpoint of salvation, Ryrie avers that repentance that leads to salvation must stem from a change of mind about Christ. He argues that "The sense of sin and sorrow because of sin may stir up a person's mind or conscience so that he or she realizes the need for a Saviour, but if there is no change of mind about Jesus Christ there will be no salvation" (Ryrie, 1987:82.) This is biblically sound as it places Jesus at the centre of the redemption of humankind and the restoration of all things. This explains Okorochoa's (1994:59-92) view when he inferred that there is a correlation between the Evangelical and the orthodox conception of salvation.

2.2.2.2 Salvation in a Pluralistic World

In order to address some of the challenges of religious pluralism, Gundry (1995) and his colleagues have edited a series of essays by some prominent scholars on the subject of salvation in a pluralistic world from the vantage points of pluralism, inclusivism and particularism.

Hick (1995:29-59) postulates a pluralist view of salvation from the standpoint of classical liberalism. Salvation, according to this view, is both spiritual, and political and at the same time, underpinned by the structure of reality (Hick, 1995:43). Another distinguishing feature of this notion of salvation is its repudiation of the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation and the Atonement (Hick, 1995:58). It is plausible, to assert, that neither God nor Jesus is the source of this type of salvation.

Another conceptualisation of salvation (inclusivism) is postulated by Pinnock (1995:95-123). Pinnock (1995:95) notes that one of the greatest challenges facing contemporary theology has to be how to relate God's salvific will to

religious pluralism. Pinnock affirms God's presence as Creator and Redeemer everywhere and in every culture and every heart and for this reason he contends that "God's grace is also at work in some way among all people, possibly even in the sphere of religious life" (Pinnock, 1995:98.) By maintaining this inclusive stance Pinnock is arguing that God by his Spirit can operate in every religion for the salvation of all mankind. Again, this is at variance with orthodox Christian belief. Orthodox Christianity does not teach that salvation can be received outside of Christ.

While the transcendent and immanent characteristics of God support the views presented by Pinnock, what is not clear is the method by which this salvation will reach people from other religions and cultures who do not subscribe to Biblical salvation. There is no doubt, that God, wants to save all humankind, but the Scripture points to Jesus as God's chosen Saviour for the salvation of the world (John 3:16). This is the view upheld by most Christians, especially evangelical Pentecostals. The Christian view is corroborated by McGrath (1995:163). Pinnock's proposal is gravitating towards universalism of salvation, which is unacceptable by most Christians, but strongly advocated by Hicks (1994:243-261).

McGrath (1995:161-180) also presents the Particularist view of salvation with a post-Enlightenment approach. He admits the Christian notion of salvation is complex and highly nuanced. He is also concerned about what could be done to the religions and to salvific place of Christianity within the world religious situations. He notes in particular how controlling images and terms such as personal relationships, physical healing, legal transactions and ethical transformation have been employed to represent salvation especially in the New Testament. From this standpoint, McGrath's concept of salvation is clearly stated as "Salvation is to be understood as grounded in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and that it is a possibility only on account of Jesus Christ" (McGrath, 1995:163.)

McGrath's presentation of salvation is in consonance with orthodox Biblical teaching. What is lacking in his argument, however, is how to bring the diverse humanity to the knowledge of Christ (in missiological terms) who is not known in

these cultural and religious settings. If Pentecostalism rather than Liberation theology is to pave the way for the salvation of all humankind (rich, poor, oppressed, oppressor) through Jesus Christ, then Ghandi's answer as to why he proselytized in political arena rather than in religion remains pertinent (Hopkins, 1944:67). World evangelization remains one of the greatest challenges facing Christianity in contemporary society.

Geivett and Phillips (1995:213-245), focused on the Particularist view, but with reference to the Evidentialist approach. While it is true that Christian Particularists turn to the Bible as their most reliable source of evidence, Geivett and Phillips advocate that the Bible is not the only source of evidence on behalf of particularism (Geivett and Phillips, 1995:216). Notwithstanding, both scholars argue that Christianity is uniquely true and that explicit faith in Jesus Christ is a necessary condition for salvation. They also affirm that the Bible presents faith in Jesus Christ as necessary condition for salvation, thus distinguishing them from the Inclusivists (Geivett and Phillips, 1995:243). While it can be argued that God is revealed or can be known from a variety of sources outside the Bible, it is safe to conclude that salvation in the Biblical sense can only be experienced from what has been disclosed by God in the Holy Scriptures. In this disclosure, God affirms that Jesus is the way to biblical salvation (Lloyd-Jones, 1996:320; Eph. 2:13; Heb. 10:10-14, 1 Pet. 3:18).

2.2.2.3 Religious conceptions of salvation

The collection of essays written in honour of Edwin Oliver James attests to fact that the concept of salvation is found in many religions (Brandon, 1963). Zaehner (1963:218-225) has noted that salvation is a misleading concept when used in Hinduism because of its Christian nature and its associations with Christian doctrines, which have no relevance to Hinduism. He has identified the Hindu concept of "*moksha*" as synonymous to the concept of salvation, but argues that it does not exclusively mean salvation from sin. He asserts that *moksha* means: "Salvation from the human conditions itself in so far as it is limited by space and time and the whole active life we lead in space and time" (Zaehner, 1963:218.)

Smart (1963:160-173) focuses on the differences and similarities Christian and Buddhist conceptions of the way in which Buddha and Christ bring salvation. Smart asserts that the salvation in Christianity is based on relationship between mankind and God no parallel exists in *Theravādin* tradition. Repentance as a prerequisite to the Christian concept of salvation is not found in this religion. This is an important observation since adherents of this religion argue that mankind and other beings owe their sufferings and dissatisfactions ultimately to ignorance, rather than, to sin or moral evil. Ultimately, the cure for sufferings and dissatisfaction involves knowledge, rather than, repentance (Smart, 1963:161). Rather than repentance, Buddhists advocate teaching for the purpose of liberation.

This study, firmly supports, that teaching and the acquisition of knowledge, are to be encouraged in Christianity. However, biblical education must point us to the Saviour, and not merely, the acquisition of knowledge. Biblical education creates faith in believers; humankind are exposed to the degree of depravity (sin) in which they are entrapped. As faith is ignited, repentance, which leads to the forgiveness of sin and salvation, is birthed. God is ultimately the dispenser of this salvation, which also includes healing. This salvation is not, however, symptomatic of what is obtained in Buddhism as presented by Smart (1963:161).

2.2.2.4 Cultural conceptions of salvation

The view people have about God and their concept of salvation to a large extent will be determined by the cultural settings in which their faiths and beliefs have been moulded. This can explain why some scholars (e.g. Dryness, 1990; Brown, 1984; Kirk, 1979; Petrella, 2008; Costas, 2002; Pedersen, Lam & Lodberg, 2002) have advocated for the contextualisation of theology. Western cultural mindset can no longer be allowed to dominate the formulations of theologies without due regard to other cultures outside their milieu. Both Hick (1995:36) and Pinnock (1995:96) affirm the need for contextualization. The role of cultural assumptions and biases in theological thought strengthen their argument, especially in the light of religious pluralism. Furthermore, it can be inferred, generally speaking, that Christianity is no longer perceived as the

purveyor of the truth and the possessor of supreme revelation about God in Western Europe and North America. Globalisation, the freedom of movement, and the emergence of diverse subcultures have created a plural society. Every group believes they have a right to determine their own salvific access to divine life. The impact of culture on theological and religious matters is definitely not a new phenomenon and must not be ignored. This sustains the argument for contextualization.

For effective contextualization, one must have good knowledge of the culture in question. Some of these scholarly works provide that greater understanding of extrabiblical materials of Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Assyrian origin (Niehaus, 2008; Walton, 1989; Noth, 1962; Bentzen, 1948 & 1949; Matthews, 1988). Walton (1989:13) emphasizes the importance of comparing the Israelites to the people living around them as biblical records and archaeological data unquestionably show that Israelites were very much aware of the cultures and literatures of the ancient Near East. His view is that this will help us to understand the common worldview of biblical times, which Israel sometimes conforms to or refrains from adopting. Niehaus (2008:13) contends that “no study of biblical material can now be complete without some understanding of its ancient background”. He decries the fact that not all scholars give the ancient world it’s due and concludes that they do this at their own peril. Scholars (Gunkel, 1895; Delitzsch, 1902) have advocated that the Biblical texts were copied or borrowed from these non-biblical sources. They tend to elevate these sources over and above the Biblical texts by positing that the age of the Babylonian accounts must mean the biblical narratives are dependent on the Babylonian, but adds that the biblical authors must have modified to reflect his own views (Niehaus, 2008:22).

Other scholars (e.g. Heidel, 1942 and Price, 1925) have concurred that the existence of parallels between biblical narratives and ancient Near East texts do not *ipso facto* indicate dependence. Heidel (1942:139) has concluded that “no incontrovertible evidence can for the present be produced” in favour of biblical dependence on the Babylonian materials. Price (1925:129), supports Heidel’s assessment, but reminds us of “a time when human race occupied a common

home and held a common faith.” In engaging with extrabiblical materials, what is intended, is to discover the truth. Niehaus (2008:14), weighs into the debate, contending that, even though we ought to affirm at the outset, however, states clearly that truth also exists in myth, but only figuratively. Notwithstanding his insightful assessment, one thing is crucial; no mythology can ultimately satisfy our desire for the truth. This study contends vigorously that the truth is found in God alone. Niehaus shares this view by noting that, the Bible is the standard of truth *par excellence*, and therefore a credible source of God’s revelation of Himself. Kerswill (1904:48) and Walton (1989:30-42) are both satisfied, with the authenticity and reliability of the Biblical account, for doctrine and, the development of one’s faith in God.

2.2.2.5 Old Testament conception of salvation (Jewish)

Arnold (1996:701) contends that the Hebrew meaning includes rescue, help from distress, deliver or to be set free and that such salvation are mostly material in nature. What he has not explored is what caused the distress which necessitated the offer of a rescue. It is not clear if sin is a factor here. Lopez (2003:52), weighs into the debate but offers no hint of sin. He rather emphasises, that fundamentally, OT salvation is a deliverance from hindrances in life, specifically nationally and individual foes (Hab. 1:2, 2Chr. 20:9). It is absolutely necessary, to explore further, what constitutes salvation in Jewish thought and what role sin plays

God’s deeds of salvation and the expectations of the Old Testament believers, hold the key. Two key Hebrew words and their etymology will be examined. The first word is (*yēsha*´), which connotes salvation and deliverance. This word has its roots in (*yāsha*´), which is synonymous with; be saved, be delivered, give victory, help, rescue etc. Hartley (1980:414) explains that *yāsha*´ and its derivatives are used 353 times in the Old Testament. He further explains that the root meaning in Arabic is to “make wide” or “make sufficient”. The idea is that by making wide or sufficient, restrictions which can cause distress and oppressions are removed. By so doing, freedom is embraced and the one who was previously trapped or restricted will be opportune to pursue one’s own objectives which were previously denied or impossible.

The second word is (*gō'ēl*). Hubbard (1997:790) explains that the word primarily represents a technical legal terminology of Israelite family law. The legal nuances are in relation to the redemption of family property or a relative who is in distress (Lev. 25:25-28, 29-34 & 47-49). It also advocates that an Israelite who sells himself to slavery as a result of poverty has the right to be redeemed. However, if not redeemed the slave is free to go at the next Jubilee (Lev.25:50). Harris (1980:144) has explained, however, that the primary meaning of the word *gō'ēl* is to do the part of kinsman, who redeems his near relative from difficulty or danger. Both Hubbard and Harris in principle are in agreement that the idea advocated here is what a good man can do or should do to alleviate pains, sufferings and difficulties faced by a relative. The *gō'ēl* should be able to ransom or pay the price of redemption or avenge for a clansman who is in need or enslaved. He should “make wide” or “make sufficient” for the benefit of the one who is in distress and cannot help himself. There is therefore a correlation between the concepts of salvation and deliverance (*yēsha'*) and redeemer (*gō'ēl*). Hubbard (1997:792) asserts that Old Testament text of various genres portray Yahweh as the divine *gō'ēl* who, like his familial counterpart, helps those who have fallen into need.

2.2.3 The nature of sin in relationship to the Old Testament conception of salvation

Kerswill (1904:15) salvation should be viewed from the perspective that mankind is in some sense lost. The meaning of sin in the Old Testament is diverse but the Hebrew word that best defines the concept is (*ḥāṭā'*). Even though other words like: *pesha'* (to rebel or trespass) and *'āwōn* (perversity and iniquities) are useful in explaining the Old Testament concept of sin, *ḥāṭā'* is the principle word for sin and its basic meaning is to miss the mark or way. Livingston (1980:277) has also noted that *ḥāṭā'* is used two or three times in Ugaritic to mean "sin". So, *ḥāṭā'* should be viewed as one the main reasons why God saves humanity.

McGrath's (1995:8) argument elucidates this fact of sin. His portrait explains the gravity of sin in every facet of the human life socially, psychologically and spiritually. His assertion confirms that the concept of sin from the Old Testament

standpoint does not start and finish with the primeval history of humankind as depicted in Gen. 3-11. Since the fall, sin has become normative in every fabric of human society (Gen. 6:5). Notwithstanding the divergent nature of sins committed in the Old Testament, Doriani (1996:737) condenses it to three main aspects to include disobedience to or breach of law, violation of relationships with people and rebellion against God, which is the most basic concept.

Cone (2010:2) has argued the connectivity between sin and salvation. According to him, salvation implies bondage in certain evil condition and this calls for deliverance. In his quest, to explore the Hebrew conception of sin, Cone concludes that its explanation is only in connection with the theocratic idea (Cone, 2010:4). As a result he strongly contends that both sin and salvation are determined from the point of view of the theocracy. At the same time he is content to declare that the Hebrew view of sin does not include a retribution future to the present life (Cone, 2010:5). This is somewhat different from what is obtainable in the New Testament. There is a reward or punishment awaiting humankind in the future according how a person has lived.

2.3 God the conqueror of Egypt

2.3.1 The significance of the deliverance from Egypt

The Exodus narrative begins with the growth and multiplication of the Hebrews as a great nation scattered across the land of Egypt (Exodus 1:7). Zuck (1991:30) argues how important this event is theologically. In his view, it marks the transition of Israel from a people to a nation. This entire single event has become the embodiment of Israel's history and existence as a nation and has been designated as 'Israel's original confession (cf. von Rad, 1962:178, 176).

God notices their suffering (Ex. 2:24) from their Egyptian slave masters and appoints Moses to deliver them from Egypt (Ex. 3; 4:22-23). Kaiser (1991:101) believes that this act of God is symptomatic of what fatherhood is all about. As a father, God has not only brought Israel into being as a nation but He has also fostered and led her as a nation (Deut.32:6). Israel's divine sonship, however, differs from the practice in the ancient Near East or in Egypt where the

Pharaohs were the product of a sexual union between the god and the queen (Kaiser, 1991:101). As a Father and a Saviour, God revealed His covenant name *Yahweh* who is also *El Shaddai* the God of the Patriarchs (von Rad, 1962:180; Kaiser, 1991:101; Kerswill, 1904:131). In this event, God displayed His power and might through miracles signs and wonders; the magnitude of which has been compared to His mighty deeds in creation (Waltke, 2007:378 and Psalms 74:12-17). Wright (1993:194) affirms similar intensity and states “God’s redemptive work in Egypt is to be regarded as the same magnitude as was the creation of the cosmos” (cf. compare Deut. 4:20, 32-38.)

2.3.2 The Deliverance from Egypt

Despite the ferocity of the plagues, Pharaoh’s heart was still hardened. This can be viewed, from the vantage point of God demonstrating His supremacy Waltke (2007:380). The Passover meal (Ex.12) sets Israel apart for the completion of their salvation. The blood of the slain lamb smeared on the door post signifies that the God’s wrath has been appeased and the lamb has substituted the death the wicked sinner or unfaithful Israel should have died. Waltke (2007:381) observes that Israel escapes this judgement because a death that satisfies God’s wrath has been made and applied by faith (Ex. 12:1-28). This Passover feast has been instituted to aetiologically remind the Hebrews of this day and how God delivered them from Egypt with an outstretched arm (Ex. 12:14, 42).

In the Red Sea, God delivers a final blow on Pharaoh and his armies (Ex.14). The victory in the Red Sea was very significant as Wright (1993:200) asserts: “There is therefore connectivity between Yahweh’s power to deliver from death (plagues) and His power to protect until they have entered their inheritance in the Promised Land” von Rad’s (1962:176.) assertion is apt as he sees the Red Sea Episode as God’s way of guaranteeing Israel’s salvation forever. Israel can always rely on this assurance, that God can be relied upon whenever, calamity strikes.

2.4 God the land distributor

2.4.1 Preparing to possess the Promised Land

The journey from Egypt to the Promised Land was not smooth sailing, but fraught with challenges (cf. Ex. 15:17-19, 22-27; 16:1-4; 17:1-13). On Sinai God established His covenant with Israel (Ex. 19). Covenant is not a new phenomenon as it has remained a fundamental feature in the saving history of Israel. One of its main characteristic is its resemblance to the types practised in ancient Near East. In the suzerainty treaties of the ancient Near East, the King who has vanquished a nation would promise to rule, protect and provide their necessities as long as they swore allegiance to his throne or kingdom (Killen and Rea, 1983:388; Cowan, Galbiati, 1978:131). Notwithstanding the resemblance, Yahweh is not treating the Hebrews as a nation conquered and forced to give loyalty or pay homage.

God has not just freed them from bondage, but He will be their God, their protector, provider and ruler (2 Ki 13:22-23). The Sinaitic covenant has served as a useful prelude to living in the Promised Land under the theocratic rule of Yahweh. The resounding echo of the people in saying “all that the Lord has spoken, we will do” (Ex. 19:6-8), in essence is a ratification of the binding principles of this ordinance. They unanimously accepted its terms freely. von Rad (1962:188) puts it more succinct when he states that “at Sinai Jahweh revealed to his people binding ordinances, on the basis of which life with its God was made possible”.

2.4.2 Possessing the Promised Land

It is one thing to be delivered and receive the promise of the land, but it is another thing to take the land (Josh. 1-12), allot the land (Josh. 13-21) and ultimately retain the land (Josh. 22-24). Waltke (2007:513) suggests that this is the best structure to understand the gift of land from Joshua’s perspective. The deliverance from Egypt is to give them the Land, which God promised to the Patriarchs of Israel. Settling in the Land will ultimately complete the salvation process which started in Egypt.

The God who dealt with the flood and the Red Sea has now given them the enablement to cross the Jordan (Josh. 3). Waltke (2007:517) has commented

on the symbolic crossing of the Jordan as benchmarking a transition from the wilderness which was hostile, precarious and chaotic to a good land revises Israel being (Josh.23:15-16). Jericho was defeated (Josh. 6), but the battle for Ai was lost (Josh. 7). Waltke (2007:520), evaluating the reasons for the defeat in Ai, posits that Joshua by declaring the war without seeking divine approval violates the rules of holy war and smacks of autonomy, (cf. Num. 27:21). The Lord assured Joshua that victory will be his (Josh. 10:8). The Lord gave his people victory over both the southern and northern confederacies. God has given the land He promised to the patriarchs to their descendants. This is true salvation, which is deliverance from the enemies of Israel and the quest for rest in the land.

The lands were allotted to the various tribes (Josh.13–23). The land must not just be possessed and allocated, but it must be retained as an inheritance from the Lord. Since the land was inherited by covenantal relationship, the only way to retain it is to keep the command of the Lord faithfully, and not deviate from it to the left or to the right (Josh. 1:7-9; 22:1-6). Joshua used his farewell speech to encourage the people to serve the Lord all the days of their lives. Obedience to “I AM” remained foundational to this relationship. They were also warned not to follow the gods of the Canaanites. They can all look at God’s faithfulness to ensure that they reciprocate by maintaining covenant fidelity. They all responded that they will serve the Lord and obey Him and Joshua sealed it with a covenant which they all witnessed (cf. Josh. 24). The Lord has given his people rest and this epitomises the concept of salvation from the context of the Old Testament; even though they have not conquered all the land they have crossed over from the land of bondage to their inheritance.

2.5 God the healer of the sick and the provider for the needy

2.5.1 Salvation through the healing power of God (Naaman/Hezekiah)

Healing in the Hebrew has many derivatives, but the overarching meaning has to do with health or wellbeing or the provision of remedy or a cure. Healing in

the Old Testament does not only stand for bodily healing. It includes spiritual healing and the restoration of one's heart to God after there has been a breach in relationship due to sin in the form of disobedience or other forms of transgression. The main Hebrew word connoting healing is (*rāpā*'), which is rendered to heal or make healthful. This word has a medical connotation, which stems from its primitive root (*rāphâh*), which denotes to mend by stitching, cure or cause to heal (cf. Hebrew Strong's Number: 7495). On the spiritual side, *rāpā'* is also used in the sense of healing and forgiving Gentile nations as in Isaiah 19:22 and 58:17 (White, 1997:857). Other derivatives of this important word include (*repū'â*), which means remedy (Ezekiel 30: 21 and Jer. 30:13) or (*rip'ût*), which the writer of Proverbs believes is the benefit which accrues to a person on the account of consulting God and hearing his word. Other usages of healing in the Hebrew is (*marpē'*) literally referred to as (*rapha'*) signifying words like health, cure, wholesome, sound and even deliverance (Jer. 8:15, Proverbs 4:22). God's healing and salvation can be seen in Hezekiah (Isaiah 38) and Naaman (2 Kings 5).

2.5.2 Salvation through faith in the spoken word of God

The teaching of Apostle Paul regarding faith and salvation is not a new phenomenon when one critically examines the relationship between these two biblical concepts (Romans 10:16-17). In the prepatriarchal era, Noah had to hear the word of God which brought his salvation (cf. Gen. 6:13-22). The writer of Hebrews has attested, that this obedience to faith, in the word of God earned Noah the accolade of being perceived as “an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith” (Hebrews 11:7).

The phenomenal faith displayed by Abraham, with no prior knowledge or relationship with God in terms of worship, is a credible testimony to the power of the word of God in bringing salvation to His hearers. Abraham was not put off when he arrived at Canaan and found out that the Canaanites were already in the land. He held unto the spoken word by faith (cf. Gen. 12:1-9, 14). His faith is attested in (Romans 4:3, 16-22; Heb. 11:9-13).

2.5.3 Salvation and repentance through the word of the prophet

When God chose Israel as a nation, He also gave them a missiological mandate to witness the mighty deeds of God in creation and deliverance to the other Gentile nations who have not come to the saving knowledge of God (Gen. 12:3). The chosen Israel, the Kingdom of priests and God's treasured possession, is expected to showcase the goodness of Jehovah by testifying and retelling their stories to future generations, not only of the stock of Israel, but also the Gentiles (Psalm 96:2-3; 105:1-2; 108:3; Isaiah 12:4; 49:6 & 66:19). However, Israel was not always willing, to undertake this missiological task as shown by Jonah. Israel enjoyed their special relationship with God. By occupying such an enviable position, Israel was content to exclude others from this relationship.

2.6 The God of Continuity

2.6.1 God the Father: The initiator of the Plan, Etymology and Method of salvation in both Testaments

God's salvation plan (Gen. 3:15) did not start and end in the Old Testament but continued into the New Testament (Hodge, 1960:367; Payne, 1962:241). In this sense, the Bible is perceived as a book of two testaments (covenants) namely the Old and the New. Augustine (354-430) concurs that "In the Old Testament the New Testament is concealed, in the New the Old is revealed" (Augustinus, *Quæstiones in Heptateucum*, 2, 73: *PL* 34, 623; cf. *Conc. Œcum. Vat. II, Const. dogmatica de Divina Revelatione Dei Verbum*, 16.)

The question scholars have debated is whether this indicates or proves that God's salvation plan is different in the two covenants (cf. John 8:56; 14:6; Heb. 9:15, 11:40). Scholars have affirmed that there is a clear difference between the operations of God in both Testaments (Kerswill, 1904; Feinberg, 1981; Hodge, 1873). Notwithstanding, Payne (1962:241) is absolutely right when he unequivocally states that: "There is but one unified Testament, God's sole plan of salvation, through which Christ offers redemption that is equally effective for saints of both dispensation."

Finlay (2004:2-5) also argues that the Old Testament is perceived by some as a record of divine promises, while the New Testament is seen as the record of the way in which God's promises are fulfilled. This perception corroborates the continuity motif, which implies that God's salvation plan is being carried out in the New Testament through the fulfilment of the Messiah promised and prophesied by the prophets of Israel (cf. Jer. 31:31-34).

Klooster (1988:138-139), a Covenant Theologian, on the other hand, by examining God's deeds of redemption in the Old Testament, makes an important observation. He notes that the period when God dealt with the whole human race (creation and fall to the flood) was a time depicting high levels of human apostasy. He describes this period as ethnic universalism. The Dispensationalists, on the other hand, describe this period as the age of innocence, conscience and human government. God's approach to executing his redemptive plan shifted after the tower of babel episode. Klooster has defined this period as ethnic particularism (the dispensation of promise), as God began to work his redemptive programme through Abraham and the nation of Israel which descended from him. In his view, this patriarchal rule runs throughout the Old Testament into the New Testament (Klooster, 1988:138). Finlay (2004:2-5) contends that God will continue His deeds of salvation through His son Jesus Christ

Ladd (1993:238), in his analysis of Conzelmann's work, provides a useful summary of God's work throughout the ages. These stages, include "the time of Israel, of Jesus and the Church". His categorisation of the different stages demonstrates that God has been at work implementing His salvation plans since the fall of mankind. This supports the continuity motif advocated by Klooster (1988:131-160). The usefulness of Klooster's analysis is not shared by some scholars (Ross, 1988:162-178).

2.6.2 God the Son: The object of salvation in the New Testament

Biblical commentators (e.g. MacArthur 2008, Keil & Delitzsch, 2004; Wycliffe, 2008; and Phillips, 2009) agree that Gen. 3:15 is fulfilled in Jesus Christ the Messiah of Israel and the entire human race. The prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus was crucified, but He also resurrected and defeated Satan (John 12:31;

Col 1:13-14; 2:14-15; Eph. 4:8.) The writers of the four Gospels and the Epistles unequivocally testify that Jesus is the Messiah, who the prophets of old prophesied about (Mk. 12:35, Mt. 1:18-20, John 1:40, 4:25, Acts 5:42, Ro. 1:4, 1 Cor. 15:31). He is the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world to bring salvation to all who will believe in Him and the forgiveness He offers through the blood he shed on the Cross of Calvary (1 Pe.1:18-20, Heb. 9:14-22, Rev. 13:8).

Jesus Himself said that He has not come to abolish/destroy the Law or the Prophets but to fulfil them (Mat.5:17). This is a message of continuity from the Old Testament to the New. In his commentary (Mat. 5:17), MacArthur (2008:249) notes that the Law and the Prophets refer to the Jewish Scriptures themselves, not the rabbinical interpretation, demonstrating that Jesus fully subscribed to the Old Testament teachings about moral, judicial and ceremonial matters. In Luke 24:44, Jesus explains it fully that everything written about Him in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. The occasional conflicts between Him and the religious leaders of His time stemmed from their misinterpretation of what these teachings espoused (Mk. 7:1-13, 10:1-10, 12:13-17, 38-40, Luke 6:1-10, 19:45-48). Jesus made it abundantly clear that there was no difference between Him and the Father in terms of the work He had come to do (John 14:8-11; 15, 16, 17). God remains the divine author of everything embodied in the Hebrew Scripture. Therefore Jesus will not teach or advocate anything that contravenes the teachings of the Laws and the Prophets unless they are misinterpreted.

He came to do the will of the Father and to complete the work assigned to Him (cf. John 5:19-23, 30, 4:34). The salvation of the Samaritan woman was of the uttermost importance to Him when compared to physically meeting His own needs such as food (John 4:31-36). God has continued to work in tandem with the Son, who He has sent into the world to redeem humanity. Jesus is the object of God's salvation throughout the history of the human race.

2.6.3 God the Holy Spirit: The upholder of salvation in all ages

The fact that the Holy Spirit was not vividly mentioned in the salvific work of God in the Old Testament does not prove that He was not at work. As the Holy Spirit

was at work in creation (cf. Gen. 1:1-2), and there is no evidence that His work stopped, He must have worked with God throughout the prepatriarchal, patriarchal and post-patriarchal eras. Assessing the liberation and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, Welker (1994:56-57) contends that God's Spirit is neither a spirit of magic or war; there is no evidence to claim that the Spirit brings deliverance in an immediate magical way. Welker, however, argues that "the Spirit causes the people of Israel to come out of a situation of insecurity, fear, paralysis and mere complaint".

Kärkkäinen (2010:325) has produced a scholarly collection of resources on the Church's thinking on the Holy Spirit and Salvation. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) avers that "... The Spirit underscores the fulfilment of prophecy, witnessing to God revealed in Jesus ... the Spirit's ongoing work is to reveal the truth, give life and strengthen faith" (Kärkkäinen, 2010:325). Looking at the salvation plan of God and how others can share in the reconciliation that was achieved by the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ, Pannenberg (1994:450-453) attests this takes place through the Spirit. The Ecumenical perspective is that the Holy Spirit is doing transformative work in the Church (Kärkkäinen, 2010:347). The Evangelical / Pentecostal perspective is, that the Holy Spirit does not only involve in the salvation of the believer at conversion. Since believers are continually being saved, the work of sanctification is undertaken by the Holy Spirit (Grenz, 2000:380-383).

The Holy Spirit convicts humankind of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:5-14). Jesus promised that the Comforter will dwell in believers and will teach them all things pertaining to the truth of God. The continuity motif is highlighted; Jesus said that the Holy Spirit will not work on His own initiative, but will only communicate what He has heard from Him and the Father (verses 13-15). Jesus commanded the disciples that they should not continue the work of the ministry until they received the Holy Spirit (Acts 1: 4-5). The Holy Spirit was responsible for Paul's successful missionary journeys, including the signs and wonders that convinced the gentile hearers to receive salvation (Acts 13, 14 and 16-20). The Church is also emboldened to continue the work, which Jesus started, through the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 1-4; 1 Cor. 12-14). Peter's first post-Pentecost sermon is evidence of the Spirit's enablement (Acts 2:5-47).

This study has continued to show that the work of salvation, which God started in the Old Testament, has continued into the New Testament. This fact is supported by the numerous literature and Scriptural text analysis.

2.7 God the Saviour of in the New Testament

2.7.1 God's promise of a Saviour

God's initial revelation of the way of salvation undoubtedly occurred in Gen. 3:15. Klooster (1988:141) argues that this unconditional promise is the scarlet thread woven into the entire fabric of biblical revelation. Klooster is arguing that God will continue to uphold His promise until its fulfilment (Isaiah 55:11). On God's promise of a Saviour, Lloyd-Jones (1996:221) observes that the purpose of redemption was not limited to man but to all things (Eph. 1:9-10) and that God's plan of salvation will always centre in the Lord Jesus Christ. Cone (2010:9) affirms the centrality of Jesus in the salvation plan of God stating. Pohle (1923:7) articulates the meditorial role of Jesus Christ in God's redemptive plan. In Christ, God and humanity are brought together in unity.

It can be rightly concluded that the aforementioned scholars cohere to a Christ-centred concept of salvation, which is based on God's promise to redeem fallen humanity from their state of depravity. The views they have presented are also in consonance with the generally accepted view of salvation from the Protestant standpoint. Lloyd-Jones, however, does not limit his understanding of this salvation to humanity but to all things. This makes an interesting point seeing that animals and inanimate objects have no conscience and cannot sin or accept the salvation offer of God. Since Lloyd-Jones, has cited Pauline theology (Eph.1:9-10), his assertion should be understood from Paul's previous statement in Romans 8:18-23. Hodge (2007:422-435) elucidates this point by asserting that the focus is on God's scheme of redemption, which he has designed to unite all the subjects of redemption as one harmonious body under Jesus Christ. There is therefore no dispute whatsoever in the minds of these theologians that the salvation plan of God starts and end with Jesus.

2.7.2 God's fulfilment of the promise of a Saviour

The fulfilment of the promise of the Messiah was God's doing (Lloyd-Jones, 1996:219), who had mapped it in eternity and put it in operation in this world of time (Gal. 4:4-5). There could be no other perfect moment for the Son of God to be born. This is corroborated by the testimonies of Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:30-38). The timing was the fulfilment of various expectations for both Jews and Gentiles (cf. Luke 3:6 and Acts 2:21).

2.8 Jesus the great teacher of righteousness

2.8.1 Jesus teaches righteousness as a means of obtaining salvation

In both the Old and the New Testaments, God is characterised as a righteous God. The righteousness of God is evident in the way He relates to humanity in the sense that He always does what is right and just (Deut. 32:4; Heb. 6:13-20; Hab. 1, 3:17-19). Grudem (1994:203), holds a view that God's righteousness means that "God always acts in accordance with what is right and is Himself the final standard of what is right." This is indicative that only God can confer righteousness to humanity. It also demonstrates that God's standard of righteousness may not be the same as the standards set by mankind.

As the direct progeny of Adam and Eve, humanity has fallen short of God's righteous standards. Jesus has come to teach humanity the way to the presence of God (Matt. 6:33). As citizens of the Kingdom of God in a wretched world, the primary concern, purposes and priorities of believers, should be first and foremost to earnestly aspire and develop characters that befit the new Kingdom to which we now belong (Matt. 5). Whenever Jesus taught, He did it with authority as the hearers have always declared (cf. Luke 4:32, 36, John 7:46). His teachings were contrasted with that of the Rabbis and Sadducees of His time. The reason is because His teachings came directly from God. He always had a right standing with His Father and His life was the embodiment of God's righteousness and He was perfect and sinless.

The work by Cone (2010:16-17) reveals what Jesus taught about the relationship of righteousness to salvation. Cone rightly argues, that in Jesus'

teaching, seeking the Kingdom of God and its righteousness was the prerequisite to attaining salvation. He hypothesises that this was a new type of righteousness and must exceed that of the scribes and the Pharisees and required inward transformation rather than a mere observance of ceremonies. The differences in emphasis, are the root cause of the conflicts between Jesus, and the other rabbinical teachers of the time.

2.8.2 Jesus' teachings on the futility of self-righteousness in obtaining salvation

Sin is perceived as a violation of the righteous nature of God or any attempt to deviate from the righteous standard which God has set. Humankind's depravity means that any attempt to please God is futile. In this current state, humankind, cannot perform any good deeds that will be acceptable to God and satisfy His righteous standards (Isaiah 64:6).

The mission of Jesus Christ is primarily to restore the human race to God. His ministry is the ministry of reconciliation in which He teaches all humankind to embrace the Kingdom of God and the righteousness inherent in it (2 Cor. 5:18-20; Matt. 5). Any form of righteousness orchestrated by human endeavours will not meet God's standard, but in Jesus Christ God's own righteousness is imputed to us freely. This righteousness is not by works or by our goodness, but the grace of God as we accept the finished work of Jesus on the Cross (Eph. 2:8-9, Rom. 3:25-26). This free gift of God is for all mankind, not for the privileged few or those born of noble birth or the descendants of Abraham in the flesh, but all mankind (Titus 2:11-14). Self-righteousness is futile and cannot improve our relationship with God as it has the capacity to make us boastful rather than glorify God (Titus 3:3-7).

2.8.3 Jesus as the archetype of God's righteousness in mediating salvation

Jesus Christ by his teachings, ministry and lifestyle epitomised God's righteousness to the fullest. From the point of view of the believer, Jesus is the Son of God, but He is also God. He became God in the flesh to accomplish the task of redemption. Notwithstanding the biblical assertion of who Jesus is, not everybody has painted the same portrait of Him. Scholarly debates about who

Jesus is has been ongoing since the early centuries of Church history, and divergent of views exist with some diametrically opposed to what Christians believe about their Saviour. Gundry (2003:103-105) identifies certain biographical accounts of Jesus Christ by some of the scholars of the early-mid 19th century, which cast doubts on His deity and His ability to mediate in the salvation of the sinner. While it is important to familiarise oneself with all the other views in modern scholarship, the Bible remains the final arbiter in matters of faith.

Erudition, no matter how compelling the evidence is, if it denies the very fundamental tenets (Jesus' deity, humanity and meditorial role in salvation) of the Christian faith, then it must not be allowed to take precedent over what the Bible has made explicit. Notwithstanding the credibility and the logicity of the reasoning, it must be validated by the inerrant word of God. At the same time, the views of the other Christian communities, who advocate that the Bible is not the only infallible source of Christian doctrine, cannot be ignored.

Straus (1835) was of the opinion that the Gospel accounts about Jesus were mythological, whereas Renan (1863) painted Jesus as an amiable carpenter who became apocalypticist. At the start of the 20th Century, a liberal view of Jesus emerged championed by von Harnack. This view portrays Jesus as a teacher of lofty ethical ideals, rather than, a divine-human Redeemer. The work of Schweitzer (1906) shook the theological world with some of his claims that Jesus actually thought that "God's kingdom was about to arrive on earth and that God was about to install Jesus as the Messiah." Schweitzer's assertion was challenged vehemently as people questioned the integrity of his work as he could not explain "why Jesus gave large amount of ethical teaching".

These views (von Harnack and Schweitzer), are totally at variance with biblical exposition of the true historical Jesus, who is God in flesh and the Redeemer of the sinner. These intellectuals postulate views which defy the well-established principle of *Sola scriptura*. While acknowledging the intellectual capacities exhibited by these scholars, and the valuable contributions they have made in terms of developing academic standards for interpreting the Scripture; their attempt to interpret the Scripture solely from form criticism or historical-critical

methodology is flawed. Paul's instruction to Timothy is the benchmark for unravelling such intellectual postulations (2 Tim 3:15-17).

Erickson (2013:704) is right and reasons in line with sound Biblical teaching when he argues strongly that to accept that Jesus' divine attributes were replaced by human attributes would amount to metamorphosis rather, than incarnation. Indeed Christ became our high priest who can empathise with our sufferings (Heb. 4:15, 5:1). His death on the Cross demonstrates to the community of the redeemed, that a Christian, can live righteously in this challenging world (2 Cor. 5:21, 1 Pet. 2:24, cf. Heb. 9:28, Heb. 12:2).

2.9 Jesus the Saviour from sin (Atonement, Forgiveness and Restoration)

2.9.1 Salvation through the Atoning work of Jesus Christ

There can be no salvation in the context of the New Testament without the atoning work of Jesus Christ. Cone (2010:17) makes a contradictory observation asserting that the life of Jesus, the power of his personality, the truth manifesting according to his teaching are the means by which salvation comes not by means of His death. What Cone has not taken into account is the connection, between sacrifice, and the forgiveness of sin. Sin is forgiven when blood is shed to atone for sin. This atonement leads to salvation or deliverance as typified in the deliverance from Egypt. The Passover lamb marked the beginning of Israel's salvation. Blood was smeared on the door post, so that the Jews will be spared from the Angel of Death. The Christian view is that there is a connection between salvation and the death of Jesus on the Cross.

Cone's comment further complicates the difficulties surrounding the etymology of salvation even among Christian scholars. It is impossible to ignore the importance of the doctrine of atonement, and its centrality in understanding the present and future ministry of Christ and the role of the Church in the present world. The pivotal role of the atonement in understanding Biblical salvation is posited by these scholars (McGrath, 1995:617-624; Erickson, 2013:713-768; Thorpe, 1988:338-339; Büchsel, 1964:254-259; Vanhoozer, 2005:72).

Some exponents are partially congruent or totally incongruent with what the Bible intended. The apparent lack of cohesion in its etymology and theological interpretation can be attributed to its wider semantic spectrum spanning into German, French and Latin. This has posed some linguistic challenges to scholars and theologians alike including Church Fathers. Blocher (2005:72) identifies some of its German derivations to include *Versöhnung* (reconciliation) and *Sühne* (expiation), with some overlap with *Erlösung* (redemption) with emphasis on its effect, liberation. The French and Latin main rendering of atonement is the term redemption, which connotes the idea of price payment. In the English language, however, the term atonement bears closest resemblance to its Hebrew derivation (*kāpar*), but also associated with other words like purge, reconciliation, pacify, cleanse and even to forgive. The Hebrew rendering has the connotation of “cover a sin” in order to pacify a deity but also related to another Hebrew word *kōper* (ransom) as in Exodus 30:12. *Kāpar* also has an equivalent Arabic root meaning, which indicates to “cover” or “conceal”.

Socinus (1539-1604) propounded the Example Theory of atonement, which advocated that the earthly ministry of Jesus was prophetic, rather than priestly and also espoused a view which relegated the death of Jesus only as “a beautiful and perfect example of the type of dedication we are to practice”. The scriptural reference used to substantiate this claim is 1 Pet. 2:21 and 1 John 2:6). Not only are these Scriptures misinterpreted, this view has some other fundamental misrepresentation of the death of Christ by stating that: “God is not a God of retributive justice and therefore does not demand some form of satisfaction from or on behalf of those who sin against Him” (Socinus, *Christiane religionis institutio* 1.667.) One of the astonishing claims of the Example Theory is to advocate, that Jesus is merely human and concluding His death was akin to that of any ordinary man in a fallen world. While it can be accepted that the death of Christ is an example of God’s love, it does not make a good hermeneutical and exegetical sense to deny His deity and priestly office, which can be affirmed without any quibble in the Bible.

The Moral Influence theory of atonement was championed by Abelard (1079-1142), who posited that the atonement merely demonstrated God's love. Abelard's followers (Schleiermacher, Ritschl and Bushnell) advanced his views further. The proper way to demonstrate the erroneousness of the concept of antinomianism is not to explain away the significance of the atonement and advocating that it is merely about divine justice. Grotius (1583-1645) propounded the Governmental theory of atonement. The main tenet of his theory is the holiness and righteousness of God, which in his view sees sins as a violation of God's laws and an attack on God as the ruler and administrator of these laws.

On the face value, it appears that Grotius subscribes to the suffering of Christ as atonement for sin. When the theory is carefully examined, it becomes theologically untenable. Grotius argues against Anselm's satisfaction theory of atonement. Whereas, Anselm agrees, that Christ suffered the punishment, which was reserved for the sinner for breaking God's law, Grotius view is completely different. Since, Grotius does not believe, that Christ's death was a punishment he declares that the death rather, made punishment unnecessary (Erickson, 2013:721-722). Grotius is right to argue that, if punishment was transferrable, then the connection between sin and guilt will be removed. The flaw in his argument could be attributed to his overreliance on his legal background. By assuming, a distinction between, a master and a creditor, is an indication on his part, that God cannot be both. The Bible is clear that Jesus was without sin, but willingly took it upon Himself to die for the sinner. Miley (1813-1895), another advocate of this theory, appropriates Scripture verses which speak of divine wrath, divine righteousness and atonement through suffering, but fall short in referring to other Scriptures which correctly define atonement (Miley, 1879:245-65).

Other theories abound like Anselm's Satisfaction theory. The view contemplated here is that sin dishonours the majesty of God. While it is noteworthy that sinful humanity dishonoured, the inability of Anselm to make the necessary link between the death of Christ and the salvation of the sinner discredits the theory. Another prominent theory is propounded by Origen and Gregory of Nyssa. The

Ransom theory of atonement contends that the atonement work of Christ demonstrates victory over the forces of sin and evil (Erickson, 2013:724). This was the dominant theory over a number of years that it was dubbed by Aulen (1969:21) as the “classic view”.

One of the challenges the Church has faced throughout its history has been to identify which of the theories can best be used to explain the others. Theologians who were sympathetic to the Enlightenment project began to propound the exemplar theory. This theory contends that since the person who died on the Cross is a human being, humanity can be inspired by examples the he modelled (McGrath, 1995:622). No matter which theory one espouses, Gunton’s argument is noteworthy. His main concern is that, Christ has achieved for humanity. This achievement, is what makes the salvation of the sinner possible (Gunton, 1988:156-166). Gunton contends strongly, that non-constitutive approaches to atonement, will lead to subjective doctrines of salvation. The crucial fact in this discourse, is that the atoning work of Christ is the only reason salvation is made possible to a lost humanity. Therefore, every believer has hope of eternal life, and a hope embedded in the faith of this finished work of Christ (Acts 4:12).

2.9.2 Salvation through the forgiveness which Jesus Christ brings

The prophecy of Zacharias captured the link between salvation and forgiveness and how John will be the forerunner of the Lord preaching repentance and making the knowledge of salvation known to the people (Luke 1:76-77). John the Baptist preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (Luke 3:3, Mk. 1:4). In Peter’s post Pentecost preaching, he urged his countrymen and the visitors to Jerusalem to repent and receive forgiveness that comes from God through Jesus Christ (cf. Acts 2:38 and 5:31). In order to merit this gracious gift of God and to appropriate the benefits of the work of Christ on the Cross, the recipients must be regenerated by accepting that they have sinned and in need of God’s salvation (Ro. 3:23-25, 6:23). The process requires the individuals also to confess and take ownership of their behaviour or rebellion as well as confess to God solemnly in order to activate God’s forgiveness (1 John 4:4).

Jesus was not only a great advocate of forgiveness, he also embodied that in all He did both in His earthly ministry and on the Cross (cf. Matt 5:23-24, 6:12). When Peter asked how many times he should forgive those who have offended him, (Matt. 18:21) Jesus ruled that every offence must be preceded with forgiveness.

2.9.3 Salvation through restoration by Jesus Christ

Theologically speaking, the concept of restoration presents some exegetical challenges because of its interchangeableness with other words like renew, restitution, regeneration etc. The difficulties can be attributed to the various Hebrew (*shûb*) and Greek (*apokathistēmi*) words which have the same meaning and are also used in both literal and figurative contexts. Meadors (1996:675) argues that the literal meaning is clear and straightforward, whereas the figurative usage can be difficult. The word “restore” can connote “personal spiritual” restoration (Psalm 23:3; 51:12); the role of mature believers in using their strengths in a mentoring capacity to restore weak believers into spiritual health (Gal.6:1). Eschatologically, restoration can be understood with particular reference to what Jesus said in Matt. 19:28; the question of the disciples in Acts 1:6 and Peter’s statement in Acts 3:21.

The eschatological concept of restoration (*ἀποκαθίστημι*) can properly be explicated by examining two Greek words: “*apokathistēmi*” and “*palingenesia*”. Oepke (1964:387) provides accurate rendering of these terms as restitution to an earlier state or brought back to the integrity of creation. The term “*apokathistēmi*” is given as “the restoration not only of the true theocracy but also of that more perfect state of (even physical) things which existed before the fall”. There is a sense in which restoration is viewed in terms of reconstituting or mending that which was broken. In this context restoration, is synonymous to consummation and this is the context in which Peter spoke (Acts 3:21). MacArthur (2008:121) rightly affirms that “the period of restoration of all things is another name for the future earthly reign of Christ, the millennial kingdom”. Restoration also means regeneration (Matt. 19:28) and this is represented by the Greek rendering “*palingenesia*” and has to do with personal salvific regeneration or rebirth of the believer according to Paul (Titus 3:5). On the

other hand, “*palingenesia*” is used by Jesus (Matt. 19:28) in reference to the ultimate consummation of the world. MacArthur (2008:204) affirms that “In the present passage, however, Jesus uses it to represent the rebirth of the earth under His sovereign dominion at the time of His second coming.” Vangemeren (1988:97) should be commended for his insightful contribution by highlighting and paying tribute to the work of the Holy Spirit in the salvation and restoration of humanity to God our Creator. Oepke (1964:381-393) is also insightful in seeing restoration in relationship to a final hope, or perhaps, to a final tendency of the living work of salvation.

2.10 Jesus the deliverer from sickness, diseases and demonic powers

2.10.1 Salvation through healing sicknesses and diseases

Healing was an integral part of the message of salvation which Jesus preached. Throughout the Gospel, evidence abounds that Jesus saw healing of the individuals as an essential aspect of the benefits of the Kingdom He was preaching about. This ministry of healing was also passed on to His disciples, who could administer healing in the name of Jesus of Nazareth as indicated by the actions of Peter and John (Acts 3:6).

The healing of the sick and those who had various diseases were not peculiar to the ministry of Jesus. What is different is the method of the healing and the perceived reasons for the ailment. Bock and Herrick (2005:94-95) have cited texts from other sources (cf. Tobit 6:7-8, 17-18; Josephus, Antiquities 8.2.5, 45-49) that differentiated the healing method used by Jesus and that of others. They assert that Jesus healed with His word (cf. Matt. 8:16-17; Mark 1:32-34; Luke 4:40) and not with “the animal parts, smoke, magical incantations and tricks”. In Tobit 6:7-8, the heart and liver of fish was to be burned and the smoke will eventually drive away any type of sickness, disease or evil spirits. In the account given by Josephus, “ ... the manner of cure was this, he put a ring that had a root of one of those sorts ...when the man fell down immediately, he abjured him ... proceeded to speak so largely of these matters” (Josephus, Antiquities 8.2.5, 45-49).

There was also a general belief that sicknesses and diseases were as a result of sin (cf. Matt. 9:1-8; John 9:1-3). The sick gravitated towards Jesus because He offered healing freely in a society where people were peasants and poor coupled with limited medical advancement. Luke, the third evangelist, paints a vivid portrait of the healing ministry of Jesus Christ (Acts 10:38). Matthew's account of the Galilean ministry of Jesus attests unequivocally the importance Jesus attached to healing (Matt. 4:23-24).

MacArthur (2008:121-130), commenting on Mathew 4:23-24, concludes that Jesus' healing ministry was a divine verification in the sense that the words that he spoke were convincing enough to cause people to follow Him. He contends that there was no doubt about His Messiahship and that no miracle was needed to affirm this. His view is that the healing miracles were additional evidence to his powerful teaching and preaching and an attestation of the nature of the Kingdom He was advocating. The significance of the healing ministry of Jesus is not just that people who have suffered get healed, but it also demonstrates that He was God as mere humans could not accomplish what He did. God indeed is a compassionate God. Jesus has not just come to save humanity from their sins but to alleviate their sufferings and pains (Mark 5:30-34, Luke 6:6-11, Matthew 9:35, John 5:16). Machen (1976:208) has explained that Luke's focus on the compassionate side of the ministry of Jesus stemmed from the fact that he was a physician with a philanthropic mindset and determined to relieve people from their sufferings, poverty and all kinds of distress. Jesus indeed is the Saviour of the whole world (Luke 19:10).

2.10.2 Salvation through deliverance from demonic powers

The issue of demon possession is crucial in understanding the theology and ecclesiology of Christians, especially in the developing countries (Africa, Asia and South America) where Pentecostalism and Liberation theology are flourishing. Ignoring the importance attached to salvation and deliverance ministries in Third World countries will jeopardize any attempt to develop a theological framework to challenge the dehumanising influences in such societies.

The casting out of demons from individuals was one of the prominent activities in the teaching, proclamation and healing ministries of Jesus. Notwithstanding the debates about the reality of demons and demonic activities in postmodernist thought, there is no doubt that Jesus believed the existence of demons in His time and He endeavoured to deliver those who were possessed or influenced by such satanic agents. Theologically speaking, demons are defined as evil angels who sinned against God and who now continually work evil in the world (Grudem, 1994:412).

The origin of demons are debatable, but it is clear from Scripture that they were not present as demons in the beginning until Satan disguised himself as a serpent to deceive Adam and Eve. Something must have happened between the time of creation and the period of the deception in Genesis 3 that made these angels rebellious and determined to work against God (cf. 2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6-7).

Evidences of the manifestations of evil spirits or demons are well documented in Scripture. Some examples are: making the host mute or dumb (cf. Luke 11:14, Matt. 9:32), deaf and blindness have also been attributed to the activities of demons (cf. Mark 9:25, Matt. 12:22, John 10:21). Other evidences include convulsions and the manifestation of superhuman strength and self-destructive behaviour (cf. Mark 9:26, 5:4 and Matt.17:15). The aim of the demonic spirit is to take control of the host so that it can influence it to do things which are unnatural or abnormal, thus making it difficult to distinguish between the actions of the demon from the host.

There is an ongoing debate in some Christian circles whether a believer can be possessed by a demon. One school of thought presented by Grudem (1994:423) is that the word 'possession' has been misused. In his view, the term 'demon' possession does not feature in the Greek text and he contends that the New Testament usage should be understood as "have a demon" (e.g. Matt. 11:18; Luke 7:33; 8:27, John 7:20; 8:48, 48, 52; 10:20) or one who is suffering from demonic influence, which is rendered in the Greek as "*daimonizoma*". His argument is that if one is demon possessed or demonize, which he argues is not the meaning of "*daimonizomai*," it gives the wrong

impression that the person cannot do anything except what the demon demands. In essence, this will imply the freedom of choice is basically taken away from the individual and he finds this implausible.

Notwithstanding, Grudem admits there are instances when one who is under serious demonic attack has no choice but to succumb and carry out activities which are contrary to his or her own will as in the Gerasene demoniac incident in Mark 5. At the same time, he avers that this is an isolated case and not symptomatic with many demonic attacks and conflicts with demons in the lives of people (Grudem, 1994:423). What is clear in Grudem's argument is that a pattern of persistent sin in the life of a Christian is purely a matter of choice the individual has made. He also makes a noteworthy observation of the possibility of demonic influences which can intensify that sinful tendency (Romans 6:12-16; Gal. 5:16-26). The clear message is that demons are not responsible for sinful behaviours in humankind. Since it is a choice by the individual, the choice to return to the path of righteousness rests with the individual and of course through the power of the Holy Spirit, as Vangemeren (1988:97) has already stated in the restoration discourse.

What is obvious is that whenever Jesus casts out a demon from an individual, he will normally give a command and one of the favourite sayings was "come out of him." This phrase is not in consonance with Grudem's assertion as only something that is inside can be commanded to come out. This view is corroborated with the teaching of Jesus (Luke 11:24-26). The use of terms like "house" and "live" indicate occupation or dwelling. The demon has taken residence in that person and "possession" is a good word to explain what has happened. In Mark 9:25, Jesus did not just command the demon to come out of the child, but also adjured it not to enter in again. This violent and defiant demon lived inside the child and tormented him at will. The compassionate Jesus and the Saviour of all those who suffer pain intervened and once and for all delivered the poor boy.

2.11 Jesus the liberator of the oppressed

2.11.1 Jesus the liberator from political and economic oppression

The liberating nature of the ministry of Jesus is explicitly articulated in what is called “His Ministerial Manifesto” on the day He inaugurated his ministry in Nazareth (Luke 4:16-19; Isaiah 61:1). It identifies Jesus of Nazareth as one anointed by God’s Spirit to be the long-awaited Messiah or Christ (MacLeod, 2002:14) to bring salvation to Israel. Mark (1:14-15) and Mathew (4:12-17) captured this occasion with different emphasis. Shelton (2000:63) offers some explanations to ameliorate the divergent views of the Gospel writers by pointing to the different sources and choice of vocabulary. Ladd (1993:240) argues how important this event is to Luke by stating that it is the key to understanding Luke’s theology and the liberating mission of Jesus.

This current mission is not about political revolution, but calling people to participate in the Kingdom of God which he has declared. The liberation is on human soul and the invitation and liberation include all people Jews and Gentiles alike. On the liberation ministry of Jesus, Cone (2010:10) has noted “But the establishment of a political, theocratic kingdom Jesus repudiated as foreign to his aim and opposed to the spirit of his mission. He sought to dissipate in the minds of his followers all dreams of worldly dominion.” Jesus was not apolitical, but fulfilled his civic responsibilities by paying tax to the government and the religious authorities (Matt. 17:24-27).

Jesus’ teachings and lifestyles liberated those who were politically oppressed and economically marginalised. He pointed His hearers to another kingdom, which is not for those of noble birth but poor in spirit (cf. Matt. 5). In his liberation mission, Jesus has become their champion and chief spokesperson. As they followed Him, He gave them hope, which society did not give them; He made provisions for them by feeding them both physically and spiritually (Matt. 14:18-21). The liberative power in Jesus’ teaching prompted Zaccheus to end his economic exploitation of the people and was now prepared to do some restitution or grant “tax refunds” to use a contemporary terminology (Luke 19:8-9). Zaccheus’ statement and confession shows that he has repented of his past deeds and Jesus confirmed that salvation has come to his house. This was the

nature of the salvation Jesus advocated, not the type shrouded in nationalistic political liberty and glory, as Cone has observed, “He expressed no sympathy with the bondage to Rome, under which his people groaned, or with their fruitless longing for deliverance from its chains” (Cone, 2010:10.)

2.11.2 Jesus the liberator from religious oppression

Christianity should set people free not put them in bondage. The teachings and preaching of Jesus during His earthly ministry were always at variance with the types of rabbinical teachings espoused by the Pharisees and Sadducees (cf. John 8:1-12; Matt. 6:16-17; Luke 13:14-17; Mk. 10:1-12). The perception of Jesus was that these traditional teachings and their applications made it difficult for the followers to be saved and have a valid relationship with God. Jesus spent a considerable time in His earthly ministry challenging these interpretations.

The Pharisees (legalists and traditionalists) have the tendency to over ritualise the word of God by adding their own views or interpretation. The Sadducees (rationalists), on the other hand, diluted the word of God by subtracting from it to suit their own perceptions, but Jesus warned His disciples about this (Matt. 16:6, Mk. 8:15, Luke 12:1). MacArthur (2008:10-13) comments (Matt. 16:6) that Jesus’ warning is about the legalism of the Pharisees and the liberalism of the Sadducees, which were both dangerous and detrimental to the liberating powers of the Gospel.

Jesus interpreted the behaviour as hypocritical and an attempt to distort or corrupt the living word of God. It is clear in Jesus’ mind that the Gospel that can liberate or set people free must be the unadulterated word of God (John 8:32). This truth, when apprehended, sets one free from the bondage of tradition, ethnic sentimentalism and ethnocentrism, as displayed by the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:23-24). Jesus stood for the truth of the Gospel, and it is this truth which Paul argues has the power of God to bring salvation to Jews and Gentiles alike (Romans 1:16-17).

When Jesus saw the injustices in the temple, He confronted them, even though it made Him unpopular with the money changers (John 2:14-19). His belief in true and pure worship of God spurred Him to demonstrate His righteous indignation on the traders. These traders, aided by the corrupt leaders in the temple who had monopoly over these business transactions, extorted and over-charged the people who needed to change their Roman currency into Jewish money, which was the only medium of exchange in the temple. Jesus abhorred any attempt by religious leaders to take hostage of the vulnerable in the name of worshipping God. Jesus is indeed the liberator of those who have been enslaved (Gal.5:1).

2.12 Jesus the advocator of the coming Kingdom of God

2.12.1 Jesus the advocator of the present Kingdom of God: Being saved

The Kingdom of God was a central theme in the mission of Jesus Christ and his teaching about the life of discipleship. It is also clear that the subject has attracted shifting nuances of opinions in modern scholarship. Since these views have soteriological implications it is absolutely necessary to explore them further.

The use of the terms “Kingdom of God” and “Kingdom of Heaven” by Jesus and the Gospel writers remain debatable. Premillennialists (e.g. Chafer, Gaebelien) suggest that “Kingdom of Heaven” is about the earthly physical kingdom which God promised Israel in the Old Testament. Modern scholarship advocates that the two terms do not represent different realities but synonymous (Ridderbos, 1978:18-19). Analysing how the Gospel writers have used these terms, Ridderbos posits that only Mark restricted himself to the “Kingdom of God” combination. He further argues that since the combination “Kingdom of Heaven” is a literal translation of the Hebrew *malkuth shamaim*, there was no need to assign a new meaning to the terms. Stein (1996:451) also argues that heaven was used as a circumlocution for “God” by devout Jews (Luke 15:18, 21 and Mark 11:30) in line with the third commandment in Exodus 20:7. Ridderbos

(1978:19) shares the same sentiments with Stein by stating that the use of the phrase Kingdom of Heaven is because of the “fixed Jewish linguistic usage in which the name of God was usually avoided”. Even though this was Mathew’s preferred option, he occasionally interchanged the terms (Matt. 12:28, 19:23-24, 21:31, 43).

The other Gospel writers (Luke 12:32, 22:29 and the whole of Mark) whose audience were mostly Gentiles and heathens, preferred not to use the “Kingdom of Heaven” term because it would conjure up polytheistic sentiments in them while the “Kingdom of God” notion would have a ring of monotheism in their consciousness. Both Matthew and the other evangelists were sensitive not to disrespect their hearers as they brought to them the teaching, which has the power to liberate them and give them hope now and in the future (Ridderbos, 1978:19). Ridderbos is right to aver that the effort to detect a theological difference between the two terms can only be attributed to misconceptions, but concludes that there is no material difference between them.

Some advocate that Jesus came to establish a political kingdom (Mark 11:15-18) and that he enlisted zealots as disciples (Mark 3:18) and His teaching of “taking up your cross” (Mark 8:34) a symbol which resonated with zealots to recruit rebels to revolt against the Roman authorities (Stein, 1996:451). This view of the kingdom of God is unsustainable as evidence abounds that Jesus did not advocate an insurrection against the authorities a view unequivocally concurred by Cone (2010:10). Jesus promoted peace and good citizenship (cf. Matt. 5:9, 38-42, 43-47, Mark 12:13-17).

Another school of thought (Herrmann and von Harnack) espouses a theory of the kingdom called “Liberal” or “Spiritual Kingdom” and argues that the kingdom of God is about God ruling the human heart, using Luke 17:20-21 to develop an inner moral ethic. McGrath (1995:306) argues that the tenet of this theory is a kingdom of God, which orchestrates a “gradual arrival of an ideal society through increasingly widespread human cooperative effort characterised by much Protestant theology”. The theory was quickly rejected and the aspiration evaporated when World War 1 exposed the wickedness of humanity, rather than the naive optimistic goodness advocated by this theory.

Weiss (1985:133) and Schweitzer (1911:238) both advocate that Jesus' teachings of the Kingdom were eschatological conceptions from the onset of his ministry. Schweitzer (1911:238) commending the work of Weiss, asserts that he was the first to rightly grasp the conception of the Kingdom of God. Schweitzer wholeheartedly affirms Weiss' conception of the Kingdom of God to be wholly in the future. To buttress their point, Schweitzer uses the petition in the Lord's Prayer as a point of reference "Thy Kingdom Come." In order to dispel the idea of the kingdom being present or imminent, Schweitzer states: "It is at present purely supra-mundane." The only way to explain the nearness of the Kingdom of God in his view is to point to the paralysis of the Kingdom of Satan (Matt. 12:25-28).

The crux of these debates centres on the timing of the Kingdom of God in terms of whether it has been realised and present with us or whether it is "consistent" and in the future. Jesus proclaimed that the kingdom of God is at hand or near or already here (Mark 1:15, Luke 17:21, Matt. 12:28). The tension has come about because scholars are interpreting the statements of Jesus with a modern theological mindset, rather than the first-century Jewish mentality (Mark 15:43). France (2005:421) has offered a summary of what he believes will be the understanding of those who heard Jesus' proclamation "The kingdom of God has come near." He contends that: "Jesus would be sure of a ready hearing and would not be misunderstood. He would be heard as saying that the God whose sovereignty over his whole creation ... was about to establish that sovereignty in a newly effective way; the king *de jure* was becoming the king genuine."

McGrath (1995:308) is right when he contends that "the Church has never been sure how to handle the concept of the Kingdom of God, with the paradoxically radical ethical elements associated with it ... in the structures of the Church itself, let alone in the state". Scholars (e.g. France, 1990:420-422; Stein, 1996:451; Schweitzer, 1911:238 and Dodd, 1937:142-149 & 1935) have made worthy contributions to ameliorate the tensions between "Consistent" or "Future Kingdom" and "Realised" or "Present Kingdom" theories. France (1990:420-422) points out that the classical debate that the kingdom of God is already realized led by Dodd (1937:142-149) or that it is something wholly in the future

(*consequente Eschatologie*) advocated by Weiss (1985:54-133) and Schweitzer (1914:4-275) should be discarded. He argues that their views are based on wrong tenets which perceive the kingdom of God in terms of “a particular time or state of affairs within history”.

France (1990:422) contends that “the term is a dynamic expression for any and every situation in which God is king, his authority exercised, and his will done”. Stein’s contention is that if the term “kingdom” is to be conceived as statically thus denoting a realm or a place or a piece of estate then there is no evidence that the kingdom of God has arrived (Stein, 1996:453). His view is that if there was a realm or territory on the planet designated the “Kingdom of God” or if there has been any significant cosmic change since the coming of Jesus Christ then one could point to this visible kingdom to say there is the kingdom of God in your midst. The term “kingdom” should be understood from its Hebrew (*malkûth*) and Greek (*basileia*) rendering (Schmidt, 1964:579-597).

In both cases, “kingdom” is translated as the rule or reign of a king and is dynamic in nature rather than static connoting a territory. In the light of the Hebrew and Greek rendering of the term, France argues that the English translation should be discarded and be replaced with terms like “kingship” or “reign”, which will elucidate the references made by Jesus (cf. Luke 19:12, Matt.6:33 and Mark 10:15). Norman and Gentry (2003:988) concur with this assumption when they concluded that “reign conveys the fact that God exerts His divine power over His subjects/kingdom”. The present kingdom is heralded by John the Baptist and Jesus Christ’s call to repentance (Matt.3:2, 4:17, Luke 4:43, Mark 4:30 Matt.10:7). The theory of the “realised Kingdom” does not mean that we should not look for something in the future (Rev. 11:15).

While acknowledging the excellent work done by Weiss and Schweitzer, the case presented by France, Stein, Norman and Gentry are more credible when the relevant texts of Scripture are carefully examined. In an attempt to discover the historical Jesus, Weiss and Schweitzer have made claims which cannot be substantiated from the Holy Scripture. It is unthinkable that Jesus did not know that He was the Messiah and as such did not exercise Messianic functions. To assert that Jesus realised that the Kingdom was in the future afterwards is to

deny His divinity. Schweitzer is spiritually myopic when he states that: “On earth [Jesus] is only a man, a prophet as in the view implied in the Acts of the Apostles” (Schweitzer, 1911: 239).

2.12.2 Jesus the advocator of the eschatological Kingdom of God: Future salvation

So the kingdom of God which Jesus and the Gospel writers proclaimed must be seen in its past, present and future dimensions, even though Weiss and Schweitzer would rather see it as a futuristic event. Israel experienced the theocratic rule of God from the genesis of its existence. God gave them prophets, judges and kings. A new kingdom was enunciated, which was embodied in the incarnation, life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Saviour (Luke 16:16). Stein notes that two distinct periods of history were being distinguished namely the period of the Law and the Prophets and the period of the kingdom of God. John the Baptist plays the dual role of bringing the old to an end and inaugurating the new which is embodied in Christ (Stein, 1996:453).

In this eschatological kingdom God has promised His citizens a resurrected body to reign with Him. Until this final kingdom of God is established, believers would have to live and hope in line with Calvin’s thought, which sees “the kingdom of God as partly embodied in a society in which rulers acknowledge God’s sovereignty, and in which the Church should play an active part” (McGrath, 1995:306). Norman and Gentry (2003:989) and Weiss (1985:129-130) have also concluded that “the kingdom of God is the work of God, not by human ingenuity. God brought it into the world through Christ, and it presently works through the Church. The Church preaches the kingdom of God and anticipates the eventual consummation”.

2.13 The Gospel of salvation in the Epistles

2.13.1 Pauline Gospel of salvation (Romans – Philemon)

Justification by Faith no doubt remains the best overarching theme to understand Apostle Paul’s epistemology of the doctrine of salvation. Cone

(2010:19), however, argues that “The absolute necessity of the mediation of Christ in [mankind’s] attainment of righteousness, in justification or salvation is the great thesis of Pauline soteriology.” Fundamental to Cone’s appraisal of Paul’s doctrine of salvation is the question of “how to bring mankind into relationship with God” (religion) and he concludes that Paul’s answer to the question is in the word “righteousness” (Cone, 2010:18).

Yarbrough (1996:593) observes that some scholars (e.g. Wrede, Schweitzer and Sanders) reject justification by faith as the centre of Paul’s theology. Yarbrough notes other scholars (Raisanen, Garston and Gager) are radically trying to reinterpret the work of Paul with the view to identifying “new perspectives”. Vanhoozer (2005:571) contends: “Despite the fact that he was a controversial figure, his theology shaped the early Christian movement in definitive ways and provided a foundation for all subsequent theologizing, not least among innovators and reformers.”

Cone’s attestation that righteousness is the best avenue to understand Pauline’s doctrine of salvation and mankind’s best way to relate to God is highly plausible. He affirms the credibility of righteousness in achieving a person’s salvation by pointing out that in Paul’s view, righteousness was no mere abstraction and that it was “his sole hope for personal deliverance from sin and a universal principle and power for the salvation of the world” (Cone, 2010:18). In this context, salvation was no longer from external source (Law), but conditioned on fellowship and union with God making the believer sons of God as they become one with God’s Son giving them the right to cry, “Abba, Father” (Cone, 2010:19). Cone has observed that in Paul’s epistemology of salvation two types of righteousness exist. The first one is legal righteousness, which is under the Law of Moses. Cone argues that this could not result in salvation even though the Jews believed it could. The second one is the righteousness of obedience, which Cone contests brings salvation and closer relationship between man and God. Since man cannot render perfect obedience outside of Christ, Cone is right to posit that man cannot be justified by the works of the law (Cone, 2010:20). Cone also argues that the righteousness of God is made manifest in the death of Jesus. On the other hand, Cone is also quick to

discount its “propitiation significance” and relegates it to mere reference to Jewish ceremonial, which must not be pressed as in his view it had no relevance to salvation as posited by Paul (Cone, 2010:20). Cone’s disregard for the death of Jesus Christ in terms of its “propitiation significance” poses serious hermeneutical problems.

Cone articulates that in Paul’s view, Christ [a representative of the human race], “in his life and in his death stands forth; yet not as a representative of the race only, but also as one who loved all [mankind] and would bring all [mankind] to his own spiritual attainment” (Cone, 2010:20).

Other aspects of Paul’s theology of redemption are found in (Romans 5:7-8; 3:24-25, 8:23-24, 13:11, cf. 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor.13:5; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Thess. 5:23; Phil. 2:12, 3:21). On the Cross Christ became a curse for all sinners thus giving them the opportunity to appropriate the blessings of God. This was particularly significant for Gentiles who can now become the children of Abraham and inherit the promise made to Abraham’s descendants (Gal. 3:13-14).

2.13.2 The Gospel of salvation according to the General Epistles (Hebrews – Jude)

There is no significant disparity between the salvation which Paul proclaimed and that found in the General Epistles. However, it is clear by every indication that Paul was an Apostle to the Gentiles. This does not mean that he was not interested in the salvation of the Jews (cf. Rom. 1:16-17, 10:1). Salvation is attributed to the work done on the Cross by Jesus Christ (Heb. 5:9). This salvation is seen as precious and the readers were warned not to treat it as insignificant. It was called “so great a salvation” (Heb. 2:3). Salvation was not just past and present but a future reality and this is the hope of all believers (Heb. 9:28).

Peter argues for a future salvation, which he sees as a form of inheritance, and like the others, it is the gift of God who had mercy on the sinner and justified him by faith by the work on the Cross. Peter also affirms that we were chosen (election) by the foreknowledge of God and set apart to be sanctified by the

Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:2-5). Peter teaches that the way to grow and maintain our salvation is by desiring the sincere milk of the word of God (1 Peter 2:2). Jude articulates the need to contend for the faith to maintain our “common salvation” and not allow false teachers to corrupt it and also warns against complacency (Jude 1:3, 5). In Revelation, John’s references to salvation are eschatological (Rev. 7:10, 12:10, 19:1).

2.14 Summary

2.14.1 Summary of analysis

In order to understand salvation in a biblical context, the focus of this chapter was to assess critically the existing contributions by scholars on the concepts of salvation in general and to identify and reflect on the areas of concern highlighted by their studies. In the forgoing analysis of scholarly works, the evidence suggests that the concept of salvation has variegated etymology and therefore divergent of views exist as to what the concept means.

Scholars (e.g. von Rad, Kerswill, Kaiser, Brandon) agree that God is the Saviour in the Old Testament and that He is solely responsible for the salvation of individuals, nationally and internationally. Salvation in the Old Testament was not always about personal sin.

It is also clear that in the Old Testament parallels exist when looking at the meaning and practice of salvation with ancient Near East cultures and literatures. Since salvation is not purely a biblical phenomenon, its meanings are affected by culture and other religious beliefs. These parallels have affected the biblical meanings of the concept of salvation (e.g. Walton, Niehaus, Noth, Brandon, Kerswill, von Rad and Kaiser).

The importance of the Exodus narrative is significant in understanding the nature of salvation and its importance in the history and confession of the Hebrews. Salvation can be understood by carefully analysing the exodus account, the gift and conquest of the Promised Land (Waltke, Kaiser and Rad).

Though God was the initiator of salvation in the Old Testament, continuity exists between the two Testaments with Jesus as the object of God's salvation ultimately. The visible role of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in salvation are more conspicuous in the New Testament (e.g. Feinberg, Ross, Conzelmann, Klooster and Kärkkäinen).

Modern scholarships have examined the concept of salvation from different perspectives (Theological, Ecclesiological, Anthropological, Pluralism and Contemporary, Western & Eastern etc.) and variances exist not just from one scholar to another but from Scripture (e.g. Erickson, Gundry, Okholm and Phillips, Fairbairn, Cone).

The overarching outcome of the study/analysis is that a liberation theological framework, based on Evangelical Pentecostalism that can challenge the dehumanising influences in contemporary society is possible only when these divergent views are critically analysed and inculcated in the developmental process. In a pluralistic world, salvation should no longer be defined from the western cultural mindset, but from the wider spectrum taking into account the influence of culture on Christianity as a world religion and at the same time accurately interpreting Scripture so as not to lose its essence.

2.14.2 Areas of concern highlighted by the studies

These areas of concern have been highlighted because they either support the thesis or contradict its underpinning assumptions. They will be revisited for the purpose of analysis.

- The view that the existence of parallels between biblical narratives and ANE texts confirm biblical dependence on the Babylonian materials and demonstrate that Biblical texts were copied or borrowed from non-biblical sources.
- The view by some scholars that the Exodus miracles, signs and wonders did not happen as the biblical account claims; but declare that it was it was a mere escape across a sprawling wilderness and sweltering desert of a small mixed band of boarder slaves (military skirmish).

- The view that God's method of salvation has remained the same for the two Testaments.
- The relationship between the concepts of sin and salvation in both Testaments and the difference between Physical and spiritual salvation.
- The definition of salvation in terms of liberation, secular or existential theologies.
- The exclusivism of the Catholic Church role in salvation and the view that grace is achieved through participation in sacraments.
- Hick's conception of salvation which repudiates the doctrine of atonement and incarnation.
- The postulation of universal salvation to all outside of Christ.
- Inclusivist's conception of salvation which claims that salvation in the Christian sense can be achieved through other religion: that their religion prepares them for biblical salvation.
- Some biographical portraits of Jesus of Jesus by scholars which makes it impossible for Him to be the Saviour of the world.
- Cone's conception of salvation which posits that the death of Jesus has nothing to do with our salvation and that the notion of ransom has to do with Jewish ceremonial rites.
- The claim that Jesus is not God-man; a view which will nullify the biblical concept of salvation.
- The denial that our salvation is past, present and future and linked with the concept of the kingdom of God which Jesus advocated.

3.0 CHAPTER THREE: SALVATION IN LIBERATION THEOLOGY CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will look at the history and core tenets of liberation theologies with the view to understanding how biblical salvation is perceived from a liberation theology context. The crux of the study is to identify the extent to which liberation theologians promote their ideologies (liberation), rather than the true biblical concept of salvation. This will include an analysis of their hermeneutical presentations of the concepts of sin, anthropology, Christology, the kingdom of God and other “paradigms of liberation”, to see how these interpretations have impacted the etymology of biblical salvation. Liberationists’ concept of theology will be examined to evaluate their praxeological methodology (a critical reflection on historical praxis), which has culminated in what they call “a new way of doing theology”. The liberation theologies’ epistemological presentation of the poor and the oppressed will be assessed critically in line with the Biblical text to ascertain the validity of their suppositions and their liberation agenda for this group. Their employment of social sciences to understand human situations (orthopraxeological) will be critically evaluated especially, their use of Marxist analysis to understand history and the implication of such approaches to theological orthodoxy, in particular biblical salvation.

3.2 Historical context of Liberation Theology

3.2.1 A historical portrait of liberation theology: Emilio Núez

In addition to the many scholarly works on the history of liberation theology, Núez’s (1977:343-356) article provides an insightful portrait of the history of this movement. In this article, Núez identifies some of the events and the most influential theologians who catalysed the birth of the liberation theology movement. Núez (1977:343) articulates clearly that prior to the advent of liberation theology, Latin American churches merely echoed the theology formed in other cultures and therefore did not contribute to Christian thought in any significant way. He further contends that the coming to being of liberation

theology is the first time in the history of Christianity that Latin American theology has awakened the interest of experts especially those residing in countries (Europe and North America), who claim to have a monopoly over the science of theology (Nú-éz, 1977:343). Nú-éz, however, has been quick to dispel the idea that this is a new theology except that it is different in the sense that it is set in the context of relating Christianity to Latin American cultures. His assessment of liberation theology is seen from the perspectives of Catholic and liberal Protestant theologians in Latin America attempting to provide a theology, which they trust will serve as the base for the “liberation” of oppressed peoples (Nú-éz, 1977:343).

Even though Nú-éz contends that liberation theology is not totally original, he equally acknowledges that it offers a “new way of doing theology”. He asserts that the “point of departure and hermeneutical norm are not the written revelation of God, but the social context of Latin America and the revolutionary praxis striving to create a “new man” and a “new society” within a socialist system as a supposed manifestation of the kingdom of God” (Nú-éz and Taylor, 1989:244). Nú-éz advocates that liberation theology is an example of the influences of social science on contemporary theological thinking. Having admitted the connectivity between liberation theology (Latin America) with other prominent theologians (Europe and North America) who were concerned about social problems and did theology in a cultural context (Bonhoeffer, Metz and Moltmann), Nú-éz concludes that the cultural environments were different from the Latin American context (Nú-éz and Taylor, 1989:244).

Despite the links between liberation theology (Latin America) with the existential hermeneutics of Bultmann, Bonhoeffer’s secular approach to Christianity and the political hermeneutics of Metz, the Latin theologians are quick to distance themselves from their European counterparts. They argue that the European environment is capitalistic (materialism), while the Latin context represents a theology that emerged from a situation of poverty, oppression, marginalisation, underdevelopment, and over dependence on Western capitalism and neo-colonialism (Nú-éz and Taylor, 1989:245). Nú-éz and Taylor argue that since the social context is different, the contextualization of the Christian message

according to the particular needs of the people can be explained. The Latin American theologians posit that “the motivation, method and goals of this theology demand, to some extent, a different approach from the one we use in evaluating other theological system” (Nú-ez and Taylor, 1989:245).

Nú-ez (1977:345) in his article also identifies one of the movements that fermented the promulgation of liberation theology. He has noted that even though Church and Society in Latin America (ISAL) began as a Protestant movement, it had the same objectives as the Roman Catholic theology of liberation with a mandate not only to do theological reflection, but also a plan of action to help in the economic, political, and social transformation of underdeveloped nations in Latin America.

According to Nú-ez, the main preoccupation of ISAL is the economic dependence in which Latin Americans live and their view is that the only way out of this predicament is “the conscientization of the of those exploited by the dominant social classes and by imperialism”. ISAL defines the process of liberation as “breaking with the system of economic dependence and exploitation under which our people suffer, due to the action of imperialism in alliance with the dominant national classes” (Nú-ez, 1977:345). It is clear from the above assertion, that the purpose of liberation, is to create a more just society in which class distinctions will disappear. The ISAL *modus operandi* according to Nú-ez (1977:347), was a total break away from the theology of the past, which was formulated in opulent societies such as the “theology of the death of God” or the “theology of hope,” but rather a theology of the people, which is quite different from a “theology for the people”. Though ISAL started as an ecumenical movement dialoguing with Roman Catholic, it soon became a radicalised leftist movement and suffered ecclesiastical isolation and lost its Protestant identity. Despite the shortcomings, Hugo Assmann and other Catholic writers aver that the significant contributions ISAL made in the formative years of this system of thought should not be overlooked (Nú-ez and Taylor, 1989:334).

3.2.2 A historical portrait of liberation theology: Rubem Alves (political humanism)

Alves (cf. Gibellini, 1980:284-302) paints a historical portrait of liberation theology, also from a Protestant perspective (Presbyterian). In his essay, he decries his inability to liberate himself (lack of the required human resources) from an abysmal solitude, a situation which sociologists call “anomie” (Alves, 1980:285). In this milieu, he was conditioned by what the structures allowed. Alves (1980:286) posits that in this environment one becomes a fundamentalist “characterized by a dogmatic and authoritarian attitude with respect to their system of thought and by an attitude of intolerance (the Inquisition) toward every ‘heretic’ or ‘revisionist’”. In essence Alves is arguing that a fundamentalist is one who has been liberated from the endless process of building up and tearing down only to begin again. However, as far as the fundamentalist is concerned the job is already finished. Security and certainty are assured as who and what is good is already known (Alves, 1980:287).

In Alves’ quest to resolve the anomie that arose out of his loneliness, he discovered the social roots of religion and its neurotic origin. His discovery revealed a religion with “its negation of the world, its absolutization of eternity, its rejection of liberty, its discomfort in the face of humans ... represent a conspiracy against life” (Alves, 1980:287). In the light of his discovery, Alves (1980:288) argues that “salvation from the world, a touchstone of Brazilian Protestantism was actually in direct opposition to the Bible itself”. Alves advocates that one thing seemed certain to us “the Church would have to free itself from the spell of fundamentalist language that has held it prisoner. Once this was realised, the Church would take the lead in the battle to transform the world, or so we hoped” (Alves, 1980:288). Alves’ contention is that the milieu (Latin America) under which the Church operates, makes God an ideological weapon designed to preserve the power structure, justify the status quo, and assassinate dissidents. In his view, the word of God has been stripped of meaning in its institutional and traditional theological context and in essence God’s name ceased to be the symbol of liberty and love. This was symptomatic of the death of God and the birth of secular humanism with sociology replacing

theology; church and God replaced by the world and human beings respectively (cf. Gibellini, 1980:284-302).

The effect of the above portrait is a new way of thinking about God. For those who were frustrated, there was a conception of a new way of talking about God and envisioning the community of faith. They refused to be caged in the old structure with a fundamentalist mindset (anomie). So they opted for this new approach (Liberation theology) with its inherent dialectic hermeneutics “in which people read the Bible from the standpoint of the hopes and anxieties of the present, and read the present from the standpoint of the hopes and anxieties of which the Bible speaks” (Alves, 1980:290).

Alves’ doctoral dissertation (1968) now published in a book format (1969) has developed a new conception of humankind, a new anthropological analysis, which he has called “Political Humanism”. Nú-éz (1977:346-348), analysing this work makes some noteworthy observations. He notes that Alves’ political humanism has three main tenets:

- a new consciousness of oppression;
- a new language that expresses this new conception of humankind;
- followed by the conception of a new community.

Nú-éz also noted that the advent of a new language is necessary because of the new community. Alves contends that this new community (worldwide proletariats) will have no limit nationally, economically, socially or racially.

The formulation of the political humanism also allows Alves to make some comparison between this new consciousness to technology and theology. Alves has argued that technological society detracts humanity from thinking about the future by advocating that man can be happy in the present as it “engulfs, conditions, and determines man” (Nú-éz, 1977:347). On theology and political humanism, Alves parts company with some of the theologians who had previously influenced him. Whilst agreeing with Barth’s radical criticism of the present, he disparages him for not “giving enough importance to the future or to the work and creativity of man” (Nú-éz, 1977:347).

Though Alves accepts “Political Messianism” and the theology of hope, he criticises Moltmann for his idea “that the movement toward the future arises in answer to a promise that comes from without and makes it possible”. Alves’ concept of Political humanism “includes the rejection of what is inhuman in the present, the concern for the transformation of this present by means of political action, and an openness to the future, based on history itself and not on a promise that is transcendent” (Nú-ez, 1977:347). His work paints history of theology portrait that deals with liberation by humankind and for humankind themselves (Nú-ez, 1977:347).

3.2.3 A historical portrait of liberation theology: Epochal Events (The Second Vatican Council, Medellin and Puebla conferences of 1968 & 1979)

Liberation theology is a product of the wider Catholic social teaching as promulgated in the Second Vatican Council and its associated encyclicals (Rowland, 2007:5). McGrath (1993:330) makes a similar observation by stating that “Latin American theologies of liberation have been predominantly a Roman Catholic phenomenon that emerged as an outcome of several transformative processes within the Church”. Taylor has articulates that for many years, the Catholic church was governed in accordance with the dogma formulated in the Council of Trent, but things were about to change due to events taking place in Latin America.

Dussel (1981:142), the renowned principal historian and ethicist of liberation theology, contends that the first meeting of Latin American bishops in Rome in 1962, which was made possible through the Second Vatican Council, began a new era for Conference of the Latin American Episcopate (CELAM). Subsequent meetings were organised (regular assemblies of Latin American bishops), which became important on a number of levels; the meetings enabled (CELAM) to become the first group in the history of the Church to develop the concept of “episcopal collegiality” (Dussel, 1981:142). On another level, the experiences stemming from the Second Vatican Council gave CELAM the opportunity to completely reorganise. The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) accelerated the pace of change which will ultimately transform the ecclesiastical landscape of Latin America forever. Taylor argues that Pope John XXIII’s

encyclicals "*Mater et Magistra*" and in particular "*Pacem in Terris*" called for the abandonment of ghetto Catholicism and encouraged the Church to foster greater cooperation with diverse groups of people so that the challenges of modern world can be addressed (Nú-éz and Taylor, 1989:134).

Brown (1993:71) chronicles how a new way of being the Church materialized. This new way emerged as the people began to realise that salvation from destitution and hope for a better future was mandated by God through the Gospel and that they as individuals have the power to liberate themselves and the social structure by participating in the process of transformation. This belief catalysed into the emergence at the grass roots the "base communities". The Second Vatican Council made this possible by dismantling the existing church structure and instituting one which saw the Church basically as "the people of God", the whole people of God and encouraged the process of promoting some who were in the laity in the place of authority and leadership (Brown, 1993:72).

Looking at these antecedents for a liberating society, Galilea in his article (cf. Gibellini, 1980:164) contends that liberation theology is not only providing important elements for elaborating the evangelical attitudes and historical responses to any new spirituality. He also sees it as a force pushing the Latin American church toward sociological reform of itself. Whilst acknowledging the importance of the Second Vatican Council and how it has moved the Church into a process of change, Nú-éz has questioned the theological profundity of the change. At the same time he is not oblivious to the openness and the ecumenicity, the liturgical renaissance coupled with increased interest in reading the Bible which this change has initiated (Nú-éz and Taylor, 1989:229).

Brown (1993:72) explicates how the Vatican Council reasserted many ways to enable the Church not to be just heavenly minded, but to be involved in the affairs of the world. The Church was encouraged to show concern for what happened to people, to supporting labour union activities and to speak against indiscriminate bombing of civilians in conflict times. Brown (1993:229) argues that this is indeed a revolutionary and ground breaking achievement and the Council should be commended. The significance of the Second Vatican Council is the harbinger role it played prior to Medellín 1968.

Brown (1993:72) asserts that the Medellin conference of 1968 rode on the wave of these reforms from the Second Vatican Council. He affirms that their terms of reference was to examine the nature of society sociologically, reflect on what it discovered theologically and then offer specific proposal for transformation. Dussel (1981:143) makes some noteworthy observations in terms of the significance of the Medellin conference of 1968. He observes that the meeting of CELAM in Lima in November 1967, a precursor to Medellin had made some progress and transition was in the offing and discussions were moving from “development” to one of “liberation”. Medellin to him was of most imponderable importance to Latin America. This was the most epochal moment when the real Latin America was discovered and a clear commitment to Liberation realised. Clodovis Boff echoes the same view when he states that “... Medellin 1968, can be considered the ‘official launching’ of the theme of liberation” (Boff & Boff, 2008:9). Despite the apprehension caused by a new Pope Paul VI on the scene, his indication to attend the Medellin conference and the publicity that created helped to allay any fears. CELAM and all the grassroots prepared by sending off letters and preparing a “Basic Document” which clearly stipulated the Latin American reality together with a theological reflection and possible pastoral projections (Brown, 1993:72).

Galilea (1980:165) asserts very clearly that the term and theme of liberation were used for the first time in an official church document at Medellin conference and this has made it the hallmark of Christian reflection in Latin America. He also notes that in the official Medellin document the term “liberation” was not used extensively. In addition to the “liberation” taking root during Medellin, Galilea argues that the notion of Christian commitment was also given greater impetus. This subsequently engendered theological discussions, which further created the opportunity for amplification of the concept of liberation (cf. Gibellini, 1980:165).

The importance attached to Medellin in the history of Liberation theology cannot be overemphasised; Gutiérrez’s comparison of it to the Second Vatican Council makes it obvious (Nú-ez and Taylor, 1989:135; Gutiérrez, 1974:135). In his analysis, Nú-ez asserts that this was the place where Latin American church

saw its place in the world. It marked a transition from talking about underdevelopment to what the people can actually do from their own standpoint. It was the end of using the Church to neutralise conflicts, but calls for recognition that the Latin American Church is present in a world full of revolution. It marked a break away from the Vatican Council talk about church renewal. Medellín shows the way for the transformation of the Church in terms of its presence on a continent of misery and injustice (Nú-éz and Taylor, 1989:135). Monsignor López Trujillo (cited in Nú-éz and Taylor, 1989:230), in the light of Medellín, advocates for a time for true reconciliation, struggle for justice, opposition to class struggles and the promotion of love for justice.

Rowland (2007:5) assessing the significance of Medellín and Puebla attests that with the Church's explicit commitment to take a "preferential option for the poor" the foundation was laid to enable any Christian who chooses to work with the poor to see their work as an integral part of church's evangelisation endeavour. So what was achieved in Medellín was consolidated or affirmed in Puebla conference, even though observers have drawn significant differences between the two events. Dussel (1981:232) explains that there was a group that attempted to thwart the outcome of Medellín at Puebla. Their objectives to condemn the popular Christian movements, the base communities, the "popular Church", the Latin American theology of liberation did not materialise. He attests that looking at the two events; Medellín was a point of departure and inspiration while Puebla can be seen as continuation. At Puebla the door was not shut for those Christians who wanted to continue their work with the poor. Dussel and Nú-éz agree that the Puebla conference was more muted and more conservative in approach as Pope John Paul II gave no substantial support to the old idea of Christendom and also failed to unequivocally support capitalism or condemn socialism (Dussel, 1981:231-232, Nú-éz and Taylor, 1989:231). Nú-éz makes an important observation that the Pope, while endorsing liberation theology and other alternative ways of social transformation, was not in favour of political involvement of priests (Nú-éz and Taylor, 1989:231).

3.3 Theological Agenda of liberation theologies: a new formulation of Christian praxis

3.3.1 Praxis in liberation theology: Solidarity with the poor and oppressed

Bennett (2007:39-54), in his article, unequivocally affirms the centrality of praxeological epistemology in liberation theology thought. She explicates in no uncertain terms that “the defining characteristic of liberation theology is that it is a lived praxis in solidarity with the poor and oppressed”. To this end she argues that the commitment and practice of liberation theology has three moments notably “the moment of praxis”, “the moment of reflection on praxis” and “the moment of return to renewed praxis”, culminating in the fact everything begins and ends in praxis (Bennett, 2007:39). Gutiérrez (1974:21) one of the greatest exponents of liberation theology has made it crystal clear that his way of understanding theological task was that liberation theology is “a critical reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the word of God”. The formulation of a new Christian custom requires a move away from the theology based on abstract propositions, which did not reflect the concrete reality on the ground (Latin America).

Gutiérrez is not alone as can be seen from the point made by Assmann, one of the main protagonists of liberation theology. In his essay (cf. Gibellini, 1980:133-150), he makes it absolutely clear why this way of doing theology is the best way in the context of Latin America. Assmann (1980:134) asserts that the Church has not made progress in liberation because of certain mitigating factors (blocks):

- the notion that the first obligation imposed by the Christian faith is recognition and an acknowledgement of certain “absolutes” concerning the meaning and thrust of history;
- that the liberative work of the Church is merely verbal pronouncements and denunciations lacking in analysis and commitment;
- finally failing to combine theory and practice to achieve a unified experience of interpretation and transformation.

He posits that as Christians engage with others in the liberation struggles, they will find a deeper solidity in which faith is synonymous with commitment, thus providing a new theological reference point. He advocates that praxis becomes the basic reference point. It becomes a process of ongoing self-criticism and the instrument of analysis. Praxis becomes the benchmark for interpreting historical processes below the mere surface of level and for examining the political definition we formulate within the framework of clearly proposed strategic goal (cf. Gibellini, 1980:135).

Presupposing the primacy of praxis over orthodox theology, Assmann articulates clearly for Christians to move beyond surface realities and accept that theologies must be inductive, pluralistic, experiential, partial, and related to their environment as the only way to be relevant. Assmann's assessment is that this proposition and its methodology should be accepted. He contends that Christians can no longer fashion a language that meaningfully reflects their experience of the faith, unless it includes in-depth social analyses and political strategies (cf. Gibellini, 1980:135). So it can be seen from the views presented by these great advocates of liberation theology (Gutiérrez, Boff and Boff and Assmann), Bennett's proposition of the three moments of praxis in liberation theology and the fact that everything starts with praxis and ends with praxis is indisputable.

The Medellín conference of 1968 brought about a turnaround in the way theology was to be done in Latin America by adopting "a preferential option for the poor", which was subsequently reaffirmed at Puebla and Santa Domingo (Rowland, 2007:5). The concept of the poor is quite distinct from its everyday usage a point which scholars have tried to explicate. McGrath (1993:332) argues that the term has a sociological connotation and admits the existence of social classes and social struggles. Gutiérrez's article (Gibellini, 1980:8) states that "poor and oppressed people are members of a social class which is overtly or covertly exploited by another social class". He advocates seriously that if one is to opt for one social class over against another or to take cognizance of the fact of class confrontation, the conclusion will be siding with the oppressed. He contends that we should enter into the milieu of the exploited social class with

its associated cultural categories and values. He further argues that in opting for the exploited social class, we must unite in fellowship with their interests, concerns and struggles (cf. Gibellini, 1980:9).

Bennett (2007:41) adds that, “praxis in liberation theology is in solidarity with the poor and oppressed and has an intention of bringing liberation and humanisation through radical, transformative social and political change”. Sobrino (1994:161) encourages Christians to participate in this new formulation of Christian praxis. His analysis of some of Jesus’ practices reveal some activities, which he believes are correlative to society and have the capacity to transform it. These activities (controversies), in his analysis, are called prophetic praxis, because Jesus was challenging the injustices of His days, including ungodly religious structures, social and religious rules (Sabbath).

There are a lot of controversies surrounding this “new way of doing theology”, especially the primacy of praxis as the starting point (use of social sciences, Marxist categories for social analysis and doing theology from below). Bennett (2007:39), asks some pertinent questions, which should elucidate the dialectics that exist in the employment of praxis as the starting point of theological tasks: “Is praxis in itself epistemologically significant?”; “Can we know through praxis and if so what exactly can we know?” There is no doubt the answers to these questions will be in the affirmative, as far as the proponents of theology of liberation are concerned.

Boff and Boff (2008:22-23) contend the need for objective engagement in solidarity with the poor. In their view, liberation preceding theology is the only way to ensure that theological tasks are not mere words but deeds. Liberation therefore becomes a pre-theological task, which becomes effective when a direct knowledge of the reality of oppression and liberation have been established, culminating in solidarity with the poor (class conversions). Praxis’ first step will be an engagement of “socio-analytical mediation” in the sphere of the world of the oppressed to ascertain facts as to “why the oppressed are oppressed”?

Haight's essay (cf. Ellis and Maduro, 1989: 139-153) looks at other things, "the language of faith and praxis" and argues that the language of faith must be translated into the language of praxis. Having analysed the earlier works of Gutiérrez, he posits that all liberation theologians have accepted this fact of synonymity or the inseparableness between the two concepts. He states "praxis not only reveals what faith is ... praxis also tends to be understood as identical with faith" (cf. Ellis and Maduro, 1989:147).

Haight further argues to bring clarity to the meaning of praxis (practice) by stating that praxis points to conscious, intentional, and thematized practice. "[It] refers to human action that is not simply blind but which emerges out of critical reflection and theological thought" (cf. Ellis and Maduro, 1989:147.) Haight is of the view that his presentation of the relationship between praxis and faith accurately represents Gutiérrez's thought to liberative action, action intended to the overcoming of oppression in society. Reaffirming the symbiotic relationship that exists between faith and praxis, Haight has defined faith as "the underlying intelligent and acceptance of and commitment or loyalty to a cause that becomes real in praxis" [and] "praxis is the enactment, realisation and actuality of an only logically prior faith" (Ellis and Maduro, 1989:148). To reinforce the primacy of praxis and its relationship with faith, Gutiérrez (1974:27) contends that discourse about God comes second because faith comes first and is the source of theology. Gutiérrez strengthens his argument by referring to St Anselm's statement, "we believe in order that we may understand" (*credo ut intelligam*). Explicating the importance of faith, he asserts that a principal task of "reflection on praxis in the light of faith" will be to strengthen the necessary and fruitful links between orthopraxis and orthodoxy (Gutiérrez, 1974:28). Believing must propel the believer to press to understand the situation (commitment) and that might require taking risks (faith) to ensure that what is believed is fully explored, which in liberation theology construct makes theology the second act. Brown (1993:58-61), expounding "critical reflection on praxis in the light of God's word" as a means of knowing, concludes that it is our best safeguard against the Gospel being derailed.

3.3.2 Praxis in liberation theology: The historical concreteness of unjust social structures

The hallmark of liberation theology is the quest to liberate the people of Latin America from oppression, poverty, marginalisation and dependency. This predicament has come about as a result of a prolonged unjust and social structures instituted and perpetuated by the powerful capitalists from Europe and North America who have continued to dominate the region. Brown (1993:61) asserts that these unjust social structures may manifest economically, politically and culturally or stem from racial, gender, class, national attitudes or even from ecclesiastical structures. Bartolomé de las Casas, as far back as the mid sixteenth Century (1552), captured the gravity of this unjust social structure perpetrated by European Christians when he declared "... imposed upon the indigenous peoples the most arduous, horrible and bitter slavery (Dussel, 1981:3). The suffering of the people of Latin America causes one to reevaluate Bonhoeffer's question about how to announce God in a world that has come of age. Rowland (2007:28) argues that in the light of the Latin American context, the challenge should be "how to tell the 'non-persons' that they are the sons and daughters of God". In his assessment of the impact of unjust social structures on the people of Latin America, Gutiérrez provides a vivid characterisation of the Latin American people as "those who are not recognised as people by the existing social order – the poor, the exploited, those systematically and legally deprived of their status as human beings, those who barely realise what it means to be a human being" (cf. Rowland, 2007:28). Liberationists have never viewed capitalist nations in a positive way because of the unjust structures which they believe is the cause of oppression and exploitation suffered by poorer nations. Rhodes (1991) maintains that liberationists advocate that the developed nations have become rich at the expense of the poorer nations (dependency theory), who continue to wallow in underdevelopment.

The endemic nature of the unjust social structures in Latin American context can be understood by some historical antecedents provided by Leonardo Boff (1992:10) in his analysis of Latin American culture. From his analysis it can be deduced that one if not the main reason for the entrenchment of unjust social

structure can be attributed to the number of times this continent has been evaded by those dominant powers who have penetrated (the process of acculturation and transculturation) into the fabric of the Latin American cultures. Boff contends that the Latin Americans have experienced three successive invasions, which have always given rise to the same outcome (oppression, distortion, and a harnessing to other cultures). Boff, reflecting on the negative impacts of colonisation and the process of acculturation and transculturation on the Latin Americans, comments “we are a broken mirror, a tragic, unhappy consciousness obliged to see itself in the mirror of others, violently ... underdevelopment and thereby deprived of the necessary means to be sovereigns of our own history” (Boff, 1992:11). All the three invasions left ineradicable damage like enslavement (Indians and Blacks) and the paralysis of the existing culture, the promotion of “*embranquecimento*” ideology (whitening of culture) and the creating of social inequalities and increased impoverishment as capitalism took foothold on the culture.

3.3.3 Praxis in liberation theology: The deconstruction of the unjust social structures

Education is a plausible avenue to deconstruct the unjust social structures, which has dehumanised the people of Latin America and relegated them to a “nameless” people without identity in the world. Education will expedite the process of humanisation. If Liberation theology’s claim that its epistemology is rooted in the total transformation of the people in Latin America, it must embrace an education philosophy that will yield the expected level of societal transformation. Brown (1993:62) argues that the liberative message to deconstruct the unjust social structures is the invitation to work for change and for reform.

Pazmino (1995) offers invaluable insights into how education can help to ameliorate the dehumanization influences of unjust social structures that are evil rather than good. He examines different educational philosophies and theories in Christian education which, if implemented, will address some of the issues which have been discussed in relation to the unjust social structures of Latin America. Pazmino (1995:77) is not advocating for a formal education

philosophy which is conventional and delivered in a formal setting, orderly, logical and planned fashion. He has explored the definition of education offered by an educational historian Bailyn who argued that education is “the entire process by which a culture transmits itself across the generation” (Pazmino, 1995:78).

Bailyn argues that four great axels have been responsible for the realisation of his concept of education namely the family, the Church, the community and the economy. His concept of education shifts the focus from formal education in the school to the vast process of socialization and enculturation (cf. Pazmino, 1995:78). Notwithstanding the merits in Bailyn’s concept of education, Pazmino warns against the danger of equating education with socialization and also the fact that biblical faith advocates for the process of disenculturation or prophetic education, in which “a community norm or standard is seriously questioned or critiqued in the light of biblical values” (Pazmino, 1995:79).

In the light of the above analysis, Pazmino has also examined educational philosophies, which are found in the reforming wing of the Christian Church with particular reference to its application to liberation theology. While acknowledging the positive aspects of reformed education which promotes divine standards and warns against rebellion against God, Pazmino has criticised it on the basis that it fails to demonstrate adequate sensitivity to historical developments which took place before or after Reformation. He rather opted for a reforming view of education, which will not only affirm the theological distinctive of a biblical view, but also addresses issues in their current historical context. Reforming view of education is in consonance with liberation praxeological epistemology. This concept of education, while accepting that God is still active in history also holds that the Church is continuing to grow in its understanding of God’s revelation in Scripture and in Jesus Christ, but at the same time argues in favour of a theology in a contextualized nature. On this point, it parts company with reformed education (orthodoxy) (Pazmino, 1995:64).

The liberative nature of reforming view of education is well captured in Pazmino's statement "... understanding of both the theological truths in Scriptures and the possibilities of change in relating those truths to different cultures and historical situations" (Pazmino, 1995:66). This epitomises liberation theology's tenet of the primacy of praxis which is the interaction between reflection and action in life. Implementing a reforming view of education with a restructuring perspective will not only deconstruct the unjust social structures which have plagued Latin Americans for centuries but act as a catalyst to bringing about transforming and humanizing influences in society. To the liberationists who want to liberate this society from unjust social structures, praxis ensures that theology is immersed in the historical concreteness. Theology is not just about mere reflection of the world in its particular setting, but rather tries to be part of the process by which the world is transformed (cf. Pazmino, 1995:67). In essence education will be one of the means to raise the consciousness of the nameless, non-persons, marginalised, poverty stricken people of Latin America regarding the injustices they are facing and the need for corrective action by them.

The foreword by Shaull in Freire's book has raised the bar on the importance of education in the transformation and liberation process of the oppressed from their oppression. He states "There is no such a thing as a neutral education process. Education either functions as an instrument that is used ... bring about conformity to it ... 'the practice of freedom' ... how to participate in the transformation of their world" (Freire, 1996:16.) Liberationists advocate for the use of social analysis to understand the world better than we have done in the past; this can be effectively realised through the process of education. Contextual theology, as practised in Latin America, has made effective use of works done by social scientists, sociologists and economists to fully understand their world and their peculiar situations and the methodologies to bring about a change. The benefit of acquiescing to social analysis is to develop realistic and feasible strategies that will explicate the workings of society, the sources of power and how to effect a change that will bring realignment of the existing social structures to produce justice rather than injustice (cf. Brown, 1993:45).

Freire, a Brazilian educational philosopher and sociologist, is attributed as the architect of the word “*conscientização*”, which connotes “learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (Freire, 1996:17). Brown (1993:45) avows that conscientization the English rendering of “*conscientização*” symbolises “consciousness raising”, which means becoming aware of things we have not noticed before. Pazmino (1995:69) acknowledges that Freire’s contribution to education is summed up in his concept of conscientization. He however admits that this word, which originally referred to the “arousing of a person’s positive self-concept in relation to the environment and society”, has been diluted in the West as action is disassociated with knowledge. Transformation is now the preferred word to explicate a “liberative education that treats the learners as subjects, as active agents and not as objects or passive recipients of shared wisdom” (Pazmino, 1995:69).

Asserting his educational philosophy, Freire (1996:14) infers “that [mankind’s] ontological vocation is to be a Subject who acts upon and transforms his world, and in so doing moves toward ever new possibilities of fuller and richer life individually and collectively”. He maintains that the world is not a static and closed order; a given reality which man must accept and to which he must adjust; rather, it is a problem to be worked on and solved” (cf. Freire, 1996:14). The importance of Freire’s educational philosophy is that it empowers the recipients to believe in themselves that no matter how ignorant they are or how deep they might be submerged in a “culture of silence”, they have the capacity to engage critically with their world in a dialogical encounter with others.

This approach to teaching and learning repudiates the old fashioned, paternalistic teacher-student relationship in which the teacher is the possessor and the disseminator of knowledge. In *conscientização*, learners can help each other in this education process because they share common values and are products of the same unjust oppressive milieu. Freire defends his educational philosophy by arguing that *conscientização* is not a threat to freedom and that people should not confuse freedom with the maintenance of the status quo. This pedagogy of the oppressed is an educational concept which is “to be

forged with, not for, the oppressed (whether individuals or peoples) in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity” (Freire, 1996:30). Freire concludes: “This pedagogy makes oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come their necessary engagement in the struggle for their liberation. And in the struggle this pedagogy will be made and remade” (Freire, 1996:30.)

Gutiérrez (2001:116) argues clearly that liberation was a total break with the *status quo* and a call for a social revolution. It is this conviction that gave rise to the Base Ecclesial Communities (CEBs) who have played vital roles in teaching and radicalizing the people through conscientization evangelization. Despite the great contributions that CEBs make, there is a great tension between them and some of the so called “popular church”. Rowland (2007:6) has described them as a significant component of the contemporary political as well as ecclesiastical scene especially in Brazil. There is a link between the work of CEBs and the ministries of pioneers like Bartolomé de las Casas and Antonio Valdivieso for their solidarity with the poor and also for resisting the practice of conquest and despoliation.

Their detractors aim to tarnish their image. Brown (1993:74-75) made some attempts to highlight their positive contributions to the liberation process and the establishment of a just society. Firstly, CEBs is a small group Christians who work locally discussing local issues and considering solutions. Secondly, they fellowship and engage in small Bible study groups and may participate in Eucharist if a priest is present. Thirdly, they pride themselves in the intimacy that exists between them and therefore avoid overburdening themselves with structure, administration or the setting up a national headquarters. Fourthly, it emphasises the centrality of the Gospel thus distinguishing them from any other “action groups”. Brown concludes that CEBs is in solidarity with the poor, have missionary approach to ecclesiastical structure, maintain great respect for others even those who oppose them and finally they stress on liberation and conscientization and their members work for justice (liberation) and education for justice (conscientization).

3.4 Theological Agenda of liberation theologies: a new reading of history

Gutiérrez made some significant statements in his article that will elucidate how a new reading of history is to be understood in the theological agenda of liberation theologies. Restating the primacy of praxeology in liberation theology, he affirms that it involves reflection that begins with historical praxis. He also reiterated that theology of liberation is and will always be a theology of salvation in the light of the concrete historical and political conditions of the present. He has avowed that liberation theology will always “involve a direct and specific relationship with historical praxis, and historical praxis is liberative praxis” (cf. Gibellini, 1980:22-24).

A new way of understanding history in liberation theology construct is to be understood in the light of Marxist approach and in particular his analysis famously known as “*materialist conception of history*”. McGrath (1995:361) provides some help to explicate the meaning and application of this concept by stating that “the materialism consist not in any metaphysical doctrine ... but in idea that to understand human beings and their history, it is essential to begin with their material conditions of production.” It is clear that liberationists advocate that basic revolutionary change is a prerequisite to achieving liberation in Latin America. Bonni, accepting the necessity for this basic revolution, has also reasserted the importance of a social-analytical tool in the liberation theology agenda. He presupposes that “the socio-analytical tools, the historical horizon of interpretation ... and the revolutionary ethos and programme which Marxism has either received or appropriated ... indispensable for revolutionary change” (McGrath, 1995:365).

The absolute necessity to adopt Marxist analysis in pursuit of a new way of understanding history in Latin America is well documented by Dussel in his systematic and coherent presentation of Latin American Church history. As an eminent historian in Latin America concerns, he is able to provide meticulous and well-analysed perspectives of events, especially in the context of liberation theology. Comparing theology and faith, he has made it categorically clear that theology is not faith. Dussel (1981:16) defines theology as a “theoretical

thinking that emerges from praxis grounded in existential, supernatural comprehension that is in faith". This definition and subsequent explanations elucidate ones understanding of the relationship between theology and history. Theology in his construct has everything to do with praxis a stand which Gutiérrez and others have affirmed unequivocally. From his definition and analysis, theology is to be perceived as throwing more light into what has already been validated in existential, "day-by-day faith"(Dussel, 1981:16).

In other words, in theology one is able to epistemologically conceptualize what has already been revealed in the empirical experience of the life of the Christian. He also posits that theology develops in stages a view held by others (Segundo, 1980:34-40; Gutiérrez, 2001:146-177). Dussel (1981:16) argues that the only way to understand the current situations in Latin America is by tracking the various stages and pathways [history] in their theological developments. Dussel has argued that the Semitic and Hebrew way of categorizing historical experience theoretically (cf. Poetry of the Psalms, historical interpretation of Gen. 12-50, mythical expression such as Gen. 1-11 and Wisdom literature such as Job) are intrinsically and fundamentally historical (Dussel, 1981:16). Historicizing Israel's prehistoric myths empowered the Hebrews to counter the many nonhistorical myths propagated by the other Ancient Near East cultures. Dussel has made a noteworthy observation that by perceiving history as an event (*Geschehen* or *Ereignis*) becomes the point of departure between the Hebrews and the nonhistorical myths of their neighbours. Both the Old and the New Testaments provide an authentic "history of theology" (Dussel, 1981:16).

What Dussel has done is to provide a "trail" to demonstrate how the historical foundation based on the interpretation of the historical events of the Old and New Testaments have been reconstructed. His assertion is that the "theology of history" as evidenced by the Old and New Testament accounts represented an historical interpretation of the experience of salvation which was embodied and epitomised in Christ Jesus and this historical interpretation must be seen as the foundation of Judeo-Christian theology. During the passage of time, this foundation has had other syllogisms and epistemologies imposed on it (Hellenism in particular Origen of Alexander, Irenaeus of Lyon, Latin Fathers and

Scholasticism). Dussel has argued that "... theological conceptualisation ... transition from the historical experience of the Christian life to an explicitly scientific-thematic expression, Western theologians abandoned the original historical method of the Old and New Testament writers" (Dussel, 1981:17). Segundo (1980:34-35), acknowledging the reciprocal impact occidental civilization and Judeo-Christianity have had on each and how they have become so closely united and identical, has concluded that it has become difficult if not impossible to distinguish the elements specific to each other. This blurring of identity has raised concerns in certain Christian consciousness with particular reference to the image of God. The dialectic lies in the inhuman structures capitalism the West (occidental) has erected which makes it difficult for the Christian to accept in his concrete societal existence the God who revealed himself in Jesus Christ. With such dehumanising structures, it is difficult to conceive God in real-life terms by the Christians in Latin America.

In the light of the aforesaid impositions (deductive reasoning), efforts have been made notably by Hegel and Moehler (Tübingen School) to reaffirm that Christian reality and the history of salvation are interrelated (*Heilsgeschehen* or *Heilsgeschichte*). The analysis provided by Dussel leads to certain salient conclusions that will facilitate our understanding of this new way of understanding history especially the relationship between "the history of salvation and "salvation history". What Dussel (1981:17) has concluded is that they are one and the same thing as indicated by his statement "theology and the systematized history of salvation are identical", but at the same time stresses that the history of salvation as an existential event should be differentiated from systematized history. Both the scientific systematization of history and history as an event culminate into one historically unfolding salvation. Every Christian endeavour rests on history as their foundation. Gutiérrez (2001:151) has evinced similar understanding of oneness of history. He unequivocally affirms that "in fact there are not two histories, one profane and one sacred, "juxtaposed" or "closely linked"; rather there is only one human destiny, irreversibly assumed by Christ the Lord of history." Miguez states it more emphatically, by declaring that, "the central premise of liberation theology is the indivisible unity of history" (Kirk, 1979:31). Even though this discourse is a

matter of methodology, its contribution in clarifying the new way of understanding history in the Latin American context cannot be underestimated.

The crux of the matter is the imposition of a theology developed outside the Latin American setting (Syllogistic-scientific method of Aristotle's *Organon*, Patristic methodologies and Scholasticism) on the Latin Americans has fermented untold marginalisation, poverty, inequality and dependency which have become prevalent in their culture. Over the years, these theological constructs were mistakenly deemed universally fit for all cultures and so were transplanted on the Latin Americans and many other continents as the only valid historical experience. Medellin 1968 and Puebla 1979 opened the door for a new way of understanding history and a new way of doing theology. The concept of salvation came to be understood as solidarity with the poor and the marginalized.

Dussel (1981:18) strongly argues "... annihilated by the process of Europeanization to recover their being ... Christian history of Latin America be interpreted – this moment in salvation history ... this indivisible moment of our unique theology – if we are to think of ourselves as being part of Christian history". For Dussel, liberation theology posits an "ontological structure (dogmatics) completed in Christian praxis (moral) and historically concretised (exegesis in the first moment and history after the Church)" (Dussel, 1981:18). Praxis opened the door for the theologians of Latin America to reread their history. Marxist's concept of history provided them the analytical tools to reevaluate their history vis-à-vis the roles the institutional Churches have played. The involvement and alignment of the Church (Catholic and Protestant) with the minority dominant powers (capitalists) who controlled wealth and created unjust social structures which subjected the majority to underdevelopment and inequalities of unprecedented, magnitude mediated the need to reread their history. Bonni decries this unholy alliance and describes it as a crisis of conscience and a situation "when Christians discover that their churches have become ideological allies of foreign and national forces that keep the country in dependence and the people in slavery and need" (cf. McGrath, 1995:333).

Gutiérrez corroborates that this new rereading of history enunciated what he calls the “irruption of the poor” and clearly defines three main liberative agenda these historical events will achieve. Gutiérrez enumerates that these will include:

- liberation from social situations of oppression and marginalization;
- a personal transformation by which [people] live with profound inner freedom in the face of every servitude;
- and finally a liberation from sin which attacks the deepest root of servitude (cf. McGrath, 1995:334).

3.5 Theological Agenda of liberation theologies: a new reading of Scripture

3.5.1 Christological proposals of liberation theologies

Christology is a pivotal doctrine in Christian thought. Therefore care must be taken to ensure that any Christological proposal must be in consonance with the teachings of the Scripture and in alignment with the Apostolic Fathers (creed). It is to this end that De Gruchy (1994:53) asserts that the position we take in Christological proposals will have “a decisive influence upon our theology and Christian life as a whole, and vice versa”.

Christology, like many other Christian doctrines, is fraught with dialectic hermeneutical proposals some of which leads to serious heresies (Ebionites 70 AD & Arianism 321 AD), which denied the divinity of Christ. Rahner’s Christology concentrated on Jesus’ incarnation and resurrection rather than on his cross. He affirms that “theology then is christologically concentrated in the problem of human access to Christ” (Sobrino, 1978:25). Pannenberg, on the other hand, posits that the meaning of history and the possibility of truth really depend on Christ. Concentrating his, Christological epistemology on the resurrection, he emphatically states “Christ resurrection is the paradigm of liberation standing above and beyond present human misery, but not directly in contradiction to that misery.” He asserts that without the resurrection, the historical life of Jesus will have no meaning even as a history (Sobrino,

1978:28). Moltmann's Christology is, however, diametrically opposed to Pannenberg. Even though his focus was on the history of Jesus, his Christology concentrated in the Cross. For him following Jesus was the very essence of Christology; it was the only way to understand the concepts of Christology and how to work it out (Sobrino, 1978:29).

The Chalcedonian Christological (dogma) definition was promulgated to provide a unified theology about Jesus Christ. Sobrino (1978:317) has defined dogma as "an affirmation of faith formulated as doctrine and authoritatively put forward by the Church's magisterium in order to defend the faith against some heresy". He concludes that all dogmas are historically polemical and have always come about in an attempt to counter heresies. Notwithstanding the relevance of the Christological proposals of the Council of Chalcedon both Sobrino (1978:333) and De Gruchy (1994:61) have vigorously criticized it from a number of perspectives. Sobrino has argued strongly that at best it is "a doxological statement [and that] the truth that is affirmed in it cannot be intuited in itself". De Gruchy, on the other hand, asserts that it is merely "a limit statement, making clear the boundaries of Christology – they do not fill in the content". These limitations are some of the reasons both scholars have called for alternative Christology not based on the Chalcedonian definitions. De Gruchy positing from South African context and that of others in the scholarly communities argues that Chalcedonian Christological proposals should be abandoned because it no longer addresses issues of our days and also because of its formulation from what he has termed "an illegitimate interpretation of Jesus Christ in terms of Greek philosophy" (De Gruchy, 1994:61).

Unquestionably, Sobrino, a Jesuit theologian from El Salvador is one of the greatest exponents of Liberation theology Christological epistemology. His views on this subject summarize the tenets of liberation theology (Christology), even though this is not intended to present a picture of unanimity on the subject across the liberationist fraternity. McGrath (1995:334) notes that in accordance with this notion of "a new way of reading the Scripture", Sobrino's Christology begins, not with the dogmatic statements of the Church, but with the Biblical text

in an effort to concentrate on the historical Jesus in order to create a basis for Christian Action.

Sobrino's Christological proposal can be explained from the vantage point of giving Latin Americans a better understanding of Christ and to point up his historical relevancy to their continent. Sobrino argues against the old classical treatment of Christology and declares his suspicions on the basis of the ramifications they have on life and praxis. Sobrino's view is that these classical Christological proposals have made it possible for Christians "in the name of Christ, to ignore or even contradict fundamental principles and values that were preached and acted upon by Jesus of Nazareth" (Sobrino, 1978: xv). Sobrino has analysed the factors which he believed to have contributed to Christological reflections obscuring the figure of Jesus and the consequences of such Christological reflections.

Three main factors were identified, firstly, the reduction of Christ to a sublime abstraction which has led to denying of Christ's truth. The second factor is the affirmation that Christ is the embodiment of universal reconciliation. While accepting the truth in the statement, Sobrino argues that, it is not given its dialectical thrust. He contends that the statement sees Jesus as a pacifist who does not engage in "prophetic denunciations ... Jesus who loves all human beings but who is not clearly partial toward the poor and the oppressed." The third factor in this analysis is the "tendency to absolutize Christ while once again, neglecting the dialectical side of the matter." He further argues that total absolutization of Christ also introjects a historical conception into the consciousness of Christians, which in turn will diminish their interests in the non-absolutes of history. Sobrino is of the opinion that the symbols associated with the absolutization of Christ will "provide a religious justification for such economic and political symbols as the state, democracy and capitalism" (Sobrino, 1978:xv-xix).

In the light of the aforementioned criticisms of classical Christology, Sobrino proposes a new Christology that will be ecclesial, historical and Trinitarian in outlook (Sobrino, 1978:xx). Sobrino attests that his Christology is ecclesial because it has the ability to reflect the life and praxis of many ecclesial

communities in Latin America; it is a Christology that will give meaningfulness to the people. His intention is to give the people the opportunity to reconsider their conception of Christology and be able to relate it a Christian ecclesial praxis at a given concrete time in history. He accepts that the truth about Christ is formulated in the dogma, but his concept of Christology will enable the people to incorporate this truth into their own lives and from their own situation and activity. He adds "... must have a history of its own, and it cannot be frozen at one point in that history ... then it is absolutely necessary to integrate that new history into our reflection of about Christ" (Sobrino, 1978:xxi).

On the historicity of his Christology, he strongly asserts that "if the end of Christology is to profess that Jesus is the Christ, its starting point is the affirmation that this Christ is the Jesus of history" (Sobrino, 1978:xxi). This is a call to go back to the route that was followed in the formulation of the dogmas. What is striking, however, in Sobrino's Christology is not the fact that he is focusing on the Jesus of history, but the fact that historical reflection takes precedent over the teachings of Jesus as found in the New Testament. He unequivocally asserts "... we will give preference to the praxis of Jesus over his own teaching and over the teaching the New Testament theologians elaborated concerning his praxis" (Sobrino, 1978:xxii). In this Christological proposal, the New Testament is perceived primarily as history and secondarily as doctrine, historical categories of sin and conflicts become more preeminent and the history of Jesus will be viewed in terms of conflict rather than idealistic (Sobrino, 1978:xxii).

Sobrino is not alone when he advocates that Christology could only be understood from the perspectives of a concrete Christ of history. Assmann echoes the same sentiments when he states "... there is a legitimate need for a historically mediating Christology relevant to the basic problems of a given historical situation" (Sobrino, 1978:10). The view of liberationist is that previous Christologies are based on abstracts or ambiguous categories. Gutiérrez argues against any unrealistic presentation of Jesus and advocates for the notion of historical Jesus urging "to approach the man Jesus of Nazareth ... concrete context is a task which more and more needs to be undertaken"

(Sobrino, 1978:11). Ignacio Ellacuria asserting the relationship between salvation history and salvation in history has advocated that the deficiencies in New Testament Christology must be ameliorated with a new Christology which enunciates a new reading and historically framed (Sobrino, 1978:11). He avows "... the mysteries of Jesus' life which once were treated peripherally as part of ascetics must be given their full import ... exegetically and historically what the life of Jesus really was" (Sobrino, 1978:11).

Finally, Sobrino posits that his Christological proposal will encompass a Trinitarian dimension. He asserts that the only meaningful reflection of Jesus is the one premised on Trinitarian terms. Trinitarian-based Christology to him is one of the most important contributions by liberationist to theology in general and he states clearly that "when we insist that theology can be done only from the context of praxis, we are saying that people can understand and appreciate the Jesus who sends the Spirit only if they live a life in accordance with the Spirit" (Sobrino, 1978:xxv).

In the Christological proposal of Liberation theology, as championed by Sobrino, it is crystal clear that Jesus is to be perceived as a political figure, an activist and one who is actively proclaiming the coming kingdom of God. In this proclamation, the Jesus of history is visibly involved in the denunciation of injustice and taking sides with the oppressed, the poor and the marginalized. He is involved in pulling down unjust social structures (sin) in order to bring about a just and comradely society. His death is as a consequence of his actions in the liberative activities that he was involved in. This understanding ensures a new way of reading the text of Scripture. The Gospel text can only be understood when it is read from a socio-political context.

The degree to which liberation theology Christology is entrenched in praxis and historical reflection of situations can be explicated by Kasper's statement in support of the Christology advocated by Sobrino "hence it is no longer a matter of the rightness or correctness of certain affirmations when judged on the basis of the Bible or dogma ... rather abstract problem ... concrete truth ... talking about Jesus Christ in such a way that human beings feel they themselves and their problems are being discussed" (Sobrino, 1978:10). The importance of

Christology as postulated by Sobrino and all the other liberationists, is one of the most delicate issues in liberation theology and Sobrino asserts that the way to investigate the course that Jesus took should be done scientifically “no just to aid in the quest for truth but also in the fight for truth that will make people free” (Sobrino, 1978:35).

3.5.2 Ecclesiological proposals of liberation theologies

The ecclesiological proposal of liberation theology is a move toward ecclesiology of redemptive liberation. It is a proposal that is completely and diametrically opposed to what is being offered by the institutionalized church, which many liberationists believe has aligned itself with the oppressors. Dussel has recounted the history of the Church and has observed that the Church began among the socio-politically oppressed of the Roman Empire, but now has become an integral part of the nations that are oppressing and marginalising the dependent, “peripheral” countries (Dussel, 1981:11). Dussel further perceives this alignment with the dominating culture at national level as sin. The new ecclesiological proposal is for the Church to return to its original mandate, purpose and mission in the world, which is to function as a liberating community and institution and must be seen to be identified with the oppressed. Dussel and other liberationists advocate for the Church to break loose from the “the system that has been absolutized by national and international, economic, social, cultural and sexual sin and injustice” and become a church that demonstrates a historical commitment to the process and pilgrimage of liberation. Gutiérrez (2001:225) avers that what the Church needs is a radical revision of what it used to be and even what it is currently. His view is that whilst the Church has deepened its relationship with the forces of domination, it has not on the other hand managed to suppress the challenges such affiliations bring (Gutiérrez, 2001:226). This pilgrimage culminates in the liberation of the oppressed classes of women, children and the poor through the process of evangelization. This is the mission and purpose of the Church under this proposal.

Dussel advocates that the way for the Church to achieve these purposes is to “redirect, to deabsolutize, and to make these systems more dialectically flexible

and self-correcting and to move them towards the Parousia” (Dussel, 1981:10). Dussel is not the only liberationist, who believes that the Church has lost its true identity, a sense of direction and the purposes for which it was incarnated as the seed in the parable of the sower, Matt. 13:1-9. This corrupt church advocated and supported the notion that “massive wealth for a few, grinding poverty for all the rest was to be understood as God’s design” (Brown, 1993:70). Those who abhorred this concept of “providence” or “fate” catalysed this ecclesiological proposal. Underpinning this new proposal, is a search for a new way of being the Church. The new Church, will approach the future with openness, and hope, thereby, accepting the liberative context of the Gospel both for the oppressed and the oppressors.

Brown (1993:72) has noted the distinction between the old and new way of being the Church. The old church was about the hierarchy, the governing leadership who made all decision which the laity must abide by. On the other hand, the new way of being the Church (base communities) is a demolition of the hierarchical structures, where the Church becomes “the people of God”, where everybody was treated as equals. Boff sees this new concept of the Church from his experience of the Basic Christian Communities in Brazil (an assembly of poor people who come together to revive their faith in the light of their daily experiences). For Boff “a true ecclesiology is not the result of textbook analysis or theoretical hypothesis; it comes about as a result of ecclesial practices within the institution” (McGrath, 1995:334). Boff having being critical of the hierarchical authoritarianism and clericalism inherent in the Catholic Church, advocates that the new ecclesial proposal should be incarnated in the life of the people and also praxeological in outlook mirroring the Church life found in the New Testament rather than being dogmatic.

Gutiérrez, having posited for a radical overhaul of the Church’s past and present condition, has made a noteworthy assertion that his proposal is not “simply a renewal and adaptation of pastoral methods.” Gutiérrez’s understanding of what is required in this context is “a new ecclesial consciousness and redefinition of the task of the Church in a world in which it is not only present, but of which it forms a part more than it suspected in the past”

(Gutiérrez, 2001:227). This new proposal has demonstrated a shift in the hermeneutics and etymology of biblical salvation. Within the liberationist epistemology, there is an understanding of the universality of salvation. It is therefore not surprising that Gutiérrez has avowed that “the unqualified affirmation of the universal will of salvation has radically changed the way of conceiving the mission and of the Church in the world”. Contending that salvation is a reality and a historical fact at the same time, he declares unambiguously that the purpose of the Church is not to “save in the sense of guaranteeing heaven” (Gutiérrez, 2001:227). In this new ecclesiological perspective, Gutiérrez affirms that the Church should no longer see itself as “the exclusive place for of salvation but must orient itself towards a new and radical service of the people” (Gutiérrez, 2001:228).

Gutiérrez also explicates the notion of the Church as sacrament. As a sacramental community, Gutiérrez calls on the Church to “signify in its own internal structure” the salvation which it announces. He further contends that “as a sign of the liberation of humankind and history, the Church itself in its concrete existence ought to be a place of liberation” (Gutiérrez, 2001:228). Gutiérrez articulates very clearly that the Church is a prelude (provisional) to the Kingdom of God, which he believes has already begun in history. In this new ecclesiological perspective, he posits a view in which the Church breaks away from unjust social structures (sin) and forges new ecclesial structures in which the most dynamic sectors of Christian community is engaged. Gutiérrez concludes his perspective on this new ecclesiological proposal stating “in Latin America the world in which the Christian community must live and celebrate its eschatological hope is the world of social revolution; the Church’s task must be defined in relation to this” (Gutiérrez, 2001:234). He asserts that “Church must make the prophetic denunciation of every dehumanizing situation, which is contrary to fellowship, justice and liberty ... criticize every sacralisation of oppressive to the Church itself might have contributed” (Gutiérrez, 2001:239).

3.6 Liberation theologies hermeneutical presentation of the Exodus narrative

The Exodus narrative is ubiquitously the most prominent paradigms of liberation in the agenda of liberation theology. Gottwald affirms that the liberation theology's appeal to the Bible is not all that straightforward as there are unquestionably problems in its dealings with biblical faith as praxis in the service of justice (cf. Ellis & Maduro, 1989:250-251). Scholars (Gutiérrez, 2001:154 & Kirk, 1979:147) continue to engage ferociously to unravel the hermeneutical stance taken by the liberationists on the Exodus narrative. Gutiérrez (2001:154) offers one of the most foundational statements to explicate the importance and centrality of the Exodus narrative in liberation theology construct. He asserts explicitly that Israel's liberation is a political action and connotes "the breaking away from a situation of despoliation and misery and the beginning of the construction of a just and comradely society. It is the suppression of disorder and the creation of a new order". Notwithstanding Gutiérrez's foundational statement, Kirk (1979:147) questioned the priority given to the Exodus narrative by liberationists to justify the biblical grounding of their reflection on praxis. As far as he is concerned, the Exilic theme would have greater hermeneutical possibilities for the situations facing Latin Americans. The employment of the Exodus narrative is not limited to the Latin Americans who are in pursuit of the liberation of their continent from domination and mass underdevelopment. The Exodus narrative has become a symbol for all who seek freedom from domination, dehumanization and marginalization.

Cone, the most notable protagonist of Black theology, has affirmed the significance of the Exodus event in the Black liberation theology movement. Examining the social context of divine revelation in the Old Testament, he has drawn a lot of inferences from the Exodus story. He argues "in the Exodus–Sinai tradition Yahweh is disclosed as the God of history ... liberate the oppressed. There is no knowledge of Yahweh except through God's political activity on behalf of the weak and helpless in the land" (Cone, 2008:59). Commenting on the contest between Pharaoh and the God of Israel, Cone notes that the whole contest was to exhibit to all that God who is in control of history was the one solely responsible for the liberation of Israel. Cone has also

noted the unavoidable implication of God standing with the oppressed Israelites will eventually have on the way theology is done. In his view, since God has identified Himself as the God of history whose will is to liberate the oppressed from social and political bondage, "... Yahweh must involve the politics which takes its stand with the poor and against the rich. Indeed, theology ceases to be theology ... fails to see Yahweh as unquestionably in control of history, vindicating the weak against the strong" (Cone, 2008:60).

The hermeneutical rendering of the Exodus narrative by liberation theologians is what gives it this pivotal position in the liberation ideology. Gutiérrez avers that the Exodus experience is "paradigmatic" and that it remains vital and contemporary due to similar historical experiences which people of God undergo (Gutiérrez, 2001:157). Brown's hermeneutical analysis of Exodus (1:8-14; 2:23-25 & 3:7-10) argues against the notion that God exercises indiscriminate love toward all people but asserts that God is a partisan God who sometimes takes sides with vengeance. Arguing that this might sound unbiblical and hard for biblical writers to swallow, he affirms that this is the case (Brown, 1984:34).

Brown (1984:34) advocates that Exodus narrative "has set its stamp on the whole Bible and has become a paradigm passage for third world Christians living in situations of oppression and injustice similar to the Egyptian situation". In this hermeneutical analysis, Brown has made some noteworthy observations. He argues that the narrative depicts two classes of people (oppressed/oppressor) locked in struggle involving intimidation, humiliation, forced labour, powerlessness and genocide. He has also noted that the oppressed class have internalized their sufferings, accepted it to be normative (fate) and also believing that they are powerless to change their condition (Ex. 6:9).

Brown has noted the movement in the narrative from the sociological account of the story in which God is aware and sympathetic to their afflictions to the knowledge that God is on their side and has planned not just delivering them from Egyptian bondage but settlement in the Promised Land (Ex. 3:7-8). Brown elaborates by pointing to the fact that God does not take sides with the

powerful, who think they hold history in the palm of their hands but with the slaves who hitherto have had nothing in the palms of their hands. Brown corroborates Gutiérrez's assertion that Israel's liberation is a political liberation and avers that politics and religion mix (cf. Brown, 1984:37).

In this exegetical analysis of Exodus, Brown has also noted that passivity is not the method that God uses in liberation. He contends that in the liberation of the weak, God enlists the weak to participate in their own liberation. Brown corroborates this view by citing that the same God who said "He has come down to deliver the people" also called on Moses to be His messenger to execute the rescue plan for His people in Egypt. His interpretation of God's statement and the call of Moses signify God's intention to "call people to join in the struggle". He unequivocally affirms that while God was willing to liberate the weak, He was also prepared to enlist the weak to act on their own behalf.

In an attempt to explain why liberationists put too much emphasis on the Exodus narrative, Brown cites Gutiérrez and Croatto. He affirms that Gutiérrez articulates that the Exodus narrative "is only a vivid example of biblical narrative as a whole, a narrative that has as its central theme liberation for the oppressed". Croatto asserts that the Exodus narrative is "A hermeneutic of Freedom – which elaborates not only the exodus story itself but also its influence on the Genesis creation, the message of the prophets, the mission of Jesus and the writings of Paul" (cf. Brown, 1984:39.) Affirming that the Exodus is an event full of meaning, Croatto states "... within a hermeneutical treatment, it is perfectly legitimate to understand ourselves from the Biblical Exodus ... situation of peoples in economic, political, social and cultural slavery" (Kirk, 1979:102).

Among the many reasons offered by Croatto to justify his hermeneutic methodology of Exodus, two statements stand out because of their implications on the concept of salvation, the source of salvation, the mediatorial role of Jesus Christ as the mediator between man and God; the role of the Church in the proclamation of the good news of salvation in Christ and the role of Israel as God's chosen people. Firstly, he posits that "God's present "salvation-history no longer passes through Israel or the Church but directly through the suffering

humanity, who supremely constitute, today, God's elect nation, his special people". Secondly, he claims that "it is the oppressed humanity who will be the agent for the "reconciliation" of the entire *kosmos*, for only the oppressed can liberate the oppressors" (Kirk, 1979:102-103). Brown (1984:40) has also affirmed that the Exodus narrative is not just a "historical account of God's liberating activity back then but also an ongoing account of God's liberating activity today".

Kirk has made valuable contributions by examining why the Exodus is a privileged text in the Liberation theology movement. He argues that despite the ubiquity of the narrative in liberation agenda, most writers do not take exegetical study of the passages. Kirk observes that the writers did not make any attempt to verify exegetically the correctness of either their method or their use of the text as they continually use the texts as interpretive "launching pad" than as a conscious creative tool (Kirk, 1979:95). Scholars especially those of the liberationists' persuasions have continued to develop endless interpretations and reinterpretation of the Exodus narrative. In the end, what we have is a narrative which is converted into an inexhaustible reserve of meaning as Kirk (1979:101) argues "The Exodus is not only paradigmatic for Israel's faith with a limited "salvation-history" but "the paradigm for interpretation of all space and time, [that is] for the ongoing, global "salvation of history." Kirk (1979:101) cites Assmann and Croatto echoing the same sentiments. Assmann sees the Exodus as an inspiring event with "a permanent motive for the institutionalisation of a critical conscience and permanent cultural revolution, on the basis of a constant liberating struggle". The idea is that reinterpretation of the text is permissible. Croatto posits the same hermeneutical reinterpretation of Exodus event. His perspective is that "a proper understanding of the text can take place only at the experiential level of human beings who are actually oppressed and dominated ... the bourgeois spirit and everything created by man to avoid risks" (Kirk, 1979:101). Croatto, concludes that because of these many interpretations, the liberation theologians emphasise that "liberation is not some newly-arrived concept but the very centre of the biblical kerygma" (cf. Kirk, 1979:101).

Strengthening the case for Exodus narrative as a focal point in liberation theology, Ruiz offers two reasons. Firstly, he states “we chose the Exodus as the focus-point of our reflection for its paradigmatic value and its importance for the history Israel (and not precisely because we judge that it provides a biblical argument to prove the theology of liberation)”. Secondly, he affirms that the Exodus was chosen “because it happens to be the archetypical event of Israel, which became converted into the foundation and motivation of all its laws and institutions as well as its theological reflection” (cf. Kirk, 1979:104).

3.7 Liberation theologies hermeneutical presentation of the Easter Faith (Christology)

3.7.1 Liberation theologies’ hermeneutical presentation of the death of Jesus

Sobrino has remained the most vocal exponent on matters relating to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in the liberation theology movement. This can be authenticated by the amount of work he has done in his Christological proposal for Latin America and his treatment of Jesus Christ as the liberator. Therefore, in this task, the bulk of the hermeneutical presentation of the death of Jesus from the liberation theology context will be borrowed from his analysis. Unquestionably, Sobrino (1978:179) acknowledges that at the core of the Christian faith is the assertion that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God who died by crucifixion, also notes that this belief is the distinguishing factor between the new faith in Christ and that of other religious conceptions. Also of importance is the fact that the Cross of Jesus Christ continues to remain the dividing line between Christianity and all other religions of the world as articulated by Paul in 1 Cor. 1:23.

Sobrino (1979:179) observes that even though religious reflections on the Cross have not been an everyday affair, he contends that the few reflections that have taken place have not lucidly demonstrated the relationship between the “crucified God” and the Cross as embodying the “authentic originality of the Christian faith”. Sobrino is advocating that any reflection on the Cross should endeavour to bring out the fact that “the Cross of Christ implies a new

revolutionary concept of God on both the theoretical and practical level” (Sobrino, 1979:179). If the reflection does not consider this relationship between the “crucified God” and the Cross, Sobrino avers that it is flawed and only focuses on the notion that “we have been saved through Jesus’ cross”. His view is that such a reflection will be misleading and redemption will be perceived as a “magical conception” thus eliminating the element of scandal in the historical cross of Jesus (Sobrino, 1979:179). Sobrino has also noted that in certain quarters (Nietzsche) Christianity has been associated with grief maybe because of the link with the Cross but has noted that this trend has shifted, as Christianity has endeavoured to “elaborate a theology of the resurrection, looking to it as the paradigm of triumphant liberty and the joy of living which was lost in the Cross” (Sobrino, 1979:180).

Sobrino has made a noteworthy observation in terms of the significance of Good Friday and Easter Sunday in Latin America. The importance of the Cross can be seen as Good Friday, rather than Easter Sunday or Christmas has been the main Christian festival for the oppressed and peasants groups traditionally speaking. He avers that even though Good Friday has functioned as a substitute for responsible effort in the cause of liberation, he states that “popular intuition has rightly grasped the authentic element of Christian faith in Good Friday; it has often grasped it in very passive terms” (Sobrino, 1979:180). His assertion is that in recent developments in Latin America the Cross no longer functions as a symbol of suffering. It is no longer to be seen in terms of “dialectical moment which instantly brings about a positive moment of liberation” without first and foremost acknowledging that a process of analysis is required subsequent to achieving the positive moment of liberation (Sobrino, 1979:180). Sobrino strongly contends that theological reflection on the death of Jesus is an absolute necessity and in particular the crucified God, noting that without the Cross, the resurrection is merely idealistic (Sobrino, 1979:180).

Sobrino has advocated theological reflections on two levels. He has identified the first level as theological in the strictest sense in that such a reflection (as real happening in history) should answer the question of how the Cross of Jesus affects God himself. His assertion is that no reflection on the death of

Jesus can be viewed as complete and impartial unless this dimension was inculcated into it. The second level of reflection should lead us to see the significance of liberation in history and its Christian import. Sobrino also posits that to grasp the Cross of Jesus in all its profundity the Cross should not be isolated from the concrete history of Jesus or from God (Sobrino, 1979:181).

Sobrino has gone to some lengths to throw more light to the assumptions underpinning his hermeneutical presentation of the death of Jesus Christ vis-à-vis the Cross. First, he has noted how much emphasis was placed on the salvific and soteriological aspect of the Cross after the resurrection. His view is that this move robbed the Cross of its power and impact as God was removed from the whole process. Secondly, he states that “one way to begin to recover the pristine value of the Cross is to consider it as the historical outcome and consequences of Jesus’ own life, to view the Cross in terms of what happened before. ... challenging the truth of other religious and political gods and entering into conflicts with them” Finally, he affirms that “our theology of the Cross becomes radical only when we consider the presence (or absence) of God on the Cross of Jesus” (Sobrino, 1979:181-182).

In another piece of work undertaken by Sobrino “Jesus the Liberator” he has analysed the historical reasons why Jesus died (Sobrino, 1993:195-211). Sobrino has argued that “Jesus’ preaching and activity represented a radical threat to the religious power of his time, and indirectly to any oppressive power, and that power reacted” (Sobrino, 1993:196). His view is that Jesus was essentially involved in conflict and that brought persecution his way and that he was also aware of the ultimate consequences of his actions (death). Sobrino has also attested that “the historical Jesus did not interpret in terms of salvation, in terms of the soteriological models later developed by the New Testament, such as expiatory sacrifice or vicarious satisfaction” (Sobrino, 1993:201). What Sobrino is affirming is that “there are no grounds of thinking that Jesus attributed an absolute transcendent meaning to his own death, as the New Testament did later” (Sobrino, 1993:201). Sobrino has concluded that Jesus’ death was not a mistake but a consequence of his life. He adds “... If nothing more had happened after his death, if faith in Jesus had not arisen after the

resurrection, his end would have been recorded in history like that of so many others” (Sobrino, 1993: 210).

3.7.2 Liberation theologies’ hermeneutical presentation of the resurrection of Jesus

Assmann concludes his article by stating that “There is no way of separating the Cross and the resurrection without succumbing to alienating Christs” (Gibellini, 1979:149.) Assmann postulates a concept of a Christ of oppressive Christologies with two faces. He elucidates this concept by stating that “On the one side are all the Christs of the power establishment, who do not need to fight because they already hold a position of dominance, on the other hand are all the Christs of established impotence who cannot fight against dominance to which they are subject” (Gibellini, 1979:149-150).

Sobrino (1978:236-258), on the other hand, has explored some hermeneutical problems of the resurrection of Jesus. The crux of his investigation rests on ascertaining how the historical resurrection can be understood in the present here and now. Sobrino has articulated eloquently the fact that the resurrection as presented by the New Testament account does not connote resuscitation of a cadaver or a restoration of normal state of life but “It is an eschatological event in which the final reality of history makes its appearance in the midst of history – whatever that final reality of history might be understood to be” (Sobrino, 1978:236).

The hermeneutical presentation of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is divergent (cf. Marxsen, 1970; Pannenberg, 1968; Leonardo Boff, 1974) as can be seen in Sobrino’s critique of Bultmann’s work on the subject. Sobrino argues that Bultmann’s treatment of the resurrection is flawed in that he has ignored historical issues. Sobrino has also argued that Bultmann’s hermeneutics of the resurrection presents the empty tomb as a legend and has questioned his claim “that the traditions that deal with Jesus’ bodily apparitions are later inventions of the Christian community” (Sobrino, 1978:237).

Sobrino's own hermeneutical analysis does not see the resurrection as a historical event. He posits that the only thing that can be seen as a historical event is the "paschal faith of the first disciples". He concludes that "if Christian paschal faith is to be uninterested in the historical question, then the only access to an understanding of this event is faith". His concept of faith is not synonymous to accepting a truth; it rather means our "understanding of our sinful selves ... To have faith in the resurrection means to believe that the Cross is a salvific event" (Sobrino, 1978:237). Revisiting Bultmann's hermeneutical presentation on the resurrection, Sobrino has noted that his interpretation is existential; the Cross reveals humanity's sinfulness even though we are equally accepted by God. In essence, Jesus' resurrection from his perspective is anthropological rather than Christological in the strictest sense. This hermeneutical presentation that "Christ lives insofar as he is preached, thereby forcing us to choose between potential alternatives: a sinful life close up in itself or a life open to God" (Sobrino, 1978:237). Pannenberg's presupposition is that "theology cannot affirm anything that is not historically attested. He argues that since theology cannot affirm anything that is based on faith, revelation, or inspiration; ... either the resurrection of Jesus is historical and hence able to be laid hold by some historical methodology, or else we cannot talk about it at all" (Sobrino, 1978:237).

According to Leonardo Boff, Jesus' resurrection should be viewed "in terms of the proclamation of God's kingdom as liberation and in terms of the Cross as alternative to the kingdom". Boff asked "Is death, not life, to be God's final word on the destiny of Jesus of Nazareth and all human" (Sobrino, 1978:239.) Sobrino having examined some of the hermeneutical challenges with Jesus' resurrection has concluded that the best requisite for understanding the resurrection of Jesus is "a specific praxis which is nothing else but the following of Jesus". He has argued for this option because he believes firstly that "it is praxis based on love that concretizes hope and makes it specifically Christian hope" and secondly he affirms that love is the only thing that keeps opening up the horizon for history. His view is that we must continue to create our horizon of understanding, and we must keep alive our hope and praxis of love at every moment" (Sobrino, 1978:256-257).

The subject of hope is very prominent in an article by Cardinal Arns, the Archbishop of São Paulo published in 1981. Arns was an ardent exponent of liberation theology. In this article, he espouses the liberating characteristics of the Easter faith and recommends that this festival should never be taken for granted arguing that the ancient Jews [Exodus narrative] commemorated it as a celebration of Hope and victory. His assertion is that Easter is for Christians the day of Hope and Victory from the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

While encouraging Christians to use Easter to continue the mission of Jesus Christ and to lift the world out of the system of death and raise it to the Kingdom of Liberty, Arns also affirms clearly what this Easter faith means [liberation context]. He states clearly “Easter is hope for the poor, the afflicted and the hungry ... in order not to lose credibility and in fact to be witnesses of the resurrection ... with all who struggle for a more just and fraternal world” (Arns, 1981.) Affirming the historicity of Easter and its centrality in the Christian faith, he concludes “Easter is an historic occurrence. ... Christ accepted suffering and death ... He impels humanity toward the road of global liberation and definitive salvation ... in a community life based on truth, justice and love” (Arns, 1981.)

3.8 Liberation as salvation

The relationship between liberation and salvation or how they differ from each other has remained one of the major preoccupations in liberation theology discourse (Núñez, 1989; Gutiérrez, 2001:147-177; Min, 1989:79-115; Boff & Boff, 1988:1-13). Gutiérrez (2001:175) has postulated a concept of liberation with three dimensionalities to include “political liberation, human liberation throughout history and liberation from sin and admission to communion with God”. While accepting that these three dimensions of liberation affect each other, he argues that they are not the same but at the same time noting that one is not present without the others. Contending their distinctiveness, he affirms that “they are all part of a single, all-encompassing salvific process but they are to be found at different levels” (Gutiérrez, 2001:175). Expanding on the connectivity and distinctiveness of these different levels of liberation, Gutiérrez argues that “... liberation will not have conquered the very roots of human

oppression and exploitation without the coming of the kingdom ... the growth of the kingdom and is a salvific event; but it is not the coming kingdom, not all of salvation" (Gutiérrez, 2001:176).

Gutiérrez's argument is that salvation and liberation are deeply connected yet distinctive. He asserts that the very radicalness and totality of the salvific process require this relationship, and for this reason he warns "Those who reduce the work of salvation are indeed those who limit it to the strictly "religious" sphere and are not aware of the universality of the process." His view is that to do this is to postulate that the work of Christ only affects the social order indirectly or tangentially rather than its roots and basic structure (Gutiérrez, 2001:176). Gutiérrez questions the motive of those "who lift salvation from the midst of history where individuals and social classes struggle to liberate themselves from slavery and oppression to which other individuals and social classes have subjected them". He argues that those who undertake such activities are basically refusing the fact that "the salvation of Christ is a radical liberation from all misery, all despoliation, [and] all alienation" (Gutiérrez, 2001:176).

While asserting that the salvation of the whole mankind is centred in Jesus the liberator, Gutiérrez's notion of salvation is somewhat different to what is espoused by the majority of the Christian community. The statement below clearly defines Gutiérrez's concept of salvation: "Salvation is not something otherworldly, in regard to which the present life is merely a test. Salvation – the communion of human beings with God and among themselves – is something which embraces all human reality, transforms it, and leads it to its fullness in Christ" (Gutiérrez, 2001:149.)

Gutiérrez however is not the only voice within the liberation movement who has posited an etymology of salvation. González Faus has made a link between the concept of salvation and the miracles of Jesus Christ. In his view, miracles are perceived as liberative signs of the Kingdom of God, thus indicating what the kingdom will look like even though he has admitted that they do not bring overall solution to oppressed reality. He asserts that miracles are "real signs of the approach of God, and so generate hope of salvation" (Sobrinho, 1993:89).

Sobrino has expanded on the view propounded by Faus by arguing that miracles are not only beneficent signs but liberating signs too. He has concluded that “the miracles and all the actions and praxis of Jesus should not only be understood from the Kingdom, but also – dialectically- from the anti-Kingdom” (Sobrino, 1993:89). Sobrino has further observed miracles as plural salvation for the poor contending that since the poor saw salvation in the miracles, salvation should therefore be considered in the context of the poor.

He argues that salvation became absolutized after the resurrection and was “presented as an indivisible and eschatological reality expressed in the singular: salvation (from sin)” (Sobrino, 1993:89). In essence, salvation in the epistemology propounded by Sobrino and others has to do not with sin as noted in the Gospels but with the salvation of the poor from their endless daily evils (Sobrino, 1993:89). He concludes that “in order to understand Jesus’ miracles as liberative signs of the Kingdom ... historical setting in which they happened ... need for day-to-day salvation” (Sobrino, 1993: 90).

Núñez (1985:175-206) has explored the concepts of salvation and liberation from the perspectives of some notable liberation theologians. He maintains that Gutiérrez does not deny the reality of sin including personal sin except that his primary concern is on social sin. He cites Gutiérrez to affirm this proposition “therefore sin is not only an impediment to salvation ... sin is a historical reality ... because sin is a personal and social intrahistorical reality ... an obstacle to life’s reaching the fullness we call salvation” (Núñez, 1985:176). Núñez has also made a noteworthy observation of Juan Luis Segundo’s perspectives on the victory of Christ’s salvation. He asserts that Segundo’s emphasis with regard to salvation is “quantitative, not qualitative, and it can be interpreted in a universal sense”. Núñez has summed up the liberation notion of intrahistorical salvation or universality of salvation by stating that “the emphasis on the universality of salvation also has as its purpose to demonstrate that the salvific action of God encompasses all humanity here ... salvation with human liberating process through history” (Núñez, 1985:183).

Boff and Boff (1988:17) assert that "... then a commitment on the part of Christians to economics and politics involves a commitment to God, to the kingdom [and] to salvation". They also affirm that God's liberation is present within the historical liberation of human beings. While acknowledging the importance of understanding eschatology vis-à-vis salvation, they argue that: "salvation and the process of its concretization [is] in history [and that] salvation defines the terminal situation of the human being in God" (Boff & Boff, 1988:18.) In the light of this assertion, Boff and Boff conclude that "Liberation in Jesus Christ is historically identified in political, economic, and social liberation" (Boff and Boff, 1988:32.)

Min (1989) explores the dialectics of salvation with particular reference to liberation theology. He avers that "the relation between salvation and liberation, then, is a thoroughly dialectical relation ... the distinction ... is not between historical liberation and transcendent salvation ... but between liberation and salvation within the unity of salvation itself" (Min, 1989:90). Min presents three dimensions of liberation though different from that posited by Gutiérrez (2001:175) the sentiments are similar. Min's categories of liberation assert:

- that it [liberation] is revolutionary, in the sense of structural change and should be contrasted from developmentalism which connotes gradual improvement;
- liberation should be seen in terms of a constant and ongoing process of collective struggle against the forces of oppressive structures; it is not something given once and for all when it receives legal recognition, as are the freedoms of bourgeois capitalism; it is something to be fought for and deepened ever anew through social collaboration;
- that "while developmentalism assumes a harmonistic vision of society and conceals the existence of social divisions and contradictions ... create a classless society ... of the *status quo*" (Min, 1989:92).

On salvation Min concludes: "Salvation is neither a 'purely immanent process' nor a 'purely transcendent process', as it could not be identified with either 'subjectivist interiority' or 'ahistorical transcendentalism'" (Min, 1989:115.)

3.9 Summary

The foregoing analysis has examined the extent to which liberationists promote the ideologies of their movement (liberation) rather than the true biblical concept of salvation. Throughout this analysis, praxis as the mainstay of the liberation movement has remained irrefutable as the works of Bennett, Gutiérrez, Assmann, Boff & Boff, Rowland and Haight have affirmed.

The historical antecedents of the Latin Americans have necessitated a contextualized approach to theology, Christian vocation, reading of history and Scripture and a redefinition of the concept of sin, the Church and how salvation should be presented.

The overwhelming evidence from this analysis is the realization that in liberation theology movement, theology can only be done through action and in solidarity with the poor and the marginalised. The role of the Jesus of history has been emphasised rather than the Christ of the eschaton and the New Testament. The Christological proposal of liberation theology focusses on the historical relevancy of Jesus to the Latin Americans. To this end Jesus should be seen as a political figure who is actively involved in denouncing oppressive regimes, campaigning against unjust social structures and taking sides with those who are disenfranchised (Sobrino, 1978 & 1993).

The hermeneutical position taken by liberation theology on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ explains their epistemology of sin, anthropology, salvation and the kingdom of God. Jesus did not necessarily die as the Saviour of depraved humanity but as a liberator who was engaged in a conflict which exposed him to persecution which made him pay the ultimate price (death). The resurrection of Jesus Christ is not seen as a historical event (Sobrino, 1978 & 1993; Assman, 1979; Marxsen, 1970; Leonardo Boff, 1974).

The concept of salvation has been analysed from the perspectives of liberation theology and it is unquestionably not hermeneutically conceptualised in the same way as presented in both the Old and New Testament accounts. Despite making references to liberation from sin, the ultimate concept of salvation in liberation epistemology has to do with political liberation from social sin and

human liberation throughout history. Liberationists posit that salvation is not to be separated from the everyday struggles of the ordinary people in history who try so hard to liberate themselves from slavery, oppression and sufferings inflicted on them by individuals and other social classes. A dialectical relationship exists between the historical liberation postulated by liberation theologians on one hand, and the transcendent salvation presented by the Old and New Testament writers and the hermeneutically assertions articulated by orthodox biblical scholars on the other hand (Gutiérrez, 2001; Min, 1989; Boff & Boff, 1988; Núñez, 1985).

4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: SALVATION FROM THE PENTECOSTAL STANDPOINT

4.1 Introduction

Without any equivocation this study has established that liberation theology affirms the primacy of a critical reflection as the basis of understanding the dehumanisation conditions faced by Latin Americans. The belief that the sufferings and marginalization of the people of Latin America predominantly stem from the unjust economic and social structures inherent in their continent is not contested. Liberation theologians have been at the forefront challenging what they see as exploitation of the masses throughout history by owners of capital particularly from Europe and North America.

Despite their efforts to bring total liberation to the people, their methodology has been questioned on grounds of orthodoxy. Christians, especially from Evangelical Pentecostalism standpoint, have expressed deep concerns about the praxeological methodology adopted by Liberation Theology in dealing with the Latin American issues. The orthopraxis epistemology espoused by Liberation theology presents some serious etymological challenges, especially when addressing biblical concepts like sin, salvation and human sufferings and how to ameliorate them.

The view of this study is that while the efforts of the Liberationists are commendable, Pentecostalism can provide a viable alternative that is both biblical in approach and effective in restoring self-worth to the nameless people of Latin America and the many impoverished people of Asia and Africa, without compromising the liberating message of the Gospel. The message of the Gospel, as presented by Pentecostalism in its missiological endeavours in the Third World, is able to empower the people to become self-reliant and at the same time live at peace with those who own capital. Liberation from unjust social structures, according to Pentecostal epistemology, is quite distinct from salvation from sin.

Whereas liberation as espoused by the exponents of liberation theology is the only way to challenge the dehumanising influences in Latin America and contemporary society in general, the Pentecostal message of salvation can lead to both economic liberation and deliverance from sin as defined in the Holy Scriptures. Biblical salvation elicits great transformation in the individuals, thus enabling them to activate their God given potentials through hard work rather than using violence and revolutionary means to bring about emancipation.

This chapter will therefore be focusing on exploring further how Pentecostalism can provide a viable liberation framework to address the dehumanising influences of contemporary society. The formidable work done by the Pentecostal movement in the last one hundred years and in particular their successes in developing countries will be vital. This is crucial, especially as it can be shown that while the efforts and the presence of liberation theology are fast fading away, Pentecostalism is growing exponentially in Latin America, Asia and Africa.

4.2 The meaning of salvation from the Pentecostal standpoint

4.2.1 The history of the Pentecostal movement

The Pentecostal etymology of salvation cannot be fully understood without shedding some light on the history of the movement. The origin and development of the Pentecostal movement is so diverse that it cannot be pinned down to one event or to one named person. It is also presumptuous to look at the origin and development of Pentecostalism purely from North American and European perspectives, since indigenous Pentecostal history exists in Africa, South America and Asia. Warrington (2008:13) makes similar observation reiterating the multidimensionality of the movement. According to him, Pentecostalism should now be identified in the plural “Pentecostals” arguing that the singular term is no longer an adequate framework to encompass what the movement represents globally.

Notwithstanding the variegated nature of the Pentecostal movement, some scholars (Rhodes, 2005:311-312; Hollenweger, 2005:20-21; Warrington, 2008:1) have always attributed its emergence to what happened at the Church of Holiness in Topeka, Kansas (Agnes Ozman and Fox Parham spoke in tongues) and the Azusa Street revival led by Seymour. The question of who should be credited with the emergence of Pentecostalism has been debated unabated and there are two main schools of thought. Hollenweger (1999:41) has argued strongly that some Pentecostals were ashamed of their black origin so they looked for another founder. Those who are of this school of thought attest that Parham is the pioneer of the Pentecostal movement. Goff contends avidly that Parham and Parham alone is the founder of the Pentecostal movement. According to him, Parham should be solely credited as the formulator of the “ideological formula of tongues as initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit” (Goff, 1988:7). Even though Parham is credited with the initial evidence formula, Fletcher, a Wesleyan theologian, is said to be the first to use the term “baptism of the Holy Spirit” (Kay, 2009:27). It is noteworthy that Fletcher did not equate the baptism in the Holy Spirit as experiential evidence of salvation. Fletcher was concerned about the spiritual state of the individual and in his view this baptism was the process that leads to sanctification.

The other school of thought accredits Seymour as the father of Pentecostalism. Rhodes (2005:312) notes that the Azusa Street Revival birthed many of the well-known Pentecostal Churches of today (the Pentecostal Holiness, the Church of God in Christ, the Apostolic Faith, the Assemblies of God, the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship). Hollenweger (2005:23) also affirms the pioneering role of Seymour by stating that: “Take away Seymour understanding of Pentecost ... because there is hardly a Pentecostal movement in the world that is not built on Seymour’s oral black modes of communication.” The Assemblies of God firmly affirms that Seymour is the founder of Pentecostalism.

Since Pentecostalism has evolved into a global movement, it has become extremely difficult to define it. It is also clear that it has changed dramatically from what it used to be at its inception at Topeka led by Parham, who was a *Ku Klux Klan* sympathizer, and therefore deemed it right to segregate Seymour from the assembly because he was black. The Biblical dictum that God is no respecter of persons is personified in Parham. It is remarkable and inexplicable that God will use a renowned racist who advocated that one race is superior to the other to receive such impartation to pioneer the Pentecostal movement. The sovereignty of God is displayed here to demonstrate that He can use anyone to accomplish His plan and purpose in this world. The irony is that God has allowed a racist to receive a vision that will become a global phenomenon encompassing all races and culture, even though he does not subscribe to the equality of all humanity who are created in the image and likeness of God.

It will not be an exaggeration to state that it was God who divinely allowed Parham to give concession to Seymour to listen to his teaching from the side room, segregated from the rest of the congregation. The credit, however, should not be given to him and his action should not be viewed as a “benign paternalistic” a phrase coined by Geoff (1988:130, 132). This was not by choice but by divine intervention. There is nothing in Parham’s past that showed that he will love and care for this Negro slave. After all, Parham advocated for a hierarchy of races that relegated the Negro, Malay, Mongolians and Indians to the lowest stratum (heathens), while the Anglo-Saxons emerged at the top as the master race (Hollenweger, 2005:22).

If Parham’s philosophies were allowed to continue, then Pentecostalism would not have become the global phenomenon that it is today. God had another plan to spread the Gospel of salvation, which transcends every culture, race and human ideology, not by the racist preacher, but by Seymour who understood that this Gospel must be preached in the whole world displaying the love of the crucified Saviour. Parham must have acted as the surrogate and the incubator of Pentecostalism, but it was Seymour of Azusa Street revival that will take it forward to the ends of the world.

Parham taught that *glossolalia* or *xenolalia* was the initial evidence of the Holy Spirit's indwelling in the believer and the necessary seal of a missionary call. If he truly believed this concept, it is difficult to fathom how such an advocate is at the same time an ardent racist (white supremacist). Serious discussion needs to take place to establish the mindset of Parham in terms of how he can sustain his racist views and at the same time embark on a missionary task to spread the love and salvation of God to the so called heathens he comfortably ostracised in his local assembly. The Church cannot fulfil its missiological mandate by working in isolation. Global interdependency is necessary to spread the Gospel of salvation to the ends of the earth. It is obvious that Pentecostalism conceived and hatched by Parham, who practices exclusivism will not survive. Parham Pentecostalism will send a condescending message to the nations outside the Anglo-Saxon enclave. Jacobsen's analysis of how ecumenical the eight first-generation of Pentecostal leaders were both Parham and Seymour were grouped under those who were moderately in support of ecumenism (Jacobsen, 2010:3). Further analysis concluded that despite reflecting on the notion of Christian unity, Parham was unsure how this could be achieved; therefore at best his support for unity was in the abstract. He was very much aware of the challenges achieving unity imposes than how it can actually be achieved (Jacobson, 2010:8). It is therefore not surprising that when he visited Azusa Street where Seymour, who was more ecumenically sensitive had embraced people from different denominations, he ditched his benign paternalism and opted for hostility and blatant racism against his erstwhile spiritual son. Hollenweger (2005:23) has recounted how he vehemently denounced the mingling of races at Azusa Street.

The situation was different at Azusa Street under the leadership of Seymour. The Azusa Street revival was inclusive bringing together believers from all walks of life. According to Hollenweger (2005:20), "white bishops and black workers, men and women, Asians and Mexicans, white professors and black laundry women were equals". It is clear that Seymour has not allowed his experience at Topeka Kansas to influence him in a negative way. Jacobsen (2010:8) asserts that Seymour and the Azusa Street Mission are considered by many to be the origin of classical Pentecostalism. He further maintains that

even though the Seymour led Pentecostalism pledged to encouraging love and respect among all Christians, Seymour contended that some theological divisions were inevitable. Seymour, while upholding the doctrine of “speaking in tongues” as evidence of the Holy Spirit baptism, he did not esteem this doctrine over and above Christian love. A Christian brother was not defined by his ability to speak in tongues and prophesy. What was fundamental, is that the individual, is saved and was living according to the word of God. The manifestation of God’s loving and redemptive influences on the life of a Christian was esteemed high in Seymour’s Pentecostal thoughts than merely speaking in tongues. Jacobsen (2010:10) concludes that: “Seymour may not have been an explicit ecumenist, but his theology was infused with ecumenical sensitivity.”

If Seymour thought he would win his detractors by embracing all peoples of colour, culture, denominations into the Pentecostal assembly, he was wrong. On the contrary his adversaries, including religious and secular press as well as mainline churches increased. Being black, he was disparaged and sneered and his spiritual leadership was questioned just because he was not of the right race or colour. Even though the Pentecostal movement went backwards in America splitting into black and white Pentecostal churches or organizations, this was not enough to stop it from becoming a global phenomenon especially in Third World countries (Hollenweger, 2008:20). This brief historiographical account of Pentecostalism would be inconclusive without looking at the early classical Pentecostal churches and how it has now developed in the Third World countries.

4.2.3 The theology of the Pentecostal movement

The theology of the Pentecostal movement is so intrinsically interlinked to the traditions of Pentecostalism that one cannot be understood without the other. Notwithstanding this intrinsic relationship, some scholars (Ma, 2005:73; Chan, 2005:580; Clark and Lederle, 1991:109) also argue that Pentecostal theology is fragmented and cannot be defined as a unique whole. Their views are based on the fact that Pentecostalism has many definitions as Ma (2005:17) declares that “it is impossible to clearly identify what is the best definition of a Pentecostal”. According to Warrington (2008:18), the way to begin to understand Pentecostal

theology is not by focusing on its beliefs but identify the main theological foci of the movement.

Without necessarily claiming to have accurately identified the main theological foci of this movement, it is safe to declare that certain biblical concepts are at the heart of this movement. The main concepts, which are prominently advocated by Pentecostalism, include justification, sanctification, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and the eschatological return of Jesus Christ to set up the kingdom of God here on this earth in which He will reign supreme with the saints. What can be said with absolute certainty in Pentecostal theology is that Jesus Christ is at the centre and theological endeavours revolve around His person under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

In this theological construct, Pentecostals will always aver that Jesus Christ is the Saviour, the healer and the baptizer with the Baptism with the Holy Spirit. Some scholars, in discussing what constitutes the main theological framework of Pentecostalism, have identified the existence of diversities in the light of the different cultural settings that the movement operates, as well as the impact of the passage of time, which means that Pentecostalism as we see it today is different from what it used to be (Coulter, 2001:38-64). To emphasise this point of diversity in the Pentecostal theological focus, Warrington (2008:18) argues that the Korean Pentecostal theology for Korea consists mainly of “salvation, healing, the second coming of Jesus, the fullness of the Spirit and blessing”. The notion of blessing in this Pentecostal theology is the creation of Cho (1987:11-55), who advocates that God intends that the believer will prosper in every aspect of his life. Fundamental to all Pentecostals is the doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Despite the pivotal nature of this doctrine, divergent of views and practises exist within the movement. Some groups within the movement see the phenomenon as an empowerment for service, especially evangelism, while others see it as something that create a greater love for the Saviour, by the believer. Notwithstanding the fluidity in understanding and application, many believe that this baptism has the capacity to create in the believer a greater sense of the presence of God leading to sanctification as well as the manifestation of charismatic gifts (1 Cor. 12).

Despite this attempt to identify what constitutes core Pentecostal theology, Anderson (2004:60) is of the strongest opinion that it is not a common doctrine that defines Pentecostals but a common experience. Sepulveda (1992:93-108) advocates the same view as Anderson that Pentecostalism avows the primacy of experience over doctrine. Ellington (1996:16-38) is absolutely right when he comments that: "... the essential emphasis of Pentecostalism is not a teaching which must be believed or a proof which can be deduced and defended against all challenges, but a God who must be reckoned with in direct encounter".

Even though Kärkkäinen (2007:1-14) views Ellington's assessment, as an overstatement, he concludes that a personal, experiential encounter of the Spirit of God is an essential attribute of Pentecostals. In his estimation, the "essence of Pentecostalism cannot be limited to any theological formulation as spirituality and spiritual experience are primary in the Pentecostal movement". Anderson (2004:256) adds that it is this attribute (personal, experiential encounter of the Spirit of God) that best identifies the Pentecostal heartbeat. Personal encounters from the Pentecostal perspective are not just self-authenticating, but perceived as a means of bringing personal transformation to the individual believers, as the Spirit of God gets involve in their lives. As the Holy Spirit becomes deeply involved, Pentecostals develop an understanding, which does not just affirm a list of biblical beliefs or see God as a concept; beliefs and God are encountered experientially (Warrington, 2008:22; de Matviuk, 2002:205-222). In view of the ongoing discourse, Hollenweger (2001:43-45) is right to affirm that: "Pentecostalism is best expressed as providing opportunity for believers to engage in an adventure in fellowship with the Holy Spirit and each other." Notwithstanding the primacy of experience in Pentecostal thought, some scholars (Dube, 2002:41-52; Bueno, 1999:268-288) are right to warn against adducing any meaningless and empty sensations to an encounter with God. Dube (2002:41-52) makes an interesting point when he warns against any attempt to constantly maintain what he calls "an involvement in some active form of transcendence, identifiable event and moment of ecstasy".

Warrington (2008:27) rightly advises that if experience is to be validated as the authentic way of encountering God within the Pentecostal movement, it is absolutely necessary that adequate and ongoing guidelines are provided. The inculcation of such checks and balances within Pentecostalism will minimise the fears echoed by Dube and Bueno. Whereas this is an excellent suggestion, it is difficult to measure its feasibility, bearing in mind that Pentecostalism is diversified and its practices are not uniformed across the cultures.

The importance of the concept of experience and why it is preferred to doctrinal beliefs within Pentecostalism cannot be overemphasised. It is also clear that by not exalting doctrine over experience the Pentecostal movement is able to develop a good sense of ecumenicity. The Pentecostal *modus operandi* arguably can be said to be the main catalyst which has facilitated the spread of the Pentecostal fire across other denominations and many cultures.

4.2.4 Salvation from the Pentecostal standpoint

Asserting that Pentecostal theology focuses on experience does not in any way undermine their unwavering commitment to sound doctrine as found in the Holy Scriptures or as affirmed by other Bible believing faith groups especially the Evangelicals. Most Pentecostals are Trinitarian and therefore affirm the existence of God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit the same way as found in most Christian Churches. This is, however, different for that constituency of Pentecostals called “Oneness Pentecostal” who are uniquely “Christocentric” in their beliefs and practices. While it can be adduced that Pentecostal traditions focus on the Holy Spirit, there is no evidence that their teachings about God or Jesus are in any way or shape compromised. Scholars (Land, 1993:96; Del Colle, 1993:91-112) have weighed into this debate arguing that Pentecostalism is both Theocentric and Christocentric, but at the same time more “Jesu-centric” than “Spirit centred”.

This observation is debatable as Pentecostals affirm that Jesus is still working in the midst of the Church through the power of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 1:8, the disciples were asked to wait until they have received the promised Holy Spirit. The Church is the vehicle through which the Holy Spirit empowers believers to preach the Gospel which brings salvation. Pentecostals subscribe to this notion

of tarrying until they are endued with power, which will subsequently give the divine enablement for service. When Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit, He made it abundantly clear that the Holy Spirit will not be independent of the Saviour. The Holy Spirit will convict humankind of their sins and draws them to the Saviour who died to save them from their sins (John 16:7-11). Pentecostal theology will be flawed if it affirms the Holy Spirit at the expense of the second Person of the Trinity and vice versa.

Bible believing churches, including Pentecostals, unequivocally attest that Jesus came solely for the redemption of humanity. The concept of salvation cannot be understood from the Pentecostal perspective outside the life, ministry, death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The preaching of the Cross is believed to be the pivotal message of Pentecostalism so it will be unthinkable that Jesus will be marginalised in its doctrine of salvation. His incarnation can only be understood from the perspective of the salvation of the whole humankind, whose lives have fallen short of God's standard. Hollenweger (2005:249), explaining the state of humanity before conversion, declares that Pentecostals affirm the Western orthodox doctrine, which advocates the "utter depravity of human nature". In essence, humanity have sinned and incapable of helping themselves as a result of the original sin of Adam and Eve (Rom. 5:14-21). This depravity is what the Holy Spirit works on to bring us into a state of conviction and points us to the Saviour.

Hollenweger (2005:247) further argues that Pentecostals believe that conversion (regeneration) is a prerequisite for salvation to take place. He also affirms that regeneration is not a gradual process, but instantaneous. Some Pentecostals, however, do not affirm this instant bestowal of salvation because they argue that confession is necessary. For the older generation of Pentecostals, it is easy for them to define that moment when they were converted (2 Cor. 5:17), the moment when the old passed away and all things became new. This is probably not the same for the children born in the households of Pentecostals. Since they were born into the movement, it might not be easy to pinpoint accurately the exact time, place and date of the born again experience. This does not in any way or shape deny the fact that they

also have received salvation. This is crucial because not all children born to Pentecostal families respond to an altar call to validate their born again experience. There is no evidence that they have an experience akin to Paul's Damascus episode. As long as they continue in Sunday Schools and demonstrate that they subscribe to the teachings of the Church, they are encouraged to participate in sacramental ordinances (Water Baptism and the Lord's Super).

They are also allowed without obstruction to involve in ministries like the joining the Choir and the Youth ministries. This was not the experience of the old Pentecostals, who came in from the cold with no prior knowledge of Pentecostalism or the born again experience. For this group this dramatic transition from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of God leaves an indelible mark on the new believer. The date is remembered, the time and place are as vivid as if it happened just yesterday. The two scenarios do not adequately explain whether conversion is instantaneous or gradual or whether conversion is a precursor to full salvation. What is significant is the reality of their salvation. Therefore, as long as they have come to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and have accepted Him as their Lord and Saviour, not because of their parent's experience of salvation, but by their own personal experience, then their salvation is as valid as those who received this transformation instantaneously.

The issue here is how possible is it to actually confirm that at a stroke one is born again. Responding to an altar call and saying the sinner's prayer is not necessarily a proof that salvation has come to the sinner and that the old is indeed passed away. Those who disagree with instantaneous reception of salvation also argue that confession is necessary. They add that this must be made by the sinner in the presence of the pastor and some even go to the extent of advocating that confession should also be made before the victims of the offences. Only God knows the heart. No matter how we investigate and seek evidence to substantiate one's salvation, only the one who has experienced this remarkable transformation and a spiritual encounter can attest to what they have experienced. If life has indeed been transformed, the fruit of

this experience will be manifested in no distant time (Gal. 5:16-26; Eph. 2; Titus 2:11-15).

Some physical evidence of this new life is captured by the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel: "We believe that the change which takes place in the heart and life at conversion is very real one; that the sinner is born again in such a glorious and transforming manner that old things are passed away and all things are become new." The newly born again believer is now empowered by the Holy Spirit in pursuit of new desires and interests from what used to be. The new birth does not necessarily immune the believer from sin. The Bible does not teach sinless perfection. The Holiness and Pentecostal movement taught they could eradicate sin completely by advocating for a second stage regeneration or conversion. To argue that ultimate salvation is achievable by adhering to this second regeneration process is unbiblical and amounts to the doctrine of grace without conditions. Rockle (1963:2-13), in his critique of Hutten's work, is right when he unequivocally declares that the Bible knows not such a thing as 'grace without conditions'. He asserts that articulating such a view tantamount to heresy, which Satan has used to lead millions astray.

Salvation should be understood as the work of God. However, some within the Pentecostal movement postulate that the sinner has a role to play and that their salvation is incomplete without sanctification. Sanctification should be seen as a process, rather than some means of completely annihilating sin in the life of a believer. There will be no time in the life of the Christian when sanctification is fully achieved to the extent that the believer is no longer able to sin. All Christians are sanctified, despite the possibility of committing sin after they have received salvation.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings in the lives of the Corinthian believers, Paul addressed them as people sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be saints (1 Cor. 1:2). Only the grace of God will sustain the Corinthians as sanctified saints until Jesus returns. It is therefore unscriptural to use 1 John 3:6, 9 and 5:18 to argue that a believer cannot sin. The Pentecostals who understand salvation in this way have in actual fact misunderstood the true salvation by Jesus Christ, which is conditioned by grace. Being sanctified does not completely exonerate

the believer from sin neither does it nullify the miracle of salvation on their lives. The work of sanctification by the indwelling Holy Spirit will continue to point struggling believers to the Cross where the Saviour once and for all purchased their redemption.

Salvation is realised because the willing sinner is justified by faith and faith alone. Understanding salvation in this way enables the believer to live his life under the grace and mercy of God, who has accepted the death of His Son on the Cross as a sufficient payment for our sin in the past, present and the future. Martin Luther struggled with how to deal with sin after conversion, but was enabled by the Holy Spirit's when he gained understanding from Paul's writing (Rom. 1:17). The view espoused by some Pentecostals that God and His Son (King and Crown Prince) have done much for our salvation, but that our salvation is incomplete unless we are willing to make some minimal contribution (sanctification) and that it is this that completes our redemption is flawed.

Despite coming under the umbrella of Pentecostalism, the concept of salvation does conjure the same meaning to all Pentecostals. How salvation is perceived by a believer in a black majority led Church in America might be different from how it is understood by another believer in another black majority led church in Europe. The contrast is even wider when you compare mainly black Pentecostal churches to mainly white Pentecostal Churches. Salvation definitely does not connote the same meaning to Pentecostals in poverty stricken churches in Latin America, Asia or Africa. Hollenweger (2005:246-247) has postulated a theory to explain the variances in understanding. His concepts of *expressed* soteriology and *lived* soteriology are useful for this analysis. He argues that the statement: "I am saved" by a black Pentecostal worker in Birmingham will mean something different for a white Pentecostal insurance agent living in Holland. He argues that the black Pentecostal worker's conception of being saved is synonymous to the New Testament Greek rendering "*sozein*". Salvation understood in this way embodies his whole life (physical, psychological, cultural and spiritual existence), attributing everything to the saving grace of Jesus Christ. What this means is that he owes everything to Jesus Christ. This is not what the believer from Holland means when he talks

about being saved. He does not mean that he owes his life to Christ and would be dead without salvation. His concept of salvation is the realisation of a new sense of direction, which has spiritual meaning. He accepts that this affords him a new opportunity to forge new relationship in the body of Christ the Church, which also requires a change of priorities at times.

Hollenweger's insights are to be appreciated. However, the different perspectives do not really alter much theologically as the etymology of salvation broadly speaking encapsulates all of the divergent views. Their conceptions of the meaning of salvation do not challenge or question the purpose of salvation or the object of salvation. Their views are the product of their different cultural milieus or they are linguistically conditioned.

Even though Hollenweger's observation does not necessarily redefine the etymology of salvation theologically speaking, it cannot be ignored in the light of what is happening to Pentecostalism globally. What his analysis has revealed is that salvation means different things to different people according to the prevailing liturgy or cultural setting in which the Church is situated. If the centre of gravity of Christianity is shifting from the West to "the two-third world" (Asia, South America and Africa), as asserted by scholars (Asamoh-Gyadu, 1998:51-57; Beckmann, 1975:9-10; Barrett, 1970:39-54), then it is important to consider some of the Pentecostal etymologies of salvation emanating from these regions.

The exponential growths of Pentecostalism globally are prevalent in Asia, South America and Africa. It is also true that these are the regions where Liberation theology has its deep roots advocating "liberation" which is orthopraxeological and contrary to orthodox (Pentecostal) Biblical etymology of salvation. In order to develop a theological framework which can address the deep concerns of liberation theology in these regions, without compromising the truth of the Gospel, it is imperative that this study fully understands what constitutes salvation from the Pentecostal standpoint in Asia, South America and Africa. Pentecostalism can develop a liberation theological framework to challenge the dehumanising influences in society especially in Asia, South America and Africa, thus bringing true liberation which does not only challenge unjust social

structures but also addresses the depravity of humanity. Salvation properly defined in conjunction with the understandings developed in these regions (contextualization) will yield greater dividends in this pursuit.

Larbi (2002:87-106) makes some important observations asserting that Pentecostals have outstripped the mainline denominations in Ghana. His work shows that 62% of the Christian population in Ghana is Pentecostals with the Church of Pentecost as the largest Protestant denomination. Larbi also explains the meaning of salvation from the perspective of Ghanaian Pentecostals and makes some insightful observations. Larbi (2002:88) has based his study of Pentecostal conception of salvation on the “Akan people” who constitute the largest ethnic group in Ghana. His justification is that the core religious ideas of the Akans are representative of the whole of the Ghanaian society and to a larger “extent the fundamentals of the traditional African perception of reality as a whole” (Larbi, 2002:88). In order to explicate the concept of salvation from the perspective of the Akans vis-à-vis African Pentecostalism, Larbi’s observations may be summarised as follows:

- The traditional views of the universe, (Cosmology) and life in general posits a belief in the existence of powers in the universe which are more powerful than humans. In this regard, every human being is constantly attacked and oppressed by these evil powers to which every sufferings and spiritual oppression can be attributed to.
- Both Christianity and the Akan religion (including African Traditional Religion) acquiesce to the existence of these forces. Pentecostalism in Africa, unlike those in the West, attests to these forces and teaches that the Bible is not silent about them either. Most of the African scientists, the educated and the illiterate who took part in this survey, subscribe to the existence of these cosmic struggles.
- The need to maintain a cosmological balance due to the existence of good spirits and bad spirits. The Akans and many other ethnic groups in Africa distinguish between the God of the Bible and the other gods. They also believe that everything that happens to humans can be explained through religion. The God of the Bible is denoted by the names (*Onyame, Nyame, Onyankopon Odomankoma*), while the lesser gods

(capricious spirits) are called *obosom* or *abosom*. In any case the Supreme God (*Onyame*) is esteemed above *abosom*.

- Salvation can be explained in the Akan concept by understanding an important word “*Nkwa*”, which connotes life. The meaning includes the enjoyment of long life, good health, prosperity and fertility both of the womb and of one's livestock, peaceful living and the enjoyment of tranquillity. The end of human existence is the enjoyment of multifaceted *nkwa*. The most important term to explain salvation in the Akan language is *Nkwagye*, which is a combination of *Nkwa* (Abundant life) and *Gye* (to rescue). God is therefore called *Agyenkwa*, the liberator and preserver of abundant life, the God who redeem or rescues or delivers. God as *Agyenkwa* is the God who buys one out of servitude or penalty.

What Larbi (2002:88) has shown is that the Akan conception of salvation is not different from the Biblical etymology of salvation. However, what is clear is that the African conception of salvation is not so much about deliverance from sin and atonement for mankind's failure to meet God's standard: it is more about everyday issues of life. Salvation in the Akan and African context is about concrete realities of everyday life both physical and spiritual that face a person, family, community or tribe. It includes how to ensure that the harvest will be plenteous, how to ransom a person from servitude imposed upon them because they hail from a minority tribe or the deliverance from ancestral spirits or bondage. Since every human problem has religious connotation in such communities coupled with the primal postulation of the existence of forces which are antagonistic to humans, it is important to postulate salvation in a way that addresses these challenges. Onyinah (2002:107-134) has conducted a survey that should help one to appreciate the African Pentecostal conception of salvation. His work corroborates Larbi's assertion that most in Africa, notwithstanding their educational or religious background, believe in the existence of powers beyond that work against human.

According to Onyinah (2002:118), a “witchdemology” survey to ascertain whether Christians believe the reality of witchcraft made some interesting discoveries: 91.7% said yes, 7.7% said no with only 0.7% saying they were not sure. Onyinah also discovered that 100% of those who were well educated to first degree level said yes while 85% of those who had no official schooling also said yes. It is therefore not surprising that deliverance ministries have continued to increase in Africa as a brand of Pentecostalism. Another important observation from this study is the fact that many Pentecostals in Africa attest that in addition to salvation, every African Christian needs deliverance from witchcraft, demons, ancestral curses or disease before they are completely free. This is of course contrary to what the Bible teaches (2 Cor.5:17). This does not take into account that the Spirit of God cannot inhabit the same temple with evil spirits and vice versa. The works undertaken by Larbi and Onyinah confirm the assertion postulated by Hollenweger that salvation means different things to different people, especially Pentecostals from the West, Africa, Asia or South America. Larbi (2002:104) is right when he concludes: “The Pentecostals’ concept of salvation (both classical and neo-Pentecostal) today embodies the enjoyment of prosperity, which includes wealth, health and fertility. Herein lies the continuity between the primal concept of salvation and that of the Pentecostals.” This does not in any way affirm that African Pentecostalism perception of salvation is embodied only in physical and material well-being. Larbi is merely showing the relationship between the Akan and African worldview of salvation and how it relates to or complements the Biblical (Pentecostal) understanding of the concept.

The insights provided by Larbi, Onyinah and Hollenweger are useful. However, it is important to stress that African Pentecostalism, whilst attempting to address the existential needs of the people, does not necessarily advocate salvation that is void of the Biblical essentials. It is a fact that salvation from African Pentecostal standpoint goes beyond the born again experience to focus on seemingly mundane yet relevant issues that affect the people practically (healing, financial breakthroughs, marriage, child bearing, deliverance from witchcraft). It is however flawed to contend that in the African Pentecostal consciousness that salvation is not understood in terms of the atonement,

forgiveness of sin and reconciliation with God. The difference in African Pentecostalism conception of salvation is that the poor and the hungry must be fed first then the preaching follows. The recipients of these good deeds will come to appreciate that those who are blessing them so generously do that because they have encountered the God of salvation who desires that all humankind be saved. Mbiti (1986:158,159) articulates it well when he asserts that: “Often in the New Testament, individuals are physically saved first by Jesus and through the [actions] of the Apostles. Only later does the spiritual dimension of their salvation surface and grow.”

It is therefore inaccurate to suggest that African Pentecostalism conception of salvation is limited to “... more deliverance from physical evils than anything else that would be in the nature of spiritual or moral depravity” (Mbiti, 1973:408). Larbi (2002:98), concluding his interview about salvation among leaders of neo-Pentecostals with classical Pentecostal background asserts that “...almost all of them suggested as the first point the issue of original sin, the depravity of the human nature, and reconciliation that comes through the atonement of Jesus Christ. The material and physical aspects of ‘salvation’ were most invariably suggested as secondary”.

4.3 The source of salvation from Pentecostal standpoint

The study by Rhodes (2005) provides a useful panoramic understanding of the beliefs of the different Christian denominations including Pentecostalism. In addition to providing excellent historiographical portraits of these Christian denominations, Rhodes should be commended for his analysis of their declarations of faith especially in those areas where Christians are generally divided. Of the greatest interest in his analysis is the wealth of information provided to elucidate the perceptions of these Christian denominations with regard to the etymologies and sources of salvation. Despite the insightfulness of Rhode’s study, one area of shortcoming is limiting his work to the churches with their roots in North America or Europe. This should not present too much problem since the Pentecostals in Asia, South America and Africa are somehow

interconnected with their counterparts in the West. The only challenges will be where Pentecostalism has been indigenized so much that it has lost its “Western” flavour. The overarching consensus in Rhode’s (2005:311-340) survey is that all the Pentecostal denominations represented attest that:

- The sin committed by Adam and Eve resulted in all humanity inheriting a sinful nature. This sin separated humankind from their Creator thus causing the glory of God to depart and making humanity vulnerable to both physical and spiritual deaths.
- Humankind is so depraved and unable to save themselves from this predicament without the help of a Saviour.
- Restoration of all humanity is possible if they are prepared to accept God’s outstretched hand demonstrating His mercy, and grace which beckons all to repent. In His mercy God is offering a second chance to lost humanity to accept His plan of salvation
- In God’s plan of salvation, Pentecostals affirm Jesus Christ as the source of this salvation. Jesus Christ is the Saviour. He is the object of salvation (Acts 4:12; Isaiah 53:5). The grace of God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are the essential channels through which salvation comes to fallen humanity.
- All agreed that the sinner has to repent toward God and exercise faith in Christ in order to receive salvation. It is also clear that the need for regeneration was also explicated as part of the jigsaw in the salvation process. The process of regeneration is attributable to the work of the Holy Spirit, who brings conviction to the hearers of the Word of God.
- It is evident from Rhode’s survey that the sanctification debate is still unresolved as we see some placing it at the beginning of the salvation process, while some see it as the continuing work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.
- The overriding conclusion is that Jesus Christ as the main source of Biblical salvation underpins Pentecostal theology and beliefs without any disputation. Even though the survey covered Churches in North America and Europe, this is so fundamental

that culture or other sociological factors cannot change it. This is corroborated by the fact that most of these Pentecostal Churches have branches in Africa, Asia and Latin America and heavily influence what is taught and preached in these local assemblies.

4.4 The importance of salvation from the Pentecostal standpoint

The importance of Pentecostal epistemology of salvation should not be limited to saving sinful humanity from hell so that they can go to heaven to dwell in the presence of God. The Pentecostal strand of salvation also has more to do with earthly life. This is substantiated by its belief in the eschatological millennial reign of Christ when He will return to rule on this earth with his saints. More importantly, it is necessary to examine the aspects of Pentecostal salvation that addresses everyday issues of life that affect people globally. Salvation that can address the deep concerns of liberation theology in “the two-third world” must not only address personal sins, but also the disenfranchisements created by unjust social structures and exploitation. This strand of salvation must challenge the abuse of power by those who control the factors of production and promulgate social and political policies.

The Pentecostal tenet of salvation is important because it has the ability to address not just spiritual needs, but physical matters, including engagement with local polity, religion, sufferings and traditions. Salvation is important from a Pentecostal standpoint because it is one if not the most important vehicle to realise Pentecostal liberation theological framework to challenge dehumanising influences in society. The importance of salvation from the standpoint of Pentecostalism can also be seen from the pivotal position it occupies in Pentecostal theology. Scholars agree that in the absence of a well-established doctrinal framework, Pentecostalism can be understood by focusing at their main theological foci (Warrington, 2008:18, Thomas, 1998:3-19).

In order to understand Pentecostal theology and in particular the importance of salvation, one needs to look at what is at the heart of Pentecostalism. Land (1993:96) contends that justification, sanctification and Spirit-baptism are at the

centre of Pentecostal theology. Simpson (1843-1919) and McPherson (1890-1944) advocate for the fourfold Gospel (Jesus as Saviour, sanctifier, healer and coming Lord). Cho and Young advocate the fivefold Gospel formula, (Cho, 1983; Young, 2010:97). It is noteworthy that in this fivefold formula Cho has added blessing whereas the formula posited by Young consists of the good news of Jesus as Saviour, Sanctifier, Spirit-baptizer, Healer and Coming King. To demonstrate how important salvation is from the Pentecostal perspective, Young draws our attention to the fact that there is no universal agreement about how the five axioms should be ranked. He does not see this as a problem. His main concern is that salvation in Christ should always be the starting point (Young, 2010:95). He is also careful not to impose a western grid on the rest of the Pentecostal global community.

Another way of understanding the importance of salvation from the Pentecostal view point is how the concepts of relationship and transformation play significant roles. Conversion has already been discussed as a prerequisite for salvation in the Pentecostal consciousness. Having analysed records from the conversion narratives, Gooren (2010:93-108) makes some noteworthy observations. His assertion is that if conversion is comprehensive, then it should completely transform a person's self-image. In essence, a comprehensive conversion is about transformation and it affects the individual's life, thus bringing "new meaning to old events" (Gooren, 2010:93). In his analysis to understand what makes Pentecostal conversions unique, Gooren makes use of ethnographical conversion stories recorded in the United States, Guatemala and Argentina in the 1990s.

It is important to note that Gooren is an anthropologist, rather than a theologian. For this reason, his employment of anthropological and sociological terminologies can be understood. In order to trace people's lifetime Pentecostal conversion experiences, Gooren uses the term 'conversion career', which he defines as: 'the member's passage, within his or her social and cultural context, through level, types and phases of church participation' (Gooren, 2010:94). Developing a hierarchy of conversion career (pre-affiliation, affiliation, conversion, confession and finally disaffiliation) to show individual's participation

in religious affairs, he moves on to identify some of the factors, influencing conversion. His analysis identifies these factors as, personal, social, institutional, cultural (including political and economic) and contingencies (Gooren, 2010:94). Analysing these factors, Gooren makes a noteworthy observation about contingencies, explaining that factors such as random meetings with missionaries, acutely felt crises or stressful situation, which leads individuals into the orbit of various religious groups, are seen by Pentecostals as providence or divine intervention. Gooren's aims to use his model to understand the core rituals (accepting Christ as personal Saviour, water baptism by full immersion, sanctification, speaking, singing and praying in unknown tongues) involved in Pentecostal conversion process. In addition, Gooren is using his study to analyse how these core rituals are integrated into the conversion narrative using the classical Pentecostal formula as a paradigm. The following can be deduced from the assertions that Gooren (1966:95-96) makes:

- The Puritan conversion ideal is a precursor to the contemporary individualised conversion concepts in Evangelical and Pentecostal churches
- Notwithstanding, Evangelicals and Pentecostals have drawn on a limited number of the standardized formulas to describe their conversion
- The most common way of expressing one's conversion included: "Accepting Christ as one's personal Lord" or "Accepting Christ as one's personal Saviour"
- Others expressed their conversion in terms of "surrendering, yielding or giving themselves to Christ"

Analysing these conversion narratives, Brereton (1991:55) notes how the terms "surrendering" and "yielding" were used by both males and females. She notes, however, that the terms were used more by females and this raises some questions for her since women are more likely to use these words in terms of 'yielding' or 'surrendering' themselves sexually. Brereton's observation exposes the lack of understanding which people generally have about the relationship between the believer and the Saviour in the salvation or conversion experience.

Brereton's observation is possibly stemming from her background as a historian and not as one who has gone through the conversion experience. The relationship between the sinner who has received salvation and the Saviour who has lavished His love has nothing to do with gender or sex. The 'yielding' and 'surrendering' have nothing to do with sexual control, but have everything to do with the Lord who emptied Himself of His glory to die a shameful death on the Cross for the sinner (Phil. 2:7-8). This explicates the bond of relationship which is now been confessed.

Brereton contends that in the passage of time at the beginning of the twentieth century, converts began to use conversion languages that exemplify the deep relationship they have for the Saviour. According to her, terms like 'having a personal relationship with Christ', 'Christ as their personal Saviour', 'Jesus died for me personally' or others claiming to 'knowing Jesus personally' or 'having personal knowledge of Him' became the norm in the conversion narratives of Pentecostals (Brereton, 1991:58). Jesus was now addressed more colloquially as a 'friend' and the converts assert that they have 'accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour' rather than Jesus accepting them.

This conversion narrative indicates that their salvation was far from Paul's Damascus experience when he was forced to yield (Acts 9). The Pentecostal conversion narrative demonstrates that believers choose to yield or surrender to the Saviour without been coerced or for fear of hell. This modern conversion formula and the deep sense of relationship it engenders is a far cry from how Gooren understands conversion narrative under the Puritans. He states: "The Puritan concept of salvation is gloomy ... their efforts to reach God are vain and sinful ... even after going through hell on earth, the Puritans could never be fully certain that they would go to heaven" (Gooren, 2010:95). On the contrary, the level of deep relationship developed by Pentecostal converts enables them to have an ongoing assurance by the Holy Spirit, who continues through the process of daily sanctification to validate this new life in the Lord Jesus Christ. So it can be concluded that one of the benefits of salvation from Pentecostal point of view is the development of deep personal relationship between the convert and the Lord. This is the essence of Pentecostal salvation. This does

not mitigate the assertion by Gooren when he declares: “Fear of dying and going to hell is still an important motivation for converts. Baptism is the core ritual that ensures Evangelicals and Pentecostal of their salvation” (Gooren, 2010:97).

Transformation is another cardinal point that explicates the importance of salvation from the Pentecostal standpoint. Following on from the conversion narratives postulated by Gooren, the testimonies of the new converts are laden with instances of unique transformation. Cantrell (A Pentecostal convert in USA) testified that a life of emptiness was replaced by a life that was meaningful and purposeful. The Guatemalan and Nicaraguan Pentecostal testimonies recorded evidence of transformation, which manifested in the new convert’s hate for the sinful lifestyle (drinking) that was previously enjoyed (Gooren, 2010:98). McPherson miraculously transformed from a state of apostasy having denied the existence of God and the credibility of the Bible to founding one of the largest classical Pentecostal movements in history (Brereton, 1991:123).

The transformations experienced by Pentecostal converts are attributable to the work of the Holy Spirit (Pneumatological soteriology). The conversion narratives of all the Pentecostals studied by Gooren attest to their ‘yieldedness’ to the Holy Spirit at a point in time in their conversion career. This took place when they received the Holy Spirit Baptism. In their testimonies, they explained this phenomenon as “seized by the Holy Spirit”, “healed by the Holy Spirit”, or “filled by the Holy Spirit” (Gooren, 2010:107). Commenting on this experience Brereton states: “Pentecostals view the experience of receiving the Spirit as the final step in a progressive surrender ... the baptism in the Spirit represents the extreme in ‘yieldedness’ to God ... Pentecostals allow the Holy Spirit to supersede their intellects and wills ... ‘they pray in the Spirit’” (Brereton, 1991:70).

The notion of yielding totally to God explains the outward manifestation of the inward transformation which has taken place in the new convert. Even though the convert has surrendered his/her intellect and will to the Holy Spirit’s guidance, this is not to say that the individual is now floating in the spirit and has no control of his actions or deeds. What is clear is that by accepting the

Holy Spirit's power in their lives, there is a visible change from the way they used to perceive things, especially their worldviews, which is now moderated by the indwelling Holy Spirit. Analysing the testimonies (males and females), Gooren has concluded that women were more open in describing what caused them to accept the Pentecostal message of salvation. Women, due to their gender socialisation, openly expressed their fears, compared to men who followed their traditional reluctance to express their fear (Gooren, 2010:107). He concludes, however, that the Guatemalan Pentecostal men were ready to describe their conversion experience without diluting the emotional aspects. He asserts that men were seen under the influence of the Holy Spirit demonstrating brokenness, while women, who were previously reserved, rose up to take responsibility of difficult challenges. From his study, he affirms that Pentecostalism has the potential to transform traditional gender patterns, but adds that this cannot be achieved in isolation. The social, institutional and cultural elements have to be factored into the individual and societal transformational process. If the Pentecostal efforts identified in Gooren's study are going to be sustainable, then Pentecostals must ensure that people do not just affiliate with the movement but join it fully. This is the only way for them to benefit fully from the alternative repertoire of scenarios or schemas, which the movement offers to guide the behaviours of its converts daily (Strauss and Quinn, 1994:284-300).

The message of salvation proclaimed and the methodology they adopt are the key factors in understanding why the Pentecostal movement is making great progress in transforming lives, societies and cultural norms in many developing countries. Robbins (2004:117-143) makes a noteworthy observation in this regard stating that: "Pentecostalism expands via a simultaneous process of 'world-making' and 'world-breaking.'" The transformation experienced by Pentecostal converts can be perceived as a break from the past. In an African context, it could be the abandonment of sacrifices to ancestral spirits or celebrating festivals in honour of the dead. Meyer (1998:316-349) is right when he argues that it might not necessarily be a break from coeval beliefs and practises, but something deemed as 'backward' or even 'satanic'. He further asserts that Pentecostals have the tendency "to mobilize a diabolizing stance

toward indigenous god, which are recast as demons operating under the aegis of Satan” (Meyer, 2010:121). This explains the importance of deliverance services in Pentecostal settings globally. The newly born again believer is expected to make a transition from the past into the new through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is not uncommon that those who convert to Pentecostalism disassociate existing social and cultural affiliations. A new identity is developed which sometimes can mean cutting off from extended families especially if their beliefs are contradictory to the newfound life in Christ and Pentecostalism. Martin (2009:24) puts it more succinctly: “Pentecostalism launches an alternative understanding of the person as a mobile self with a ‘portable identity’ and concomitant ‘portable practice’ and ‘transportable message’, all being conducive to spatial and social mobility.” What the Pentecostal experience does in the transformational process is to replace the old with the new. As a global movement, it has developed its own imageries of the world and these are transmitted to its adherents. Meyer (2010:121) notes “... Pentecostalism as a distinctly global religion, with its own imagery of the world as a whole that transcends more limited, local worldviews and promises to involve believers in a global born-again community”.

4.5 Pentecostalism: the relevance of the concept of salvation in a contemporary society

The concept of contemporary society in this paper will be used in reference to current modern era or present age. This notion of current modern era or present age will also be denoted by what is generally referred to as the 21st century society. In order to understand how the Pentecostal concept of salvation can be of relevance to this current age, it will be necessary to identify some of the philosophical constructs which have dominated this era and the major proponents of these ideas. Like many of these sociological terminologies, the concept of contemporary society does not lend itself to a single all-encompassing definition. It is not uncommon to identify elements of postmodernism and modernism when ascertaining its etymology. Even though modernism and postmodernism elucidate the meaning of contemporary society,

it is generally viewed that postmodernism is everything that modernity is not. What is also clear is that notwithstanding what this period is “christened” evidence of stacking similarities in the ideologies they espouse abounds. For these reasons, the words will be used interchangeably.

Grenz (1996:12), an eminent Evangelical/Pentecostal scholar, in his analysis of the prominent key issues of contemporary society, argues that scholars have reached a consensus on one point that “postmodern phenomenon marks the end of a single universal worldview”. This assertion explicates the fact that people everywhere are not the same as we are, but different. The true picture of contemporary society is that cultural pluralism exists. In other words, in the contemporary society milieu, different religions with different forms of worship exist and lifestyles will be different and at times contrary to what we accept as normative because of our culture, level of civilization or religious beliefs. Connor (1989:9) makes an interesting observation about the contemporary or the postmodern society, which he calls “the postmodern condition”. This idea indicates the multiplication of centres of power and activity and the dissolution of every totalizing narrative, which claims to govern the whole complex of field of social activity and representation. Smith (2006:23) is right to infer that this observation is in consonance with the view espoused by Lyotard (1984:xxiv) that postmodernity is ‘incredulity toward metanarratives’. In view of this he suggests that the Church should be motivated:

- to recover the narrative character of Christian faith, rather than understand it as a collection of ideas
- to recover the confessional nature of our narrative and the way in which we find ourselves in a world of competing narratives (Smith, 2006:26).

The contemporary society, with its postmodern features is associated with the delegitimation of accepted metanarratives, which are held to be authoritative. Adams (1997:4-18) made similar observation and asserted that the postmodern society is defined by ‘unlimited pluralism’. From these assertions it can be deduced that the contemporary society or the postmodern 21st century era espouses views which are contradictory to Judeo-Christian worldview vis-à-vis Pentecostal concept of salvation. This is not surprising, since some of the most

notable exponents who have influenced our contemporary society (Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Jean-Francois Lyotard and Richard Rorty) did not affirm a belief in a personal deity (Groothuis, 2000:38).

Since postmodernists deny the existence of metanarratives, advocating that there are no grand stories which give meaning to all life and which define what is true, it can be concluded that their tenets are at variance with accepted Biblical metanarratives. The Christian belief that all humanity is depraved and in need of salvation, which comes only through the finished work of Christ, will be contested. In the Christian worldview, salvation in Jesus is an absolute truth. However, from what has been discussed above, the contemporary society worldview is enshrined in relativity of truth and without any universally accepted truth. Truth is therefore relative and private to the individual. Levy (1988:18) argues that since postmodernism advocates the deconstruction of the text, the implication is that at any given point the text of Scripture will be conditioned by a network or web of relations that will determine the meanings of the text.

In other words, the text will never have “once and for all time” meaning or one single ultimate meaning. Theologically speaking, Gellner (1992:35) argues that the notion of deconstruction will replace “objective truth” of the word of God with “hermeneutic truth”, which in turn erodes biblical authority. The profound implication this will have is that anybody can interpret the Bible without seeking spiritual or doctrinal validation. Bauman (1992:102), commenting as a sociologist puts it rather well when he states: “... postmodernity is the permanent and irreducible pluralism of cultures ... Things which are plural in the postmodern world cannot be arranged in an evolutionary sequence ... no criteria of validation is available ... Without universal standards ... how to secure communication and mutual understanding between cultures”.

The challenges of contemporary society should not be perceived only from the philosophical lens as discussed above. What is important is how the Pentecostal movement can use its message of salvation to address real humanitarian issues brought about by postmodernism in the face cultural pluralism, erosion of moral standards and authority, increased inequalities, poverty and exploitation, AIDS and HIV epidemic, malnutrition, high infant

mortality rates and many more vices in the developing countries. Many in today's society including the developed countries have lost hope and confidence in the established institutions. Perhaps the Church is the only hope to restore their dignity back to them. There are also those who have lost hope in the mainline churches because of their associations with the capitalists who exploited them. Others disparage governments whose policies have continued to erode their standard of living thus relegating them to the fringe of society. This paper is asserting that the liberating framework endemic in Pentecostalism can make a difference in contemporary society by challenging the dehumanising conditions facing the majority in two thirds of the world.

The challenges of dehumanising influences of contemporary society are not limited to Africa, Asia and South America, but include Europe and North America. While it is also clear that modernity and postmodernism are primarily Western ideological mindset, it does not mean that their influences are limited to the West, but throughout the world. Since the world is in transition, the phenomenon of modernism has continued to bring with it capitalism, urbanization, telecommunication, technology, which in turn has facilitated the spread of Western popular culture across the globe notably in Africa and Asia.

There is, however, a school of thought that argues that Pentecostalism, despite the exponential growth it has experienced, cannot adapt to modernity. According to one of the scholars who support this view, Pentecostalism will continue to function to help individuals make transition from premodern to modern society (Stewart, 2008:2). In order to strengthen his point, Stewart sites the decline of Pentecostalism in Canada, Western Europe and South Korea as evidence that Pentecostalism has not adapted to the needs of a modern constituency (Stewart, 2008:3). Stewart's assertion is important because, if this is the case, it is necessary to ascertain how he arrived at this conclusion. If his conclusion is to be accepted as a given universally, then one needs to explain the exponential growth of Pentecostalism not just in rural Africa, Asia and South America, but also in major cities of these continents where both the rich and the poor congregate to worship.

It is necessary to clarify whether the decline of Pentecostalism in Canada and Western Europe are as a result of conflicting ideological battlegrounds, where Christianity and other New Age and humanistic religions or ideologies are thriving as a result of secularization, political correctness, and religious pluralism. What is clear in Western Europe in particular is that it is not Pentecostalism that is declining, but the mainline traditional churches. Whereas the mainline traditional churches are dwindling in membership and church buildings are sold off to flourishing IT businesses, turned into museums or flats or in some cases sold to Muslims to be used as mosques or Islamic centres, the Pentecostal churches in London in particular are exploding with no adequate accommodation to house them. Most Pentecostal Churches in the capital cities of Europe are located in Business Centres or disused warehouses.

In the United States (modern), the big churches located in the big cities are mostly Pentecostals with some exceeding twenty thousand members and holding three to four services on Sundays. This fact is not in any way attempting to validate or legitimize the faithfulness of these mega churches purely because of their sizes. What cannot be disputed is that Pentecostalism is thriving in America, one of the wealthiest and most modern countries in the world today (Kosmin and Lachman, 1993).

In order to sustain his argument, Stewart attributes this to the fact that America is in a unique situation. He claims that 'in no other modern Western state is the disparity between rich and poor greater than it is in the United States' (Stewart, 2008:19; Bond, 2001:5-7; Johnston, 2005:82-91). In his view, Pentecostalism will continue to grow so long as the American society continues to have what he describes as the 'permanently poor' who desire the community of equals, ecstatic releases and apocalyptic promises (Stewart, 2008:19). Stewart (2008) and Kosmin and Lachman (1993) attest to the fact that Pentecostalism is growing in the United States. Stewart has, however, failed to recognize that growth in the Pentecostal movement is attributable to factors other than economic disparity. His view will be strongly contested by those who believe that church growth is also the work of God through the power of the Holy Spirit. Every local assembly will characteristically remain a mixed multitude as typified

in the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt. 13:24-30). This is why the size of the congregation cannot be used as a validation of the level of spirituality or soundness of doctrine, but suffices to say that people are still gathering in the name of God and as Pentecostals. Everyone in the mega churches is not necessarily from a poor socioeconomic background. It is also clear that some mega churches cannot be authenticated as genuinely interested in the spiritual wellbeing of the congregation.

In most African countries, particularly in Nigeria and Ghana, while it can be said that these economies are still developing (premodern) and may justify Stewart's assertion that Pentecostalism attracts only people from dislocated socioeconomic backgrounds (industrial proletariats), there is no evidence to support his thesis. In the capital cities of these countries, the rich and the poor, the educated and the illiterates as well as politicians and market traders all sit and worship God happily in the same auditorium. The same is the case in London and most mega Pentecostal churches in America. Those who were attracted into the Church because of the powerful message of salvation they have heard and received when they were poor, do not leave or graduate out of the Pentecostal churches. There is no evidence to prove that they leave to join a more affluent congregation (mainline traditional church) because they are better off socially and economically.

By his own admission, Stewart (2008:4) asserts that not all the new industrial proletariats became Pentecostals. He also agrees that not all who became Pentecostals were necessarily products of Methodist Holiness teaching traditions where spiritual rebirth and moral living developed during the Great Awakenings were emphasised. He argues that the common factor linking all the Pentecostal believers was religious background that contained elements of emotive spirituality. Wacker (2001:10) supports this view by asserting that emotive spirituality is one of the hallmarks of Pentecostalism because of its ability to understand the human encounter with the divine.

Examining the impact of salvation on American society according, Stewart (2008:5) has drawn from the teachings of two prominent historical pioneers in American Christianity. According to his observations, the teachings of Finney

(Liberal Protestant denominations) and Wesley (Conservative Christian denominations) are the dividing lines. On the one hand are those who advocate for divine intervention and restructuring of American social institutions. On the other hand are those who hold that salvation was an individual matter and could not necessarily transform the American society. The former were adherents of Finney, whose teachings on holiness and Christian responsibility focused on the salvation and renewal of American society (Noll, 1965:103-113). The latter followed Wesley's teachings on holiness and Christian responsibility, which focused on the renewal and salvation of the soul (Lindstrom, 1997:1-21). His adherents in turn approached their role in society by emphasising on the salvation of the individual soul, rather than social intervention. Whereas the liberals approached things pragmatically, the conservatives believed that the change of the American society will be the work of God. Stewart (2008:6) notes that when the American society began to spiral into further decay, the conservative changed their approach and adopted a more apocalyptic way averring that God would have to destroy the existing society and replacing it with a new one.

What Stewart has inferred from this change of approach by the conservative is that the Pentecostals rejected the liberal approach, but adopted the apocalyptic method instituted by the conservatives. The resultant effect, which has a negative connotation, is the abandonment of the institutions which exist to improve the social and economic status of poor people in society. By adopting a mindset that was antagonistic to social institutions, the Pentecostals became more alienated and their socioeconomic conditions worsened. Anderson (1979:229) attests that during this period, Pentecostals not only rejected pursuing their affairs solely through socioeconomic intervention, but also refused joining labour unions, social lodges and political parties because these were worldly activities.

Even though such a stance might have worsened the socioeconomic situations of the Pentecostals, they had an alternative way to survive. They created a viable religious community and espoused a belief system that helped them accept their place in this social order. The Pentecostal movement has continued

to adopt the same principle to sustain those who are alienated and disenfranchised in today's society. The message of salvation propagated by Pentecostalism contains an eschatological dimension that enjoins its adherent to understand that life does not necessarily end here. Every Pentecostal adherent imbibes the notion of the second coming of Christ and the millennium Kingdom of God in which the believer will be rewarded for faithfulness and not succumbing to the pressures of this present life.

The work by Stewart has analysed the situations in America (1865 – 1920) and Latin America (1930-1990) and has come to some noteworthy conclusions to support his thesis. His view is that what happened in the American situation can be used to understand or explain what happened in Latin America. In other words, the pull factors to Pentecostalism in America during the Gilded Age with massive industrialisation and social dislocation are similar to Latin America's Great Depression of 1929. Notwithstanding the fact that America and Latin America have different cultures, experienced their economic depression, civil wars and economic growth at different times, Stewart believes that the situations resulted in similar outlooks and that they also affirm the functions of Pentecostalism in society. Stewart (2008:9) summarises the similarities as:

- First, most Pentecostals were part of the massive rural-urban migrations that occurred in order to fulfil the need for urban-industrial expansion.
- Second, a disproportionate number of Pentecostals come from the lowest of the social strata, namely the urban-industrial proletariat.
- Third, the majority of Pentecostals came from religious traditions that already emphasized emotive religiosity.
- Fourth, Pentecostals did not respond to their undesirable situations with social or economic activism but rather with a religious solution being Pentecostalism itself.

These observations might have been true during the period Stewart studied. However, they cannot be accepted as the basis of analysing and understanding the relevance of Pentecostalism and their tenets in today's society. Even though Stewart does not believe that Pentecostalism is sustainable in modern society,

his work has affirmed some important Pentecostal distinctives, which are still valuable and help to explain why the movement is growing exponentially in many continents of the world. The message of salvation advocated by Pentecostalism is relevant today as it was at its inception. Anderson (2004:285) is absolutely right when he states that Pentecostalism is: “flexible and resilient enough to adapt to and be at home with both modernity and its elusive successor, post-modernity.” The functions of Pentecostalism identified by Stewart (2008:10-14) include:

- A Restored Sense of Community.
- The Ecstatic Re-enchantment of the World
- Apocalypticism – Hope for the Future, Purpose for Today

Even though Stewart asserts that Pentecostalism cannot adapt to modernity, at the same time he suggests that Pentecostalism has adapted itself in modern nations with large middle class, small lower class and few people who oppose modern values (Stewart, 2008:17). Pentecostalism’s ability to adapt to modernity is corroborated by a number of scholars (Anderson, 2004:285; Griffin, 1988:28). They postulate a view that Pentecostalism, in order to be relevant in these modern nations, have, tempered their theology by shifting from their proselytization and radical stance, which appealed to the lower class to something more moderate and void of sectarianism. Niebuhr (1951:45-82 & 190-229) understood the process of adapting to changes and challenges of modernity when he affirmed that the trend is no longer ‘Christ against culture’ but ‘Christ the transformer of culture.’ The Pentecostal movement has survived where other faith groups have failed because of its ability to contextualize its theology and salvation message to meet the needs of people from different socioeconomic backgrounds. It is also not a question of the Pentecostals ditching the fundamental tenets of their faith (strong revivalistic, eschatological and restoration beliefs with great emphasis on Christ’s imminent return) espoused by the founding father (Seymour, 1906:3 & 1907:6), but a matter of adapting the same message of salvation to a new generation in a new sociocultural milieu.

4.6 Pentecostalism: the proclamation of the Gospel of salvation in a contemporary society

The missiological mandate given to the disciples and the Church by Jesus Christ is crystal clear in Scripture under the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20, Mk 16:15-18, Acts 1:7-8). The command was not discriminatory in terms of who should receive this message of salvation embodied in the Gospel. It was a clear command to preach the good news to all humankind irrespective of their anthropological disposition, class, race, social and economic status or geographical location. The Gospel must be preached to the ends of the earth. The Christian faith communities are generally perceived as the extension of the work Jesus and the disciples started. The fact, however, is that the world in which Jesus and His disciples conducted their missiological assignments is different from ours. For this reason, it will not be sustainable for the contemporary faith communities to adopt the same methodological approach they used in propagating the Gospel. This is not to understate the abiding principles enshrined in their work, which can be adapted to deliver the same message with power and clarity as they did several years ago. The Bible remains the blueprint from which the Gospel of salvation, must flow irrespective of the transformational process the world and its inhabitants have undergone.

The reality is that the world has undergone such a huge cultural shift that the methods used in the twentieth century to propagate the Gospel will not yield the desired harvest in the present world. The present world is characterised by postmodern traits, which is typified by the erosion of all foundations of truth, morality and interpretative framework (White, 2001:169).

Scholars agree that the cultural shifts demand a reevaluation of Christian ministry and activities in the light of the challenges they pose. White (2001:169) recalls how Evangelical Christianity in the past expended all its energies and resources on the transformation of individual lives by the proclamation of the Gospel. He also concludes that this was done at the expense of ignoring what was happening in the contemporary cultural environment. He postulates that this approach was a mistake. His assumption is that the Evangelicals were not proactive in taking full cognisance of the shifts within the contemporary cultural

environment. His assertion is that since contemporary environment was also shaping the individuals they were trying to reach with the Gospel, they should have adapted their strategies to suit these shifts. The truth is that people are generally a product of the cultural environment in which they live. Grenz (1996:161-162) is more commendable of Evangelical Christians. He asserts that: "... devoted much energy to the task of demonstrating the credibility of the Christian faith to a culture that glorifies reason and deifies science ... the Gospel have often been accompanied by a rational apologetic that appeals to proofs for the existence of God, trustworthiness of the Bible and the historicity of Jesus' resurrection".

The two views presented by White and Grenz are very important. While it is important to be apologetic in defending the truth of the Gospel, it is equally important that Christianity does not divorce itself from the cultural environment which conditions the very people it is trying to reach. This imbalance in Christian ministry was one of the reasons for the advancement of liberation theology. The theologians of Latin America held the view that Western theology was pure scholasticism and void without any regard to the reality on the ground. If the Pentecostal movement is going to make a lasting difference in today's world, it must learn from the mistakes of the early Evangelicals who went on a collision course with the great intellectuals of the Age of Reason. Their efforts should not be expended on what Grenz (1996:161) refers to as the "propositional content of the faith, seeking to provide a logical presentation of Christian doctrine" only. There is time and place for that aspect of the ministry, but the liberation of the individuals through practical efforts and activities based on Christian love and the truth of the Gospel should be paramount.

Liberation theologians failed because they deviated from Christian orthodoxy, thus practising theology from below. Whereas their attempts to bring socioeconomic and political liberation to the Latin Americans are commendable, they neglected the most important agent of human transformation and social change. Biblical salvation as espoused by Pentecostals, when well implemented, should bring a transformation in the individual, which can also affect the community as a whole. Revolutionary liberation advocated by

Liberation theology promises so much but delivers so little, as the owners of capital are threatened and alienated, resources are siphoned out of the system leaving the people even worse than before.

Contemporaneity is no more a Western cultural phenomenon. Culture is readily exportable through the media. The age of the Internet, social networks, music and mobile electronic gadgets has brought the concept of global village to roost. The ease with which people move across each other's frontiers, is rapidly blurring cultural differences among postmodern generation. The success of the recent Arab Springs (Tunisia, Libya and Egypt) has been attributed to the effectiveness of these social networks and the worldwide web.

On the negative side, the modern media networks have also brought untold mishaps as unscrupulous elements in our society have used them as catalysts to propagate their evil agendas. Terrorism and the spread of armed jihadists (*Al-Qaida and Boko Haram*) have continued to create frontal assault on liberal, pluralistic, democratic and Christian values as well as institutions that support these values (Cohen & Kennedy, 2007:405). The issue at stake here is that lessons learnt from the Western society in terms of sterility in the propagation of the Gospel can be applied to situations in Africa, Asia and South America. This is not to discount the peculiar cultural environment the postmodern generations encounter from the different continents. The variables of the postmodern challenges may be slightly different, but nevertheless they still pose difficulties in proclaiming the Gospel of salvation. Whereas Cohen & Kennedy (2007:405) express some pessimism (sociologists' standpoint) at the current situation, they also recognise that dialogue, is possible especially if we acknowledge the diversity in Islam. That is to say not everybody within Islam is a threat to the contemporary society; therefore talk can begin with those Muslims who aspire for peace as a meaningful way of solving the issues at hand. This insightful understanding should encourage Pentecostals who are engaged in missionary and kerygmatic endeavours in regions where Islam is a threat to Christianity (Sub Saharan Africa and Asia).

The work done by White (2001:169-181) is invaluable as it elucidates points which should be taken into account in order to evangelize fruitfully in a postmodern society. From a sociological standpoint, Berger (1969:107) has identified and analysed forces at work in American contemporary society that are relevant to the task of evangelism. According to him the three main dominant factors which shaped current trends in contemporary society include secularization, pluralisation and privatization. With these forces at work the Church is no longer looked as the institution that shapes life and thought in our society. The Church in the words of Roszak (1973:412) "... was socially irrelevant, even if privately engaging". In terms of pluralism, it is not a question of many faith options as that has always been the case. Gilkey (1991:21) posits that "what is unique is a 'new consciousness' that 'entails a feeling of rough parity, as well as diversity among religion'. The resultant consequence of pluralism is the diluting or devaluation of the truth.

If the forces of modernity challenged the truth of the Gospel and its proclamation, then the challenges of postmodernism are even greater. White (2001:172-173) has explored four main characteristics of postmodernism (Moral Relativism, Autonomous Individualism, Narcissistic Hedonism and Reductive Naturalism) that affect the proclamation of the Gospel. It is generally believed that postmodernism has failed. White (2001:173) states it well when he declares: "... Rather than enhancing personal satisfaction and fulfilment, it has proven to be a barren wasteland ... narcissistic hedonism has created empty souls; and reductive naturalism has proven inadequate for human experience." Notwithstanding the sentiment echoed by White, it is not realistic to approach the evangelistic enterprise oblivious of the untold influences the voices of postmodernism has had in shaping the contemporary society mind-set. Whatever one thinks about postmodernism, it has affected the way the Gospel is to be proclaimed.

During the Enlightenment era, the presupposition was that knowledge is not just certain and rational; truth was not only objective but also good. In the postmodern perspective, knowledge was no longer perceived as inherently good. Optimism is now replaced with pessimism. The absence of a unified

approach to reality also undermines our claims that our doctrinal formulations are objective truth (Grenz, 1996:163). Another noteworthy observation by Grenz (1996:167) declares boldly that “The postmodern situation requires that we embody the Gospel in a manner that is post-individualistic, post-rationalistic, post-dualistic and post-noeticentric.” Succumbing to the pressures of the postmodern era is therefore not an option.

In order to develop an evangelistic strategy that will yield the expected dividend, Pentecostals must give heed to the suggestions culminating from the work undertaken by White. Having affirmed that the unbelievers of the 1950s inherently had some elements of godliness in them compared to their counterparts in the current age, White has suggested a different approach to evangelism. While accepting that door-to-door visitations, revival meetings, Sunday school classes and bussing were effective in the 1950s, he admits that contemporary society is so different that these methods will not work (White, 2001:174-175). Instead, White (2001:174-181) suggests, seven insightful and more postmodern approach to proclaiming the Gospel to our world. They are:

- Method and style should be culturally relevant (1 Cor. 9:22)
- Relationship must be built with unbelievers
- Evangelism should be understood as a process and event with a renewed emphasis on process
- Maintain a biblically functioning community
- Apologetics must be used – but updated
- Christianity must be portrayed as practical
- A vision of the Church’s mission must be recaptured

White (2001:176) is absolutely aware of some of the issues or challenges his suggestions raise. On the question of contextualization, he is aware that some Church leaders have overstepped the mark, but it is equally naïve to ignore the relevance of contextualization in the presentation of the Gospel. Erickson (2013:61-62, 227-228) makes an insightful contribution attesting that the Gospel can be translated to take account of a unique cultural context, on the other hand, transforming the Gospel was not acceptable at any cost. Understanding the backgrounds of the people to whom we proclaim the Gospel is very

important as, they might include those who have made a decision not to have anything to do with the Church, even though they have some kind of belief. There are also those who are not remotely interested in spiritual things or abhor Christianity altogether. The former should be treated as prodigal growth (nominal Christians) and the latter conversion growth. Both growths are important and require the Church's attention.

Despite the challenges posed by the cultural shifts in our society, we should never give up in honouring the demands of the Great Commission. If global Pentecostalism takes advantage of the opportunities offered by these cultural shifts and develops viable strategies that will make the Gospel both meaningful and relevant, the liberating power inherent in it will be unleashed and the dehumanising influences of contemporary society will be minimised or at best eradicated.

4.7 Salvation: Pentecostal standpoint and other traditional Christian faith groups

Even though all Christian faith groups lay claim that their concept of salvation is derived from the Bible it is evident that hermeneutical differences exist. This research has revealed that there is no overarching etymology of salvation that satisfies all Christian faith groups. Whilst it can be affirmed that Christians in general believe and articulate the pivotal roles the Trinity plays in the salvation of all humankind, distinctives exist. The lack of consensus are prevalent in areas such as the emphasis placed on the Church in the salvation process, the importance of sacraments, the conceptualization of the fall (original sin and its remedy) and the role the individuals play in their salvation if any (works), or what the Lutherans refer to as synergism. Another area of discord is the Calvinistic concept of limited atonement, which the Lutherans vehemently oppose, as indicated by Articles 4, 12, 18 and 20 of the Augsburg Confession of 1530 and Articles II and XI in the Formula of Concord (contained in the Book of Concord, the Lutheran Confession).

Notwithstanding the variant distinctiveness of the concept of salvation by the different Christian faith groups, one thing is clear: salvation from the standpoint of all Christians is to be understood as 'grounded in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ' (McGrath, 2011:316). This fundamental understanding of biblical salvation is not eroded by the plethora of metaphors used in the New Testament to depict the same concept, nor is its essence diluted by how different Christian faith groups describe it. While Kärkkäinen (2004:5) acknowledges that the Christian Church is not likely to be united doctrinally, he is however disappointed that there is no consensual understanding of salvation in the light of its doctrinal importance. He sums up his views so well by stating that: "The richness of Christian theology and witness is the symphony - even though too often a cacophony - of various legitimate voices concerning the saving works of their God and the Saviour." In his view, despite the absence of homogeneity of testimonies, he anticipates that a common perspective on salvation could be realistic. This expectation can only be deemed as aspirational as one cannot foresee how this homogeneity can realistically be achieved.

The issue is not the divergent of opinions, but to what extent the various voices disagree on the fundamental question of how sinners can be saved and restored to their maker (1 Cor. 1:10). The concept of salvation should not only be treated from the realms of sound biblical hermeneutics or defence of Church dogma, but also from the standpoint of how it addresses the issues facing contemporary society. It was this aspect of the doctrine that distinguished the Pentecostal perspective of the concept. The Pentecostal notion of salvation, while remaining loyal to its biblical roots, also affirms that the liberative message of the Gospel is potently transformational. It addresses the sociocultural and anthropological challenges on ground in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Even though all the Pentecostals examined so far did not agree in terms of the metaphors they used to explain the concept of salvation, they all acknowledged that everything soteriologically pointed to Christ, who gives abundant life not just spiritually but physically, socially and economically (John 10:10). This abundant life includes the concept of wholeness, liberation from all sorts of spiritual, physical, economic, cultural or social isolation or marginalisation (Luke

4:18-19). The message of salvation posited by Pentecostalism ignites hope and empowers the individual not to wallow in the doldrums of despair, blaming capitalism and unjust structures. It does not encourage violent political revolution, but endears the individual to discover their God-given talents and make a difference to themselves, their community and society as a whole. Sociologists Cohen and Kennedy (2007:390-391) posit a view which corroborates Pentecostal approach to capitalism, entrepreneurship and economic growth with particular reference to Ecuador in Latin America. They contend that: "Pentecostalism has often had to combine values of community solidarity that inhere in the revival of indigenous ethnic identities with Weberian tradition of 'exalting the individual, personal choice and ascetic ethic of work, saving and accumulation'" Cohen & Kennedy, 2007:391; Gros, 1999:185).

Advocating that a consensual understanding of salvation among Christian churches is achievable is purely idealistic. The doctrinal gulf between some of the traditional Churches is so wide and historically entrenched that any attempt to harmonise them will be futile. This is not to say that attempts are not being made for some ecumenical convergence of some sort. The works undertaken by Rhodes (2005) and Kärkkäinen (2004) will elucidate the divergent of views held by the different traditional Christian faith groups on the concept of salvation.

Historically the division between the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Churches can be attributed not only to unavoidable cultural differences (Greek and Latin), but also political and doctrinal issues. Rhodes (2005:294) also observes the influence of Western theology by Augustine of Hippo (354-430) and the contributions of the Greek Fathers on Eastern theology. The so-called *Filioque* clause is another fundamental reason for the West/East divide based on the interpretation of John 15:26. The Eastern Churches aver that 'the Holy Spirit will proceed from the father whilst the Western Church declared from the father and the Son' (Rhodes, 2005:294).

On the question of salvation and sin, the Orthodox Churches posit that humankind did not inherit guilt as a result of the sins of Adam and Eve. Since children do not inherit sin at birth, they are sinless until they come to the age

when they personally choose to sin. Mortality is fundamentally the cause of sinfulness. Sin creates a barrier between humankind and the Creator. The incarnation of Jesus Christ forges a link for humankind to return their Creator. The concept of deification (*theosis*) is used to explain the Orthodox conception of salvation. Rhodes (2005:299) explains it rather well when he states: “God became man so that man might become God.” This connotes humanity sharing in the divine nature with God. Rhodes is quick to clarify that humanity does not become God ontologically speaking. The process of salvation according Eastern Orthodox can be seen as the quest to restore humanity to its original position as people created in the image and likeness of God. Lossky (1985:97-98) captures the sense of this restoration well by stating that: “... It was necessary that the voluntary humiliation, the redemptive *kénosis*, of the Son of God should take place, so that fallen men and women might accomplish their vocation of *theosis*, the deification of created beings by uncreated grace.” As far as the Eastern Orthodox Churches are concerned, salvation is inherently concerned with ‘participation and communion with the deified humanity in the incarnate Logos’ (Kärkkäinen, 2004:33).

The Roman Catholic conception of salvation has been discussed extensively in the previous chapters. Rhodes (2005:99-100), however, identifies different factions within the Roman Catholic Church who emphasize certain aspects of salvation which might not be in consonance with the rest. The ultra traditional Catholics uphold the tenets of the ‘old time’ Catholicism and also critical of the changes the Vatican II implements. The Liberal Catholics esteem human reasons above the Bible and the authority of the Church, whereas the Charismatic and evangelical Catholics embrace doctrines relating to the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Broadly speaking, most churches teach that as a result of sin, Adam and Eve and the rest of humanity lost the divine life God bestowed on creation through sanctifying grace (Rhodes, 2005:311-340). In order to be saved, this divine grace must be restored. The process of salvation begins with God initiating ‘first actual grace’ and for this salvation to be effective a person must respond positively to this action initiated by God Himself. Rhodes (2005:101) observes

that baptism in Catholicism removes the original sin and sanctifying grace is infused, which then leads to 'initial justification' and the new birth. It is obvious that the Catholic conception of salvation is at variance with Pentecostalism and that advocated by the Eastern Orthodox Churches. Like the Orthodox Churches, the Catholics advocate that they are the only true church where salvation may be found (Rhodes, 2005:102). In the past, Catholics (Pope Pius IX, 1854) advocated that, it was the only ark of salvation. However, since Vatican II, non-Catholics are no longer viewed as outside the family of God but as 'separated brethren' (Rhodes, 2005:102).

There is not much significant difference between the Lutheran articulation of salvation from Pentecostalism and other Protestant denominations. Rhodes (2005:216) argues, however, that Lutherans place a heavy emphasis on law and Gospel. While the law is used to point the human predicament (sin) and the Gospel to teach that eternal life, forgiveness and restoration are possible through faith in Jesus Christ. A brief statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod adopted in 1932 says this about redemption: "The purpose of this miraculous incarnation of the Son of God was that He might become the Mediator between God and men, both fulfilling the divine Law and suffering and dying in the place of mankind. In this manner God reconciled the whole sinful world unto Himself, Gal. 4:4, 5; 3:13; 2 Cor. 5:18, 19." The Missouri Synod also affirms strongly that justification is by faith in the finished work of Christ: "By this faith in Christ, through which men obtain the forgiveness of sins, is not meant any human effort to fulfil the Law of God ... but faith in the Gospel ... fully earned for us by Christ ... This faith justifies, not inasmuch as it is a work of man, but inasmuch as it lays hold of the grace offered, the forgiveness of sins, Rom. 4:16." The Lutherans reject the Calvinistic teaching that God has predestined those who should be saved (Articles 9, 12, 13 and 15 of the Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod adopted in 1932). Article 13 of this document states "... we reject also the Calvinistic perversion of the doctrine of conversion, that is, the doctrine that God does not desire to convert and save all hearers of the Word, but only a portion of them". The Lutheran position is that those who are not saved are so not because God has

purposed that they will not be saved, but solely because they resist the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51; Matt. 23:37; Acts 13:46).

Notwithstanding the Lutheran doctrinal position, Kärkkäinen (2004:87-108) has shown in his work that Lutherans are involved in conversation with both the Orthodox and Catholic Churches in search of ecumenical convergence with regard to salvation. Whereas the German Lutherans are reserved on these ecumenical conversations, the Finish Lutherans are more upbeat due to the leadership they enjoy from the Mannermaa School (Kärkkäinen, 2004:87). Analysing the challenges of this ecumenical conversations of 'salvation as Justification and Deification', Saarinen (1977:242) has made an important observation.

His assertion is that Lutheran theology of salvation could perhaps be labelled a 'faith' approach and Eastern counterpart a 'holiness' view. The different perspectives help to explain the challenges of the two faith groups achieving a consensual understanding of the concept of salvation. Approaching salvation from the faith paradigm means that Lutherans will trust things which are not seen, develop high level of trust in God's promise of forgiveness and therefore gravitate toward a view of salvation which teaches justification by faith. On other hand, since the Eastern Orthodox avows a salvation paradigm that stands on holiness, its focus will be on healing, restorative process in the lives of the believer and climaxing to *theosis* or glorification. Salvation perceived in this way will promote the sacramental life of the Church and the believer. The overarching objective in this case will be to strive for perfection. This observation helps to explicate the mystical nature of the Eastern Orthodox Church's liturgy.

Kärkkäinen (2004:107) has analysed the dialogue between Lutherans and the Roman Catholic Church. What has been confirmed is that radical differences exist not just from one denomination to another but within the same denomination. On the other hand, the joint declaration has identified some areas of commonality. This is a brave attempt to summarise Kärkkäinen's own summary of the joint declaration.

- Common Bible reading has enabled Christians (Catholics and Lutherans) to appreciate the rich meanings of Biblical terminologies, including salvation and justification. This ecumenical understanding allows denominations to generally appreciate the theological traditions of each other but at the same time maintain their own theological distinctiveness.
- Salvation is by the grace of God through the finished work of Christ
- Even though God is the Saviour, human cooperation is an absolute necessity
- Christ is our justification and righteousness
- Justification and Sanctification are inseparable
- Justification is union with Christ
- Justification is the work of the Trinity
- Justification does not immune one from temptation to sin

What this declaration shows is that despite the differences in traditions, in many areas we Christians agree more than we disagree. Our disagreements should not stop us from working together for the salvation of the whole human race. As Kärkkäinen (2004:1) asserts from the onset, what is important is that as a community of faith, we should be able to give an honest answer to the most profound question of human life: "What is the way back to God, to live with God and share in the divine."

Both Methodism and Anglicanism affirm articles of faith which are similar to most Protestants including Pentecostalism. The Methodists affirm that the Bible contains all things necessary to salvation and that Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between mankind and God. They confess that humanity is depraved and cannot in their own natural strength and work turn to faith (Rhodes, 2005:268-269).

As was previously stated, differences exist about the etymology of salvation within the same denomination. A BBC Radio 4 broadcast on Holy Wednesday evening in April 2007 revealed the degree of difference in the Anglican Communion in relationship to the doctrine of atonement. It is abundantly clear that different theories have been espoused to explain the atonement, but what is not clear is where the Anglican Church stood. From this broadcast it is now

obvious that some of the Anglican clergies advocate views which are far from what the Bible clearly teaches. The diversities of views are evident from the hostile exchanges that took place between the Dean of St Albans (the Very Revd Dr John), the Bishop of Lewes (the Rt Revd Benn) and the Bishop of Willesden (the Rt Revd Broadbent). In this Radio 4 broadcast John (2007) asserts that “The ‘primitive theory’ of the relationship between justice and suffering portrayed in the Old Testament as turned upside down in the New Testament.”

He went on to describe as “pretty repulsive as well as nonsensical the explanation, given to him in his Calvinistic childhood, of the crucifixion as God’s ultimate punishment for sin”. In his view, the theory that the crucifixion symbolised God punishing His Son Jesus in order that we may receive the forgiveness of sin was illogical and insane. Holding to such a view in his opinion portrays God like a psychopath. This is indeed strong language and helps to elucidate the Dean of St Alban’s theology of atonement. By denying this basic truth, John went on to attest that what is truth about God is that He is love rather than wrath and punishment. John contends that “The Cross is not about Jesus reconciling an angry God to us; it’s almost the opposite. . . On the Cross, Jesus died for our sins; the price of our sin is paid; but it is not paid to God, but by God. . .”

According to John, he was not teaching anything strange from the official Anglican guideline given by the Church of England’s Doctrine Commission Report published in 1995. The report explicitly states that: “The notion of propitiation as the placating by man of an angry God is definitely unchristian.” Even though John claimed that he was following the Church’s guideline, the Church of England’s Doctrine Commission in its 1995 report *The Mystery of Salvation*, some of the other Bishops were critical of his assertion and interpretation of the doctrine of atonement.

Broadbent insisted: “To ignore the entirety of the language about atonement and sacrifice and the Cross is to nullify the message of what Good Friday and Jesus dying for us is all about.” He expressed his disappointment that the BBC were “using their schedules to undermine the message of Easter”. Benn

described “the truth that Jesus died as our sin-bearing substitute carrying the punishment for our sins on the Cross” as “the glorious heart of the Gospel. To deny or vilify that is a tragic denial of the power and heart of the Gospel. I hope Jeffrey John will speedily reconsider and repent of his attack on apostolic Christianity.” What the exchanges have revealed is the chasm between the clergies even at the upper echelon of Anglicanism on this fundamental and all-encompassing doctrine of salvation.

4.8 Summary

Having explored how the deep concerns expressed by liberation theology can be addressed without compromising the message of the Gospel, the following conclusion can be made:

- The type of liberation which is being advocated by liberation theologians is vastly distinct from what constitutes to salvation from the standpoint of Pentecostalism.
- The two movements have aims to liberate humanity from dehumanization influences of contemporary society albeit through different approaches
- Even though both movements are involved in theological activities, liberation theologians are more interested with concrete issues that affect the people politically, economically, socially and culturally. Their theology starts from below focusing primarily on practical issues.
- Pentecostalism has similar objectives but different approaches. The movement uses the truth of the Gospel and the liberative powers inherent in it for the conscientization of its adherents with the view to bringing about complete emancipation and transformation.
- The testimonies of those who have come into contact with the Pentecostal brand of salvation have attested to how this has changed their lives, their families and communities as a whole.
- The focus has not been only on external transformation, but inward as well. The new believer who has embraced Pentecostalism is not only liberated from external constraints, but receives an inner strength

through the truth of the Gospel, which inculcates a self-belief that they can make a difference in their world.

- Salvation as advocated by Pentecostalism has not encouraged the individuals to engage in revolutionary acts, which can be counterproductive and a disincentive for owners of capital to invest in such an environment. Pentecostalism in Africa, Asia and South Africa has become agents of change by empowering individuals and communities to become entrepreneurs (Progressive Pentecostalism). They are not totally anti-capitalism, except in cases of exploitation and enslavement of the workers.
- Jesus Christ is clearly the focus of the salvation message which is advocated in Pentecostalism. Biblical salvation is still relevant in today's society. This concept of salvation addresses all aspects of human predicament and can be contextualized to deal with issues stemming from cultural pluralism, religiosity, contemporaneity, globalisation, terrorism, wars, nepotism, AIDS/HIV, poverty and many other shifts which society is currently experiencing.
- Jesus did not limit the message of the good news to the temple, the synagogues or to any particular geographical location. He went everywhere doing good (Acts 10:38-39). The mandate for the Church is to embark on a serious missiological and kerygmatic endeavours to save our world. While it is true that minimal consensual understanding of salvation exists between the different faith groups, this does not stop the Church from working together. The ecumenical dialogues that are taking place must continue.
- This study is aiming to formulate a liberation theological framework that mirrors what is being done by Pentecostals across the globe. The new framework must not be violent, ideological, or too scholastic that it is unpractical in addressing the real issues on the ground. It must however, be embedded in Scripture for the restoration of the dignity of mankind as God ordained it from the foundation of the world.
- If the churches dwell on the differences in their theology and fail to work together as the people of God, the agenda of God to fill the whole earth with His knowledge, reverence and glory will be hijacked by those who

purport to have the answer to human predicament but are wolves in sheep clothing. The way forward is a complete liberation in accordance with Scripture and the Pentecostals not Liberation theology is leading the way.

5.0 CHAPTER FIVE: PENTECOSTALISM CRITICISMS OF LIBERATION THEOLOGIES: SALVATION OR LIBERATION

5.1 Introduction: Hermeneutical Background

The focus of this chapter is to explore whether there is any justification for Pentecostalism's criticisms of Liberation Theology and what viable alternatives can be offered. This alternative must satisfy the central theoretical argument and the objectives of this study. It must also fill the gaps and the inadequacies associated with Liberation Theology endeavours in Latin America and elsewhere.

Proposing a Pentecostal framework to liberate humanity from the dehumanizing influences of contemporary society calls for a critical consideration of Pentecostal hermeneutics. It also requires an in-depth analysis of the concerns Pentecostalism has with Liberation Theology. The dialectical variances, especially with respect to salvation and liberation and other related themes, must be evaluated through the lens of sound biblical orthodoxy, but not at the expense of a balanced contextualisation. The objective is to make the word of God relevant to the vast majority of people living in two thirds of the world.

Generally speaking denominations within the Christian community have had a fair share of criticism of their hermeneutical process. These criticisms are not bad in themselves as long as they help the faith community to gain greater insights into the word of God and the authorial meaning of the text from the perspectives of the writer. The only justification of any hermeneutical criticism must be to be truthful to what the text is meant to convey. The scholarly works of (Barton, 1997; Archer, 2009; Jenson, 2007; Virkler, 2002; Fee & Stuart, 1994; Shaul & Cesar 2000; Fierro, 1977) are invaluable in understanding the complexities of the hermeneutical process.

Understanding how Pentecostals read and interpret the Bible will elucidate some of their practices in the regions of the world where they are operating and experiencing growth. If Pentecostal hermeneutics are intrinsically linked to practices, the key question is how valid are their interpretations? Hirsch (1967:1-3) notes a view of interpretation that has continued to gain momentum:

"The meaning of a text is what it means to me." If this relativistic cultural stance is adopted, the text will mean different things to different people according to the culture, philosophy, linguistic and historical placement of the interpreter. This will neutralise the dichotomous relationship between orthodoxy and heresy. Interpretation of the text of Scripture should have the same validity, irrespective of which angle the interpreter approaches the text. What Virkler (2002:20) refers to as gaps or blocks that hinder spontaneous accurate understanding of the word of God should be addressed in the hermeneutic process. Assigning the exegete as the determiner of meaning contradicts previously accepted norm that a text means what its author meant (Virkler, 2002:23).

Fee and Stuart (1994:14) argue that every good interpretation should aim to get at the plain meaning of the text. It is also noteworthy that not all Christians who accept that the Scripture is the Word of God believes that it possess the objective truth and authority for all times and situations. The interpreter should make good sense of the text and at the same time ensure that enlightened common sense is brought to the task. This is not to suggest that the exegete does not play any significant role in determining the meaning of the text. Fee and Stuart (1994:14) corroborate the observation made by Virkler (2002:20). What a reader understands by reading a text of Scripture might not necessarily be the exact intention of the Holy Spirit or the human author. Readers bring to the text: "all that we are, with all our experiences, culture, and prior understandings of words and ideas" (Fee & Stuart, 1994:14). Notwithstanding these difficulties, Fee & Stuart (1994:17) argue against those who advocate that reading rather than interpretation should be encouraged. In their opinion, what is needed to combat bad interpretations is not to ban interpretation all together, but to constitute a common-sense guideline to achieve good interpretation.

Virkler (2002:25) arguing that a text has one valid meaning but can have different applications needs to be qualified. Having one valid meaning does not limit a text to one interpretation, but many due to our inability to understand it clearly. This confirms that all exegesis is subject to re-interpretation. The issue at stake is not so much how a text is applied in a given situation, but what meaning is accorded to that text. So as long as the meaning accorded to a text

is what the original author intended, then different applications can be made in accordance with ones' cultural, historical, linguistic and philosophical disposition. At the same, time it is difficult to fathom how a meaningful application can be made on a basis of an interpretation that is invalid. Understanding the text is paramount.

Another challenge facing the validity of interpretation is what theologians generally refer to as *Sensus Plenior*, indicating the fact of dual authorship of humanity and divinity. In the light of 2 Timothy 3:16, the debate is how much of the Scripture we have today is the human authors' intention and how much is God's intention. Hagner (1976:92) insightfully declares "... the nature of divine inspiration that the authors of Scripture were themselves often not conscious of the fullest significance and final application of what they wrote ... only in retrospect and in the light of the New Testament fulfilment." Some believe that the Old Testament writers did not fully understand everything they wrote using examples like 1 Peter 1:10-12; Daniel 12:8 & 8:27. Others, however, believe that to accept the dual meaning of Scripture will create eisegetical problems (Virkler, 2002:26). Opponents of the *sensus plenior* view contend that the Old Testament Prophets were not ignorant of what they were prophesying except for the time of fulfilment of their prophecies (1 Peter 1:10-12). So even though Caiaphas fully understood what he said in John 11:50, he might not have understood the full implication of his statement.

Barton (1997:17-18) offers some clarity on how to read the Bible by supporting the use of historical and literary methods. In his view, the historical methods will give us access to the literal meaning (original meaning intended by the author) and the literal methods helps us to understand how the Bible communicates as text. Barton (1997:21) also suggests that the Scripture should be interpreted in the context of the present. This approach will ensure that the Bible is not confined as a historical document, but rather as a book of divine revelation. In this way (contextual reading of the Bible), we can use the Bible to understand what is happening in today's contemporary society. Reading the Bible contextually means that the individual reader can have a sense of nourishment

believing that the sacred text is life-giving and a means of receiving a word for today.

On the other hand, contextual reading of the Bible can also be seen from the ecclesial perspective. The Bible becomes the source of all instruction in Church matters. Migliore (1991:54) puts it rather well: "Thus to interpret Scripture contextually means to listen to its story in and with the community of faith ... confidently expecting that the Spirit of God will again speak to us through the biblical witness." This is the essence of Apostle Paul's prayer for the believers in Ephesus (Eph. 3:18). Mesters (1981:199-200) describes his experience (Brazil) when the Bible is read contextually. In his opinion, it is important to read the Bible in the context of the life of the common people and the realities of the wider world, which impinges heavily against them.

He asserts that three elements: the Bible itself, the community and reality (the real-life situation of the people and the surrounding world) must be considered when interpreting the Bible. According to Mesters (1981:199-200), the absence of any of the three elements in biblical interpretation makes the whole process void of progress and causes chaos. The word of God must not be limited to the Bible, but also to reality and that the Bible will facilitate the discovery of the word God within reality is his conclusion.

While acknowledging the views presented by Migliore (1991:54) and Mesters (1981:199-200); Barton (1997:25) goes further to suggest that contextualization should not be limited to the individual and the ecclesial perspectives. He points to the wider context of human experience in the world-at-large with particular reference to Liberation Theology. He argues that Biblical interpretation that only operates at the individual and ecclesial levels, whilst commendable, does not go far enough. His argument is that the Bible does not just belong to the Church, but the whole world of the created order (Romans 8).

Barton's argument is plausible up to a point. What he has not made clear is how the rest of the world would interpret the Bible. It is difficult to understand how those who do not have a personal relationship with the God of the Bible can interpret the Bible accurately. This is not to say that God cannot reveal Himself

to whoever He desires to. The Bible indeed is a public document that has a legitimate place in both the public institutions and the wider social domain, but its interpretation should not be left to those who have not embraced the God of the Bible as the only true God. Barton's assertion that the Bible should be placed wherever truth is contested, wherever power is exercised, and wherever justice is sought is an important observation. What is not clear is how the truth of the Bible can be defended or articulated by those who do not possess the knowledge of this truth.

The pronouncement by Fee & Stuart (1994:26) that a text cannot mean what it never meant is absolutely crucial when the Bible is left in the public domain where anyone can offer their own interpretation. The Bible in the hands of those who have not acquired the skills of interpretation has done more harm than good to the faith communities and the world-at-large. Bowker (1991:14-15) is absolutely right when he enumerates the horrendous outcome when people lift a text from its context. Slavery and apartheid were justified by those who lifted Gen. 9:25 out of context. Those who lifted Leviticus 20:13 justified executing homosexuals. The determination of what the Scripture means should not be left in the hands of those who are not qualified to interpret it accurately.

The exponents of Liberation Theology argue that: "What constitutes a wise reading of Scripture in the context of society-at-large is most likely to come from those who read Scripture from the social margins" (Barton, 1997:25.) Whereas there is an element of truth in the statement, it is also filled with absurdity. There is no evidence in Scripture or any credible source to suggest that blacks (slavery) women (inequality), Jews (anti-Semitism) or the poor in the Third World (social and economic injustice) have greater insight into the word of God because of their situations. What is clear is that the Biblical narratives that deal with their particular situations help them to understand that humankind is inherently evil, but God is the God of love who will care for them in their desperation and hour of need. Salvation is of the Lord and that He will deliver them from their life predicament.

One of the fundamental hermeneutical flaws in Liberation Theology is the notion of preferential option of the poor. Many have come to understand this to mean that God loves the poor more than the rich. There are many poor people today who hate God because they believe that God has made them poor. There are also many rich people who believe that they have become rich purely by their own human ingenuity. In essence, they have no time for God. What is clear in the Bible is that the love of money is the root of all evil (1 Timothy 6:10). There is no evidence that the Bible is against those who are rich and still love God and their fellow human beings. God loving the poor more than those who are rich is not a teaching found in the Bible.

After all, the Gospel of salvation which Jesus preached was addressed to both the poor and the rich (Luke 7:22 & 5:32; 10:1-10). Both are in need of salvation according to the teachings of Jesus Christ. Apostles Paul and Peter share the same view according to Romans 3:23 and 2 Peter 3:9. One might rightly infer that the poor who are in the margins of society when compared with the rich (Matthew 19:23) readily accepts the Gospel of salvation; this should not lead a serious exegete to conclude that God prefers the poor to the rich. God's fervent heart desire is for all fallen human race (rich and poor) to come to the knowledge of His saving grace. What the Bible teaches is that those who are rich should not abuse those who are poor (Micah 6:8, Isaiah 58:6-8). The rich can be a source of blessing to the poor when they realise all riches come from God (Deuteronomy 8:17-18).

Attempting to explain the notion of the hermeneutical privilege of the poor, Barton (1997:25) states that: "What they have in mind is not some kind of claim to moral or religious superiority on the part of the poor ... quite unlimited way, experiences of poverty, suffering and powerlessness provide ... easily obscure." Evidently this tenet of preferential option for the poor is biblically indefensible, as it is clearly a notion developed from Liberation Theology's preunderstandings. These hermeneutical challenges are real, but the original intended meaning of the text must be *prima facie*.

5.2 Evolving Pentecostal Hermeneutics

The excellent work by Archer (2009) has examined how these changes have evolved over the years. According to Archer (2009:89), contemporary scholars of Pentecostalism argue that the hermeneutical approach of the early Pentecostals can be described as "literal", "ahistorical" or "pietistic". Even though these three methods of interpretations were used, generally the Pentecostal hermeneutic can at best be described as "literalistic hermeneutic". This hermeneutic approach has caused some within the scholarly community to label Pentecostals as Fundamentalists. Spittler (1994:103-16) makes an insightful contribution in defence of Pentecostalism. In his opinion, Fundamentalism has much to do with "an unbending literalism in biblical interpretation coupled with a theory of inspiration close to dictation".

Despite the fact that Fundamentalism and Pentecostalism accept the Scripture as the authoritative 'Word of God', Spittler (1994:111) and Archer (2009:91) argue that they are different. The view postulated here is that Pentecostalism is synonymous to Fundamentalism in so far as their biblical styles (precritical and uncomplicated) are concerned. On serious Pentecostal beliefs like speaking in tongues and the manifestation of divine healing in today's world, they are diametrically opposed to each other.

Having trawled through so many literatures in this investigation, one cannot but disagree with the contemporary scholars in this discourse. To describe the modern day Pentecostalism as Fundamentalists is flawed. Throughout this study, there is no evidence to conclude that Pentecostal literalistic hermeneutic is "an unbending literalism... close to dictation". Pentecostals believe that the Bible is the Word of God and upholds its inerrancy. However, the Pentecostals encountered in this study were not people of absurd sanctimonious outlook, intolerant of others or upholding a circumscribed code of practice common to all. Ecumenicity was highly visible among Pentecostal in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

On the contrary, there is enough evidence to support the view that Pentecostals are gregarious, actively participating in civil society, embrace modernity and have a progressive outlook to life and ministry. The notion of the "Pentecostal Paradox" shows how the movement is able to adapt to local and cultural conditions speedily; hence its exponential growth globally. Historically speaking Pentecostals might have manifested Fundamentalists' traits. The modern Pentecostalism is too big to have one overarching label. Neither the hermeneutic practices nor the behaviour of the Pentecostals encountered in this study justify them to be given that pejorative title "Fundamentalists". Pentecostals believe and practice what they read in the Bible and are inspired by the Holy Spirit to please God. Through the process of contextualisation, the Bible in their hands becomes a living rather than a dead book.

The early Pentecostals were not only labelled as Fundamentalists, their interpretations were deemed as heretical by others in the Christian communities. Archer (2009:126) argues in their defence that the Pentecostals developed a creative and innovative method of reading and interpreting the Bible. This approach he argues created new theological mosaics which also pushed theological boundaries thus making interpretative connections within the Scripture which was not previously noticed. From the perspective of the Pentecostals, their method was purely to let the Bible speak clearly and plainly for itself in order to recover and practice biblical truth that had been lost. Those who were critical of the Pentecostal method of interpretation argued that this method was void of historical critical or scientific method.

The opponents of the Pentecostal approach accused them of showing little interest in the historical cultural context of the New Testament and only consulted such sources when faced with hermeneutical challenges (Archer, 2009:125). Notwithstanding, Archer (2009:125) agrees that the early Pentecostals were mindful of cultural and grammatical contexts in the hermeneutical enterprise paying attention to syntactical relationships of words and sentences.

Those who criticise Pentecostal hermeneutics to be incorrect argue that it is based on an uncritical nineteenth-century holiness exegetical method. They argue that this exegetical method is both theological and interpretively incorrect. Turner & Thomas (1998:3-38) contend that Pentecostals should do exegesis correctly. Goldingay (1995:45), however warns against the perception that any given method can be completely objective and not affected by the social cultural location of the person using the method in question. His view is that interpreters and their chosen methods of interpretation are historically conditioned. McQuillian (1998:16) and Aichele (1995:1-8) rightly contend that the reader does not come to the text as a blank slate: "the meaning of the text is derived from a dialectical transaction between the readers' contributions and the text's contribution".

It is now obvious that Pentecostals have made a lot of progress in the hermeneutical process. Whereas in the past a greater proportion of Pentecostal leaders were labelled as uneducated (Cargal, 1993:169) using the uncritical Bible Reading Method, but have now adopted the historical critical approach due to their university academic seminary exposures. Bray (1996:223) notes that while adopting this scientific method of interpretation, Pentecostals did not abandon their traditional Pentecostal and conservative conclusions. Even though Pentecostals have embraced the basic tenets of the historical criticism method, they rejected the naturalistic worldview of modernity. This explains why they later abandoned the historical criticism method in favour of the newer version: the critical historical-grammatical exegetical method.

Anderson (1994:13) argues in favour of this modified method. He contends that Pentecostal pastors embrace heretical beliefs and practices because their exegetical method is wrong. He validates this method of interpretation by stating: "The intended meaning of the original author is still considered primary, and meanings gained through the historical/grammatical study are seen as objective and universally authoritative" (Anderson, 1994:22.) Affirming what Pentecostal hermeneutics should be concerned with, Arrington (1994:107) states: "Pentecostals see the full purpose of biblical interpretation as not only to uncover or discover truth, but also to apply Scripture to one's own life and to the

community of faith." This hermeneutic should be able to demonstrate with clarity what the text meant then and what it means today.

The Pentecostal hermeneutics properly articulated should be able to provide answers to the central question and meet the objectives of this study. It should be able to provide alternative and viable strategies that will counter some of the hermeneutical practises propagated by the exponents of Liberation Theology in Latin America, Africa and Asia. By overhauling its primitive hermeneutics in the face of modernity and postmodern challenges and still remaining truthful to the Holy Scripture, Pentecostalism is qualified to constructively criticise Liberation Theology hermeneutics. This process of adaptation in principle demonstrates that Pentecostalism is willing to modernise and be relevant to society. This is one of the ways it can become accessible and not alienate the very people whose lives it wants to transform through its social ministries.

5.3 God's redemptive work in the Old Testament

Chapter two of this investigation firmly established that God is the God of salvation. After the fall, God set out to redeem and restore the human race (Gen. 3:15). It is clear from the Genesis account that redemption is as a result of humanity's failure to keep the standard, which God has set from the beginning. Adam and Eve disobeyed God's instruction, which subsequently brought a wedge between them and their maker. Since this single act of disobedience necessitated God's plan of salvation, it is important to understand the etymology of biblical salvation in this context.

In other words, salvation or God's redemptive acts cannot be understood if one fails to acknowledge the fact of sin. The personal sin of Adam and Eve was the main reason why God instituted His plan of salvation. While it is true that every redemptive act of God is not directly related to sin or disobedience; what is absolutely clear is that humanity and all creation experienced a dramatic change after the fall. Genesis chapters 3 - 9 map out how humanity continued to reject God's standard in favour of its own. In Genesis 6:5, the true condition of depraved humanity was accurately published. Despite God's redemptive

efforts in history, every inclination of the thoughts of humanity's heart continually remained evil all the time and in every age. This is the new nature inherent in every offspring of Adam and Eve. Jeremiah's assessment of the human heart corroborates the Genesis account (Jeremiah 17:9).

Notwithstanding humanity's desires to drift away from their Creator, God remained faithful to His salvation plan. Even though Jesus is the ultimate end of salvation, God throughout history continued to save His people from their enemies, afflictions, famine, sicknesses and diseases. What is absolutely clear is that human sufferings, oppressions, enslavement, natural disasters, wars, economic exploitation, human right abuses and many more came into existence because humanity became increasingly corrupt after the fall. Sin did not just affect humanity's relationship with the Creator, but humanity to humanity as well as other created beings (Romans 8:20-21). As humanity drifted from the kingship of God and instituted their own human government, corruption and violence increased (Gen. 6:11-12; 10:8-12). Corruption and violence have become the hallmark of the human race in every generation and culture.

Salvation therefore remains the single act of God to reconcile sinful humanity to Himself. It can also be deduced from this fact that the salvation, which will bring complete turnaround, is that which addresses the condition of the human heart. Ratzinger (1984:xi, 8) is right in criticizing the Liberation Theology's conception of sin. He strongly argues that: "The acute need for radical reforms of the structures which conceal poverty and which are themselves forms of violence should not let us lose sight of the fact that the source of injustice is in the hearts of men." In this regard he suggests that: "... it is only by making an appeal to the *moral potential* of the person and to the constant need for interior conversion, that social change will be brought about which will be truly in the service of man" (Ratzinger, 1984:xi, 8; Min, 1989:81). God did not create humanity to serve humanity but Himself. Biblical salvation must redirect humanity to complete obedience to the will of God. God's salvation includes liberating humanity from servitude, which came about as a result of sin. Satan robbed humanity the freedom and dominion which God bestowed at creation. Having

adopted the pattern of Satan rather than that of God, every human effort resulted in the exploitation and enslavement of fellow humans.

Those who are strong politically, economically and socially subjugate the will of the poor, the powerless and the vulnerable into servitude. Humanity continues to develop complex socioeconomic and political systems, technology and military hardware to control and manipulate those who are less privileged and unable to help themselves. Unfair trade agreements drawn by the More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs) or G8 nations continue to perpetuate poverty and underdevelopment in the Less Economic Developed countries (LEDCs) in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In order to protect their investments (oil, minerals, agriculture) in the South, the powerful countries in the North continue to support dictators and corrupt governments in poorer nations by colluding with them to siphon natural resources out of these countries. These unholy alliance and activities destroy arable lands leaving the people with barren and environmentally devastated lands, unfit for agricultural or any sustainable economic activities.

Brown's analysis of the Exodus narrative makes an interesting observation which corroborates the increased violence and oppression in every generation. He argues that "The *nouveaux riches* pile up more wealth for themselves, and the widows and orphans - the most defenceless and powerless members of society - become favourite targets for easy exploitation" (Brown, 1984:46.) Trade agreements and boundary negotiations are all designed to enrich the powerful individuals and nations at the expense of the less economically developed nations. Brown (1984:46) further argues that: "... The names and numbers of the players change, but the nature of the game does not ... born of idealism and selfless commitment, harden into tightly knit oligarchies ... The last state is no better, and is often worse than the first." Originally this was not how God intended it. Humanity was created in the image and likeness of God and could only mirror God's just behaviour, holy character and goodness towards God and his fellow humanity. Everything changed and has remained the same since the fall.

If the fall caused God to begin His redemptive work, the challenge here is to ascertain the extent to which Liberation Theology and Pentecostalism hermeneutics have considered this fact in their concept of salvation. Liberation Theology and Pentecostalism are not in disagreement that God is the Saviour both in the Old and the New Testaments. The variance in their theologies is how the concept of salvation is hermeneutically determined. This irreconcilable difference is central to this study. Both movements make references to God's redemptive acts as documented in the Old Testament. Suffice to say that God's redemptive work is both Old and New Testament phenomenon.

However, there is evidence of divergence in terms of 'the what' and 'the why' of God's redemptive acts. Liberation Theology perceives God's redemptive acts in terms of liberation whereas Pentecostalism sees it as salvation. The difficulties lie in how both Liberation Theology and Pentecostalism define the concept of sin. If sin is interpreted as a personal and private matter, then the method of salvation will be different from those who perceive sin from economic and social perspective. This in turn will reflect on how the two movements interpret and apply biblical narratives to situations they encounter in the day to day activities of their respective organisations.

Salvation is the work of God and culminates in Jesus Christ (*Protoevangelium*) the seed of the woman according to Gen. 3:15. Paul depicts Jesus as the second Adam whose complete obedience reversed the damage done by the first Adam (Romans 5:12, 15, 17-19). Based on proper exegesis of Genesis 3:15, it can be concluded that, God has preordained that our Saviour Jesus; born of a woman should through His obedience, death and resurrection deliver us from the power of sin and death. Keil (2004:64) puts it more succinctly: "... the fact that the victory over the serpent is promised to the posterity of the woman, not of the man, acquires this deeper significance, that as it was through the woman that the craft of the devil brought sin and death into the world, so it is also through the woman that the grace of God will give to the fallen human race the conqueror of sin, of death, and of the devil". Therefore the justification of any criticism by Pentecostalism against Liberation Theology's hermeneutics of salvation must comply with this proven fact: that Jesus has come to redeem

fallen humanity from sin and death brought about by the disobedience of Adam and Eve. Paul is more apt when declared the grace of God which has appeared to all mankind (Titus 2:11). This emerging Kingdom Christ renews and restores hope to all humankind, both the oppressed and the oppressor, the rich as well as the poor who are materially destitute through exploitation by their task masters.

5.4 Deliverance from Egypt

One of the fundamental criticisms of Liberation Theology by Pentecostalism and others in the faith community focuses on how the Bible is read and interpreted. Liberation Theology's hermeneutics about how God delivered the Israelites from Egypt has probably raised more concerns than other biblical themes and their application. Since this investigation has already established that every hermeneutic methodology attracts criticism, it will be necessary at this point to examine the core features of Liberation Theology hermeneutics to ascertain aspects of concerns posited by Pentecostalism.

Staunch exponents of Liberation Theology Boff & Boff (2008:24) provide great insights in terms of how liberation theologians approach their hermeneutical process called mediations. The notion of mediation connotes the means or the instrument of the theological process. According to them, three mediations exist: socio-analytical (historico-analytical), hermeneutical and finally practical. These mediations ensure that in their pastoral work they will be able to see at first-hand what is happening on the ground, then make the right judgement and finally take the right action, which will hopefully ameliorate the problems; in this case oppressions (Boff & Boff, 2008:24). Since the liberation hermeneutic methodology lends itself to application rather than explanation, Boff & Boff (2008:32) state that: "The liberation theologian goes to the Scriptures bearing the whole weight of the problems, sorrows, and hopes of the poor, seeking light and inspiration from the divine word."

This method of hermeneutics is traceable to the Base Ecclesia Communities (CEBs), which started in Brazil. Dawson (2007:147) explains the constituent elements of this group as youth, students and lay people. They enrolled in *lectura popular* where training was offered using Freire's principles of 'conscientization' which was fully explained in chapter three of this investigation. Dawson (2008:147) provides a vivid account of how the CEBs embark their hermeneutical activities: "... When the round is completed, the Biblical text and shared comments are then drawn together in the form of a reflection delivered by a member of the community ... the past week's life experiences provide the tool by which the Biblical text is interrogated and made relevant to the life setting of the group." This popular hermeneutic approach gave prominence to the real life of the people on a daily basis, rather than the Biblical text and the individual. This new way of reading the Bible is different from what is obtainable in western academic exegesis. Boff & Boff (2008:34) bring more clarity to liberation hermeneutics by declaring that "the important thing is not so much interpreting the text of the Scripture as interpreting life according to Scriptures". It is difficult to understand how a hermeneutical activity has nothing to do with grasping the meaning of the text. Applying the text of Scripture to a situation without fully grasping the meaning of the Scripture is a bit like prescribing medicine for a patient without accurate diagnosis of the ailment. The result will be catastrophic. Notwithstanding, liberationists without any equivocation perceive themselves as rereading the Bible from a theological-political perspective stressing the social context of the message. In this way, each text is placed in its historical context leading to the construction of the appropriate translation.

Criticisms of Liberation Theology are not limited to Pentecostalism or theologians of other persuasions, but also from its adherents. Analyzing the Exodus event, Gottwald (1989:250) has also taken time to explore whether Liberation Theology is sufficiently biblical. He believes that on the surface things may seem straightforward and unproblematic. He takes this stance since Liberation Theology makes use of some of the central themes of the Bible in recovering "a vivid sense of biblical faith as praxis in the service of justice". Even though Gottwald does not take sides with those who criticize Liberation

Theology's employment of the Bible either too arbitrary or too political, he asserts the need to undertake some reevaluation in this area. He focuses on Liberation Theology's deployment of Scripture to ascertain its thoroughness and adequacy. He hopes to use his findings to blunt the force of criticism from the detractors of Liberation Theology and to enrich their work exegetically (Gottwald, 1989:251).

In this process of reevaluation, Gottwald (1989:251) finds himself agreeing with some of Fierro's (1977:129-81) criticisms of Liberation Theology. Gottwald (1989:251-252) enumerates aspects of Fierro's criticisms of Liberation Theology which he supports. Firstly, "... that in order for the noteworthy promises of liberation theology to grow ... to fuel social change in church and society, they must be developed in a more comprehensive, self-reflective and rigorous manner" (Gottwald, 1989:251). Secondly, looking at liberation theology's employment of the Bible and Marxism he notes: "... although invoking biblical symbols and liberation ... biblical strands of oppressions and liberation in all their stark multiplicity and contradictory interactions" (Gottwald, 1989:251). Thirdly, with particular reference to Latin America, he criticizes: "... the main biblical approach is to dwell upon certain 'exemplary' themes such as exodus, the prophetic criticism of society, and Jesus' confrontation with authorities" (Gottwald, 1989:252; Fierro, 1977:129-81).

The main criticism is that this hermeneutical method ignores critical exegesis, which is necessary to penetrate into biblical social structure as well as social history in a more robust and in-depth way. If liberation theologians continue to claim that the Bible has been misread by dominant theology, then it is imperative that they employ a comprehensive hermeneutical approach to correct any concerns they have. The shallow hermeneutic methodology described above is a contradiction to what liberation theologians purport. This level of sparseness of in-depth biblical exegesis can only lead to distortions and wrong applications of the text of Scripture.

One of Fierro's criticisms focuses on how liberation theologians select certain biblical themes to promote their particular epistemology. Boff & Boff (2008:34-35) attest to this practice by providing a list of Bible books as their

hermeneutical preferences. In particular, they argue that Exodus is preferred: "because it recounts the epic of the politico-religious liberation of a mass of slaves who, through the power of the covenant with God, became the people of God" (Boff & Boff, 2008:35). Not only is Liberation Theology criticized for preferring certain books or themes, they have also been criticized for their hermeneutic renderings of the exodus event. Scholars from different denominations, but particularly those from Pentecostal and Evangelical backgrounds, have led the way.

In order to understand the criticisms leveled against Liberation Theology on this matter, it will be necessary to explore the hermeneutical renderings posited by leading liberation theologians. Gutiérrez (2001:154) the, foremost advocate of liberation theology, sees the event as a political action by declaring that: "It is the breaking away from a situation of despoliation and misery and the beginning of the construction of a just and comradely society." Gutiérrez's assertion that the exodus was a political action is also corroborated by Boff and Boff (2008:35) and Brown (1984:37), who declare it as God's promise of a political liberation from the economic and social bondage Israel had endured. Brown's most insightful observation is to see the exodus event not only as political and theological event but as predominantly a sociological event, where two classes of people are locked in a class struggle. Despite the Marxist connotation associated with the term, which he believes some Christians will find uncomfortable with, he strongly asserts that: "It is a story of masters and slaves, kings and chattel, oppressors and oppressed, owners and workers" (Brown, 1984:36.) Brown also notes how "the story moves from the sociological account of a struggle in which one side holds the cards to the theological assertion that God is aware of the struggle ... agreement with the folks who presently hold none of the cards" (Brown, 1984:37).

Gottwald (1989:253), in his analysis of the exodus narrative, tried to ascertain whether it was an event or a series of events or whether it should be understood as a process. His assessment seems to suggest that it is both a historical event and a socio-historical process. In terms of the exodus being a process, Gottwald makes an excellent and valid statement: "As a process, exodus refers

typologically to the movement of people from a situation of bondage to a situation of freedom, from a collective life determined by others to a collective that is self-determined, and this movement is understood to be a venture in the face of risk and uncertainty as to the consequences of making a 'break for freedom'" (Gottwald, 1989:253.) The use of the word 'typological' somehow suggests that Gottwald does not posit the view that the story is a historical reality. This is somewhat different from what is articulated by most liberationists. The difficulty he faces in locating the 'historical fact' of the narrative stem from his observation of how the story is set in the Bible "in a mixture of literary genres that include saga like narratives, theophanic descriptions, instructions, lists and laws" (Gottwald, 1989:253).

Whether the story is an event or a complex process, one fundamental fact is that the liberation theologians claim that the Exodus is a paradigmatic experience (Gutiérrez, 2001:157, Brown, 1984:34). Assmann (1975:66), one of the prominent advocates of liberation theology, goes further to assert that the Exodus event should not only be seen as paradigmatic in terms of the faith of Israel "with a limited 'salvation history' but the paradigm for the interpretation of all space and time' [and] for the ongoing, global 'salvation of history'". The idea is that wherever struggle, oppression or injustice is experienced by Christians, especially those in the Third World countries the quintessence of the exodus story can be invoked. Croatto agrees with this view when declares that the exodus can only be interpreted from the position of dependent people. He further concurs that the story has inexhaustible reserve of meaning, which makes it relevant and hermeneutically unique for Latin American theology (Croatto, 1973:45).

Walzer's (1985:84-105) observation is apposite in this regard by stating that: "Reformist and revolutionary religious and political groups and movements throughout postbiblical history have 'latched on' to the exodus paradigm for religiously inspired and religiously based recordings of church and society." In Gottwald's opinion all the religious and political organizations who attempt to silence liberationists for recuperating the political dimension of exodus can only be described as those who are content with Pharaoh's rule (Gottwald,

1989:259). Bloch's statement is an excellent and noteworthy assessment. He sets out the prerequisite that will validate the use of the exodus story as a model for those involved in struggle by stating that: "It should by now be evident that the efforts to draw 'religious inspiration' or 'biblical values' from the early Israelite heritage will be romantic and utopian unless resolutely correlated to both the ancient and contemporary cultural-material and social-organizational foundations" (Bloch, 1972:84-105.)

The importance of the exodus narrative both in the history of Israel and the Christian faith requires that its meaning be accurately determined. Kirk (1979:100) is right in affirming that the Exodus became for the biblical writers the archetypal event through which they interpreted their entire history as 'salvation-history'. It is also with this knowledge that von Rad (1962:176) states that: "This remembrance of a deed of Jahweh's in war ... is the primary and most certainly the oldest datum in the confession concerning the deliverance from Egypt." Gutiérrez (2001:155) is emphatic when he states that: "Yahweh will be remembered throughout the history of Israel by this one act which inaugurates its history, a history which is a re-creation." In essence, the God who created is one and the same God who also liberated Israel from the bondage of Egypt. What is not so clear from liberation theology's standpoint is the equation of the deliverance from Egypt as being synonymous to creation. Even though the *Elohim* who created is the same Yahweh who delivered, the two events are different. In Genesis, God created the earth and all its inhabitants both living and inanimate, but the deliverance from Egypt can be seen as God recalling and reconciling His people to Himself. This mighty deed of God is not the same as creation as the Hebrew people already existed, except that they were not walking in accordance with the precepts of the God of their forefathers.

Both Pentecostals and Liberation Theology agree that the Exodus narrative is relevant to their missions and aspirations and also resonates with the message of salvation or liberation which they proclaim. Kirk (1979:147) notes that this event has received disproportionate treatment to the detriment of other Old Testament events. The Pentecostals have criticized on several levels the way

liberationists have interpreted and applied the meaning of this important historical and biblical narrative. The scope of this investigation will not permit an exhaustive analysis of the areas of divergence between the two movements. However, some of the pertinent aspects which will elucidate the objective of this investigation will be explored.

Pentecostals and other orthodoxy theologians are not in complete agreement with liberationists when they assert that the Exodus event is a paradigm of revolution for our time. Non-liberationists do not accept the idea that this one event contains inexhaustible hermeneutical possibilities for peoples who experience similar situations (Kirk, 1979:148). Brown (1984:34), affirming the event as a paradigm, contends that failure to accept the paradigmatic nature of the exodus seriously means that we have equally failed to take the Bible serious. The issue is how this event is exegetically presented.

The problem with the liberationists' interpretation is not whether this event has elements of socio-political and economic dimensions. Sabugal (1978:39) acknowledges the social-political nature of the event, but concludes that its spiritual dimensions are more important. One of the fundamental reasons for the liberation from Egypt was for them to go and worship God (Ex 3:18; 4:23; 5:1). This spiritual dimension must be the fulcrum on which any interpretation of the event should revolve. Israel was already God's people even in Egypt. The only difference is they had forsaken the ways of the God of their forefathers for Egyptian gods. Another reason for this liberation is for the people to return to the true and living God whom they have abandoned (Ezek. 20:5-9; Deut. 4:34-35; Hos.12:9 13:4). However, underpinning the occupancy of the land is the fulfilment of God's promises of the coming Messiah. In this regard, the Exodus has also a meaning in the New Testament revelation and therefore not limited as an Old Testament paradigm. This is why Sabugal's (1978:39) argument is cogent.

The ubiquity of this event in both the Old and New Testament demands that any exegetical analysis of must consider information from both Testaments. Sabugal has expressed disapproval on the part of liberation theologians for not making use of all the available information on the subject from both Testaments.

It is only when what the event meant for the Israelites of old can correctly be ascertained can it we truly claim what it means for today's contemporary society. Segundo (1977:77) makes a noteworthy observation that the absence of any relationship between liberation and politics in the New Testament is indicative that a nonpolitical interpretation of the Exodus event is the way forward. In his view, it is naive to say that the Exodus holds the key for all interpretation of Scripture as a whole. In this regard, Núñez (1985:192) argues rightly when he states: "... The result of a strict exegesis of Biblical text, then, does not allow the Exodus to be used as a paradigm for political and revolutionary struggle in the transformation of Latin American society." Núñez (1985:192) completely accepts that the Exodus has the message of salvation. He also agrees that something should be done urgently to address the sufferings of the people of Latin America. However, his most profound statement is this: "Tangible results may be expected here and now from the salvation that comes from the Lord in personal, family and social life. But we can insist on those results without violating the text of the Scriptures" (Núñez, 1985:192.)

Every criticism levelled against liberation theologians on the Exodus event can be traced to the flaw in their hermeneutical methodology. There is nothing wrong in making the texts of Scripture relevant to our contemporary society. What is not theologically acceptable is ignoring the original meaning of the text and reconstructing another meaning to support the course one is advocating. The importance of determining the true meaning of a text cannot be overemphasized. Scholarly insights help to underscore this important fact.

According to Gordon & Fee (1994:25), hermeneutics implies seeking the contemporary relevance of ancient texts. Notwithstanding, they also caution that, hermeneutics should never start with the here and now (mediations) which is the method adopted by liberation theologians. The right way is to be found in the original intent of the Biblical text. Archer (2009:192), commenting on Pentecostal hermeneutics, argues against any exegetical method that focuses only on what the original inspired author meant, but advocates that what the text

means today must be considered. Scripture must be applied to one's own life and to the community of faith is the view advocated by Arrington (1994:107).

Having analyzed the contributions by Menzies(1992) and Dunn (1970) on current Pentecostal hermeneutical concerns, Archer (2009:189) concludes that both scholars share the same understanding that 'meaning' is embedded into a text by an author. He posits that "The task then of the biblical scholar is to extrapolate or discover the text's objective single meaning (which is generally synonymous with discovering the author's intended meaning) and explain it to the contemporary person" (Archer, 2009:189.) In support of Archer's assessment, Fowl (1998:32) advocates for determinate meaning, which he believes will make the text of Scripture unambiguous and lucid to all rational people. Hart (1995:116) lends his support to the debate by asserting the need to objectively ascertain what the author originally intended and argues that the exegete must not bring to the exercise any preexisting assumptions or understandings. It is when the true meaning of the author has been determined can the exegete exercise the liberty to make contemporary application. Liberation Theologians focus mainly on application rather explanation. In applying the text of Scripture to a contemporary situation, it is important not to ignore the past meaning of that text and the significance of the text should not be mixed up with the author's intended meaning. Klein, Blomberg and Hubbard (1993:401) bring much clarity when they state that: "The significance of a text will become the different applications based on the intended meaning, but the meaning always remains fixed and determined."

The scholarly discourse undertaken here underpins the Pentecostal criticisms of liberationists' interpretation and application of the Exodus event. Pentecostals are not immune from contextualization and applications of texts of Scripture to make them relevant to different diverse cultures across the globe and in addressing contemporary issues. They also advocate pneumatological hermeneutics, which implies that the Holy Spirit can bring new insights to a text of Scripture but this will not change the determined meaning of the text in accordance with proper exegesis.

When the Exodus narrative is accurately interpreted, there is no evidence to support liberationist's view that humanity participated in their liberation. God is the sole agent of liberation. The people of Israel could not help themselves. They did not possess the military capacity to stage an uprising to overthrow Pharaoh. The deliverance was not the work of man neither was God working in partnership with humanity. Liberation Theology claims that "God calls people to join in the struggle ... The people, trusting in the power of the Lord, are to be the vehicle of their own liberation" (Brown, 1984:38.) Making the people and Moses the champions of their liberation is a product of poor exegesis. God needed no help from any human agent. The Israelites could not have delivered themselves.

Gottwald (1989:256), supporting the liberationist standpoint, argues that the original account has been modified to heighten the agency of God in directly aiding the Israelites. Pixley (1987:76-80) holds the same view as Gottwald, discounting that the Israelites were passive in this conflict as the modified text, claims citing the holy war traditions of Joshua and Judges. His argument is that God always fought on the people's behalf not in their stead. Núñez (1985:188) contends that accepting liberationist's interpretation of this event will serve as a basis for Christians to become politically committed to the transformation of society and the creation of a new humanity.

As long as Liberation Theology continues to advocate that the text possesses 'reserve biblical meaning' *sensus plenior* rather than *sensus literalis*, new unhermeneutical meanings will continue to emerge. It is therefore not surprising that Gutiérrez (2001:153) continues to declare that "creation and liberation from Egypt are but one salvific act". But based on orthodox exegesis and in line with the hermeneutics of Pentecostalism, Núñez (1985:196) responds to Gutiérrez's assertion "... In this way the history of salvation and the process of [humanity's] liberation are united. There is no natural order of creation and supernatural order of redemption; the perspective of political liberation allows for only one, in which salvation as the self-creation of man takes place." These realities about liberation hermeneutics aptly justify Pentecostal criticism.

5.5 The definition of sin

The definition of sin is another important factor that explains Pentecostalism's criticisms of liberation theology. According to Pentecostalism, sin is the main reason why God promulgated His salvation plan. Sin is therefore seen from the perspective of humanity falling short of God's standards. After the initial fall humanity continued sinning, which in effect alienated them more from their Creator. God in His grace and mercy devised an all-encompassing plan of salvation to deal with personal, social and institutional sins that are now endemic in the earth.

Seeing that humanity and the rest of creation had become degenerate and destitute, Liberation Theology, on the other hand, defined sin not as a private and personal affair. Sin is defined in terms of the inability of the existing social, economic and political infrastructures meeting the needs of humanity, especially the poor and those marginalised because of their class or status in society. Gutiérrez (2001:174) sums up the liberation theology conception well by stating that: "Sin is regarded a social, historical fact, the absence of fellowship and love in relationships among persons, and, therefore, an interior, personal fracture." The view here is that the definition of sin should not be limited only to spiritual redemption, which does not in any way challenge the dehumanizing influences of our contemporary society. Sin should also not be viewed as an afterthought. Sin, according to Gutiérrez (2001:174), is found in all structures that are oppressive in which humans exploit their fellow human beings, thus fermenting racial, class and gender prejudices. In this sense sin underpins all situations of injustice and exploitation.

Echoing the themes of injustice and exploitation, Dussel (1981:8) sheds more light on how sin is perceived from Liberation Theology standpoint. He uses the "No-to-the-Other" phrase to explain that the unjust structures in Latin America represented the worst possible sin. Comparing this phrase to the Cain and Abel situation, he asserts that this analogy even recurred concretely when the "No of the North Atlantic" embarked on marginalizing the Indians, Africans, Asians, labourers and peasants. He makes a strong assertion by stating that: "Sin,

which begins as a 'No-to-the-Other', a self-deification, and an autofetishism, culminates in idolatry, in a No-to-the-creative-Other" (Dussel, 1981:8).

By this definition, sin focuses on how political and economic structures have been designed to exploit the disenfranchised and the helpless creating underdevelopment, which further widens the gap between the rich and the poor in Latin American society. Liberation Theology's solution to this protracted problem is not found in the salvation advocated by Pentecostalism. Their way of redeeming the poor in Latin America is through the process of liberation. Since the causes of these unjust social structures are attributable to powerful multinational companies who are the owners of factors of production, the liberation efforts aim to dismantle their apparatus. Liberationists do not assert that the process of liberation should be left to some external forces. The poor are galvanized to undergo a process of conscientization to empower them to take their own destiny into their own hands by overthrowing the forces that have kept them underdeveloped. Lay people, young people, and farmers are recruited into the base communities to be trained for revolutionary endeavours.

Dussel (1981:9) also offers an approach to liberating the 'Other' in his phrase. Surprisingly, he does not suggest a revolution and the taking of arms to bring emancipation. Dussel goes to the Bible for a solution by advocating that the "No-to-the-Othe" should be replaced with the "Yes-to-the-Other" making reference to the Moses in Exodus chapter 3 and the parable of Jesus on the Good Samaritan. The "Other" in this phraseology is likened to the stripped, beaten, and half-dead victim on the road side and a free person in the Egyptian slave. He further proposes conversion (*conversio*) of the 'Other' as a citizen of the City of God rather than aversion (*aversio*). Dussel (1981:9) concludes by asserting that: "Before affirming a Yes-to-the-Other, however, it is first necessary to deabsolutize the system, to expose its underside, it is necessary to be atheistic regarding the system."

So it can be seen that the fundamental difference between Pentecostalism and Liberation Theology lies in their definition of sin and the method of redemption. These different conceptions of sin also explain the differences in their etymology of salvation. Whereas salvation and liberation may connote a form of

deliverance, they are definitely different from Pentecostal and liberation standpoints. The Pentecostals will have no qualms if Liberation Theology did not define itself as a theological body. If the movement existed and operated purely as a revolutionary movement fighting for the political, economic and social liberation of the Latin Americans, this disparaging criticism will not exist. By declaring that it is offering a new way of doing theology but at the same time posits that theology is a second act, creates a great chasm which justifies Pentecostal criticism. From the Pentecostal standpoint, it is unfathomable for a movement to claim to be theological in biblical sense, but at the same deviate completely from the accepted biblical etymologies of concepts like salvation, sin and justification. Pentecostals are absolutely right when they assert that the concept of liberation advocated by liberation theologians is at variance with biblical salvation which aims to transform the human heart rather than changing political, economic and social structures. Exploitation, abuse of power by dictators, ethnic cleansing, and slavery are all symptomatic of the condition of the unregenerate heart. Systems, whether political, social, economic or social, are designed and operated by human beings. Unjust social structures are the work of depraved humanity. Even though Gutiérrez is the foremost architect of liberation theology, his views are sometimes more sympathetic to biblical themes compared to some of the other exponents (Boff&Boff, Assmann). Gutiérrez (2001:173) puts unjust situations squarely as the work of human beings arguing that they are not products of unexpected happenings. If the condition of the human heart is addressed, the world of commerce, politics and social justice that is obtainable in our fractured and dehumanised society will be minimized.

Min (1989:104-115) weighs into this debate focusing on the dialectical relationship between social and personal sin. He makes some insightful assumptions that are noteworthy (Min, 1989:104). Firstly, he asserts that: "If salvation thus transforms the very meaning of history into an inner moment of salvation history, it is through historical liberation that salvation becomes historically effective." Secondly, he makes another assumption declaring that: "If salvation is the totalizing principle for the unity of salvation and liberation, liberation is the concretizing principle of that unity." While Min's efforts are

commendable it is obvious that his intention is to justify why liberation theology advocates the notion of social sin which requires liberation rather than personal sin which requires salvation. The futility of his efforts lays on the fact that neither Pentecostals nor adherents of orthodox theology will accept any fusion of liberation, which deals with social sins with salvation which rescues depraved humanity from their sins.

There exists no synonymy between social sin and personal sin and vis-à-vis liberation and biblical salvation as far as Pentecostals are concerned. To his credit, Min (1989:104), while declaring that liberation theology has chosen the path of political liberation as means of addressing social sin, also points to the diametrically opposing views posited by Ratzinger. Ratzinger (1984: IV, 15) makes it explicitly clear that "sin is primarily an affair in the inwardness of the individual, and social sin only a 'consequence' or 'effect' of individual sins". The argument propounded by Ratzinger is that liberationists should not ignore the fact that the personal sinner needs interior conversion in order to be free. Therefore, by locating sin essentially in the social and political arena, liberation theology's action is antithetical to the human dignity and the personal freedom the individual deserves.

Min (1989:105) is not so much in favour of the dichotomy between social and personal sin. In his view, "It is individuals themselves, not in isolation but in their togetherness, who constitute the subject of society, its relations and objectifications, and who are therefore collectively responsible for both good and evil." Min is right, but what is lacking in his analysis is the question of culpability in an act which breaches the law. Somebody must be made responsible. The whole society cannot be punished for the ethnic cleansing of the ethnic Kosovo Albanians by the Serbians in the 1990s, the Holocaust or the massacre of the Tutsis by the Hutus (1994) in Rwanda. Somebody gave the instructions, some people colluded and it is these people that are brought to the International Court of Justice at The Hague for trial. They are criminally liable.

Institutions are led and managed by people who make day-to-day decisions. Their positions become untenable when they make wrong decisions. While it is clear that the freedom of the individual is conditioned by society, whose impact

far surpasses that of the individual as such, evidence exists where an individual within a corrupt society or organisation has stood out. If that individual possesses a conscience that is void of offence toward God and fellow human being, that individual will not allow that society or organisation to condition the mind to commit atrocities. Those who are truly saved are reminded that they are in the world but not of the world. They become the salt and light of their society to eschew what is evil.

By criticising the liberationists' approach to solving the Latin American problem is not an admission on the part of Pentecostalism that they support the situation in Latin America. They are just arguing that the liberationists have not understood the root cause of the problem hence Pentecostalism is determined to address the degrading conditions of Latin America but in a different way. By preaching the Gospel which has the power to bring salvation, they help to transform not just the individuals but the society as a whole. Yong (2010:123) has demonstrated that underpinning the Pentecostal concept of salvation is that "Jesus saves not only human souls in the next life but also human bodies and lives in the present age."

Even though the salvation of the individual is central to Pentecostal soteriology, it also includes salvation in the economic and political arenas. According to Yong (2010:127), global Pentecostalism has been ideologically compatible if not correlative with the neoliberal market economy. It is not odd to see Pentecostals in the global south encouraging its adherents to take risks as entrepreneurs in the competitive market place. This move is contrary to what was previously advocated by classical Pentecostal missions. The new and progressive Pentecostal cosmology no longer sees the world of commerce as something not to be ventured into. In the words of Yong (2010:19), from a phenomenological standpoint rather than theological, Pentecostalism now embraces prosperity and promotes what they call 'sanctified consumerism' and 'holy materialism'. Even though one cannot see how consumerism could be sanctified and materialism declared holy, the idea basically demonstrates how Pentecostalism enabled individuals and society to be transformed. By transitioning from local market growing vegetables and subsistence crops into global market, they

became growers of cash crops to make enough money to feed themselves and empower others to become self-sufficient. This shows that unjust social structures can be transformed when those who have received salvation and are prepared to become agents of social, economic and political change participate to make a difference.

Peterson (1996:202-8, 224-26) has cited the excellent work done by Latin America Childcare (LAC) to change many communities. This Pentecostal body operates as an alternative voluntary organisation which draws inspiration from the Bible to address concrete social conditions and the needs of families in the communities. The success of LAC shows that the Pentecostal framework is a viable alternative to what Liberation Theology offers. Analysing the participation of Pentecostals in the global market Yong (2010:127) sums it up rather well "... production and consumption, Pentecostal cosmology and spirituality play what might be called a purifying role in its economic life". This purifying role is what saved believers are called to do in a broken world by shining as lights in dark places and by acting as salt to heal and to eradicate decay and corruption in society. Only those who have accepted the salvation which Jesus brings have the divine enablement to accomplish this not focusing on social sin which cannot be repented of.

5.6 The consequences of sin

The consequences of the sin which liberationists advocate will be different from the sin perceived in the lens of Pentecostalism. The consequences of social sin from the standpoint of liberation theology represent the untold damage done to human beings as a result of exploitation, class struggles, poverty, underdevelopment, sicknesses and diseases which are prevalent in the Third World particularly in Latin America. In liberationists', thinking capitalism is to be blamed. In order to achieve liberation from the onslaught of capitalism's unjust social structures, the people must do whatever it takes to ensure that they are freed from the clutches of their oppressors. On the other hand, the most conspicuous consequences of sin from Pentecostal epistemology is found in

Genesis chapter 2:17 and 3:4-5. God made it clear that the penalty for eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil is death. The cost of the disobedience by Adam and Eve is that death became the inheritance of every human being in every generation.

In this investigation, sin has been classified into social or unjust structures (liberationists' view) and private and personal (Pentecostals' view) for the purpose of analysis. Another reason is also to ascertain the validity of Pentecostal criticism of liberation theology's etymology of salvation and to show that salvation is different from liberation. Notwithstanding, this investigation has also made some efforts to demonstrate that the focus should not be on social sin but on personal and individual private sin which are symptomatic of the conditions of the hearts of fallen humanity. It is not realistic to talk about sin outside the human heart. It is the condition of the human heart that filters into the community or society as a whole. Economic, political and social structures are the by-products of the human mind, which is corrupt, deceptive and inherently evil and in need of transformation.

Therefore, in order to bring a lasting liberation to the suffering masses of Latin America, Asia, Africa and those facing all sorts of discrimination in the developed nations, the human heart must be transformed. The curse of death pronounced in Genesis chapters 2 and 3 must be reversed. Paul provides a way to remedy the situation in his letter to the Ephesians in chapter 2. He firmly asserts that we were dead in our transgressions and sins, but God in His rich mercy in Christ has saved us by His grace. We were helpless and could not help ourselves. Salvation is by Jesus Christ and it is about personal and private sin, but liberation is by human efforts, by any means possible, including taking arms and engaging in revolutionary activities.

It is important at this juncture to explore death as the cost of sin according to the Genesis account. Exegetically speaking, it is clear that Adam and Eve did not die the moment they ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Genesis 5:5 records that Adam lived up to 930 years old. If they did not die immediately, then death as the penalty for their sin means something other than physical death. Another way of explaining this is to argue that maybe there is an inbuilt

understanding that the penalty of death in this account has no time factor. On the other hand, if God stipulated that they will die, then there is no reason why that should not be the case. Adam and Eve, according to many scholars, died a spiritual death. The notion of spiritual death can be interpreted in the sense that they were alienated from the presence of God. Sin separated them from God. This can be understood if the ministry of Jesus is carefully examined. As the embodiment of God's salvation plan, Jesus epitomised his ministry in reconciling humanity to God (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). Sin estranged humanity from God, and the plan of God is that through salvation in Christ all humanity will be restored back to the Creator (2 Corinthians 5:21). The restoration and reconciliation process also include the bestowal to humanity the glory and dominion, which were their prerogative in the Garden of Eden.

From the viewpoint of Black Theology, Roberts (2005:51-67) makes invaluable contribution to this debate. Arguing that human nature is a good thing spoiled, he is of the opinion that any discussion about the racial treatment suffered by Black people in America, which does not consider the "fallenness" of humans, is unrealistic. The significance of Roberts' assertion is to demonstrate that every evil in society including entrenched racist and slavery mentality in the American South stem from the fallenness of humanity. Roberts (2005:51) draws our attention to a court case which depicted Blacks as a commodity to be bought and sold in the market. In the Dred Scott case of 1857, the United States Supreme Court led by Chief Justice Taney ruled that "... blacks had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the Negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit. He was bought and sold and treated as an ordinary article of merchandise and traffic, whenever profit could be made by it" (Van Evrie, 1859). Notwithstanding how whites treated blacks, Roberts' argument is that human beings both blacks and whites are sinners. In his view, "Sin is a broken vertical relationship before it is a horizontal relationship" (Roberts, 2005:56.) The reality of this statement is that private, personal or individual sins as well as social or unjust social structures came as a result of the original fall of Adam and Eve.

What Roberts, while acknowledging that sin creates separation, also advocates that forgiveness, should be the way to achieve reconciliation. According to his understanding of the racial divide between the blacks and the whites in America, the Gospel should be perceived as possessing both reconciling and liberating qualities, which should not be ignored by Christian anthropology. What makes Roberts' work insightful and relevant to this investigation is his recognition that the awful racism experienced by blacks in America is as a consequence of the breakdown in relationship between God and his creation (Adam and Eve). He declares that "There is estrangement between God and humanity, and this explains why each person is set against his or her brother and sister" (Roberts, 2005:56.) The same can be said about the Latin American situation. Núñez (1985:18-19) identifies a hierarchy of oppression to include:

- those oppressed under unjust economic social structures;
- the repression of American Indians by the Iberian conquest who implanted Christendom (European cultural, social and political and political systems);
- the creation of a dominant social class which relegated the *criollos* (natives) to second class citizens.

These inhumane treatments of others by their fellow human beings are the consequences of sin committed by Adam and Eve. Roberts sums it by acknowledging that murder came after the fall and that sin is mankind's desire to be as gods. Since all sins including racism in America, the Rwandan genocide, the holocaust, the exploitation of the native Indians in Latin America are all the consequences of the fall, it is important to align with the Pentecostal mode of salvation rather than the liberationist liberation methodology. The Pentecostal message of salvation is the only way to bring about reconciliation first and foremost with God the Creator with the created. A reconciled heart will be rid of self-centeredness and self-glory which exalts human beings over other human beings. It is only when the original condition (image and likeness of God) of human nature is restored through biblical salvation and reconciliation then humanity can attain peace with itself and with one another. This is the way to true liberation and the amelioration of the consequences of sin.

5.7 The redemptive work of Jesus Christ

There is overwhelming evidence within Pentecostal scholarship that supports the view that Jesus Christ is the Saviour who came to save humankind from their sins (Warrington, 2008:34; Kay, 2009:268; Hollenweger, 2005:247). On the other hand, Liberation Theology sees Jesus Christ as a liberator. Some of the known exponents of liberation theology (Assmann, Boff, and Sobrino) have written books that reinforce this view (Núñez, 1985:207, Sobrino, 1978:34). The way Jesus Christ is perceived by both Pentecostalism and Liberation Theology will determine how they view His redemptive work. The Pentecostal understanding of who Jesus is, is in accordance with the Council of Chalcedon of A.D. 451, which affirms without equivocation the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ. Since Pentecostals affirm the complete humanity and true divinity of Jesus Christ, without dividing the fundamental unity of His person, it is perfectly understandable, that they will postulate a different Christological construct from liberationists.

Núñez (1985:208) is right to point out that Liberation Theology proposes a Christology thought which starts with the historical Jesus. In this way, Jesus is not seen as the God who came down to be incarnated; rather what is advocated is an ascendant Christology. Christology which starts from below presents Jesus as man who slowly reveals His divinity. This new Christological construct opposes any attempt to view Christology purely from metaphysical or dogmatic standpoints. This Christology presents Jesus Christ as a liberator who can respond adequately to the hopes or desires of each generation. By adopting this approach, liberationists' definition of Jesus completely contradicts what is generally accepted in the faith communities but in particular Pentecostalism. Highlighting this difference is important because of the connectivity which exists between Christ as the Messiah and the doctrine of salvation in Pentecostal theology. The Jesus who is recognized by Pentecostals as the Christ is the one who proceeded from the Father, who was crucified, died and was buried but rose again on the third day according biblical accounts. This Jesus has the sole responsibility to bring about humanity's redemption and their restoration to their Creator through faith in the salvation He brings.

Defending the liberationists' approach, Sobrino (1978:329) argues that "the classical dogmatic Christology cannot be mediated historically in and through every kind of culture, sociological, philosophical and theological analysis". His thesis is that the Greco-Roman world in which this Christology was formulated is different from the Latin American situations as the times have changed. In his view, the dogmatic Christology of the Council of Chalcedon suffers from a lack of concreteness, historicity and relationality. Boff puts his view more succinctly defending Christology that is developed in Latin America. He declares that such Christology "should give primacy to the anthropological aspect over the ecclesiological, to the utopian (in sense of a historical liberating project) over the factual, to the critical over the dogmatic, to the social over the personal, to orthopraxy over orthodoxy" (Boff, 1979:43, 46).

Núñez (1985:210) provides an analysis of how Liberation Theology Christology differs from Liberal and Soteriological Christology. He observes that Liberationists reject Liberation Theology Christology "because it ignores the eschatological character of the mission of Jesus and tends to present Christ as if He were a good bourgeois citizen of the nineteenth-century style" (Núñez, 1985:210). He also argues that the liberationists reject Soteriological Christology because in their opinion it is "based on the individualistic and personal interests of man, not on what should be its true interests in the light of faith and reality in which they live" (Núñez, 1985:210).

The liberationists' construct of who Jesus is poses serious challenges not just for Pentecostals, but for the faith community as a whole. In their approach to find the historical Jesus, they reject the Christ revealed in Scripture by reflecting on the Gospels and taking into account the collective wisdom of the Church Fathers as demonstrated in both the Chalcedon and Nicene Creeds. The Christ of Liberation Theology is one constructed by liberating ideals or practices of the people. In essence the Christ of Liberation Theology is not the same Christ we read about in Hebrews 13:8. The Liberation Christ will be subject to historical, social and political changes. As these factors change, He will also change. This is contrary to what the Scripture teaches.

While it is important to formulate a Christology that addresses everyday life situations, it should not be done at the expense of ditching what the Bible teaches about Jesus Christ and the redemption He embodies. The Christ of the Bible is both human and divine. Núñez (1985:219) notes that Liberation Theology emphasizes strongly the humanity of Christ, but on the other hand fail to emphasize his deity with the same vigour. His assertion is that even though they do not reject his deity, but at the same time they do not affirm it without ambiguities or limitations. These are some of the reasons why Pentecostal criticisms of Liberation Theology are justified. Unless the Christ of the Bible is accurately defined, we cannot fully understand the redemption which He brought to fallen humanity. It is absolutely preposterous for Boff to suggest that "belief in the deity of Christ is a product of the post-resurrection Christological reflection of Christians in the first century" (Boff, 1979:153-155). Boff's suggestion that Jesus could not be conscious of being the Son of God once again demonstrates the flaw in Liberation Christology. In his view, Matthew 16:16 is not historical but something inserted and for that reason he also doubts whether Jesus actually pronounced the words of Matthew 16:17. These are evidence of faulty hermeneutics inherent in Liberation Theology and serve as point of departure from the Pentecostal standpoint. The Pentecostals cannot accept any attempt to distort what is accurately recorded on the pages of Scripture as not divinely inspired. Jesus told Peter that what he had said was not the product of human knowledge but a revelation from God. Jesus confirmed that God revealed that knowledge. Boff, attributing this important and fundamental revelation of the Christ to a belief of the Hellenistic Christians rather than something inspired by God, brings Liberation hermeneutics into serious question. In this sense, Assmann (1975:103) is absolutely right when he declares that: "Christology is one of the most dramatic of the gaps in the theology of liberation in Latin America." If Jesus is not the Christ who is also the Messiah, then our salvation is not real. For Pentecostals, Christ is the Son of God, the very God who is also fully human. In Him and Him alone do we have our redemption from our sins and truly justified.

5.8 The revelation of the Cross

The Cross remains one of the most important motifs in Christian thoughts and in the New Testament. Trotter (1996:136) generally agrees with this view when he argues: "It stands as the centre of the New Testament theology of salvation and is the starting point for not only soteriology, but all of Christian theology." Osborne (2003:369) notes that all the four Gospels have records of the Cross and in particular the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, but argues that they all approach it from different vantage points. According to him, it is necessary to consider all these accounts before one can fully understand the significance of Jesus' crucifixion. The Cross also occupies a significant position in the writings of Paul. In 1 Corinthians 1:18, he makes it clear the reason for his calling and why he preaches not with human words of wisdom. It was important for him not to empty the Cross Christ of its power. He further declares that the message of the Cross was to the believer the demonstration of the power of God. Even though this message of the Cross might sound foolish to others, in the crucified Christ is the wisdom and power of God manifested (1 Corinthians 1:19, 23). Analysing these verses of Scriptures, Osborne (2003:370) is right to make the following deductions:

- The "word of the Cross" is the heart of the Gospel, and the preaching of the Cross is the soul of the Church's mission.
- "Christ crucified" is more than the basis of our salvation; the Cross was the central event in history, the one moment which demonstrated God's control of and involvement in human history.

Despite the pivotal position of the Cross in Christian thought, it is not free from controversies, as can be seen from the scholarly work by McGrath (2011:319-346). In this work, McGrath has condensed the meaning of the Cross and the resurrection into four main themes, but makes it absolutely clear that they are not mutually exclusive. Some of the different schools of thoughts presented by McGrath are not new to this investigation as they have already been discussed in chapter two. Therefore the focus will be on how the Cross is perceived by the different contributors and how this helps to address the challenges presented by liberation theology. Even though these contributors are not Pentecostals by denomination, it is clear that their views are generally in line with the passages

of Scripture (orthodoxy) and not at variance with Pentecostal theology. Where this is not the case, their arguments will be weighed using common sense hermeneutics and exegesis. The main thrust is to understand the meaning of the Cross as revealed in the Bible in order to counter Liberation Theology's conception of salvation as liberation for social and political justice.

In looking at the Cross as the foundations of our salvation, it is clear that modern scholars have moved away from making reference to the "theory of atonement" and have opted for soteriology. This is mostly due to the controversy surrounding the use of the term "sacrifice." McGrath attributes this to the negative association of the concept of sacrifice post 1945. The shift does not dilute what is clearly written in Scripture (Romans 3:25, Hebrews 9:11-14, 28; 10:8-12), that Jesus was offered on the Cross as a ransom for our sins. The Church Fathers Athanasius (*Epistolaefestales*, vii :) and Augustine (*De civitate Dei*, X, 20) both agree that Christ's sacrifice was trustworthy and of permanent effect because he offered Himself as a true mediator between God and humanity (1 Timothy 2:5; Philippians 2:6-8, 1 Corinthians 5:7).

McGrath (2011:322) also notes the link between the Cross and the theme of victory. This victory was associated with among other things the idea of a decisive victory over forces of evil and oppression. This idea of victory is derived from 1 Peter 3:18-22. Since Anselm (c. 1033-1109) was not content with the victory theme of the Cross, he propounded the idea that the death of Christ on the Cross was the basis of receiving forgiveness from God. Another understanding of the Cross is linking it to the love of God for humanity. This notion of God demonstrating his love for humanity through the death of Jesus on the Cross has been identified with earliest Christian tradition and in particular with the writing of Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-c.215). According to Clement, "... the incarnation of Christ, and especially his death, represents a powerful affirmation of the love of God for humanity and a demand that humanity demonstrate a comparable love for God" (Clement of Alexandria, *Quis dives salvetur*, 37, [5.3]).

By analysing the meaning of the Cross from scholarly, theological and biblical perspectives, it is now possible to gauge the liberation understanding of the Cross in the light of Pentecostal criticism. How the Jesus of the Cross is understood is important in presenting the liberating message of the Cross and the salvation which Jesus wrought by his death.

Contrary to the assertions made above, liberation theologians attribute the death of Jesus on the Cross to historical reasons. This does not mean that they do not have some theological arguments to substantiate his death. Kirk (1979:128) is clear that liberation theologians believe that Jesus died "as if he were a seditious political leader citing Luke 23:1-2 and John 11:47-50 to support their claims. Crespy (1971:89-109) argues that the trial of Jesus was political and that he was condemned for Zealotism. Supporting this ideal of Jesus dying as a political leader, Sobrino (1994:196) argues strongly that because Jesus was a man in conflict, He was persecuted and it was this persecution that brought about His death. Sobrino (1994:196) further explains the death of Christ in this term: "... the fact that Jesus' preaching and activity presented a radical threat to the religious power of his time, and indirectly to any oppressive power, and that power reacted." Since the activities of Jesus were contrary to those in power and authority, He got in their way and the result of those who get in the way according to history is death.

The liberationists' interpretation is that Jesus knew the consequences of Him being in conflict with those in authority. They also believe that Jesus' humanity is displayed throughout this persecution process. Even though He knew the consequences of his actions, He was prepared to present Himself not just as one who announces hope to the poor and curses their oppressors is indicative that He accepted that persecution was God's will for Him. What is shocking in this liberation exposition of the death of Jesus Christ is the statement by Sobrino (1994:201) that: "the historical Jesus did not interpret his death in terms of salvation, in terms of Soteriological models later developed by the New Testament, such as expiatory sacrifice or vicarious satisfaction".

For this reason, Sobrino (1978:187-190; 1994:211-227) strongly argues that the Cross of Jesus is scandalous. He advocates that the early Christian changed the Cross from something negative to something positive by explaining it in terms of soteriology. Whereas he sees no reason to object the Soteriological terms in which the Cross is explained (2 Cor. 5:19), he contends that: "The problem lies in the fact that one-sided Soteriological consideration of the Cross draws our attention away from the theological dimension of Jesus' death." He insists that the New Testament has not only been shifting from the scandalous aspect of the Cross, but also evades clarifying whether the death of Jesus affected God Himself. It is illogical that Sobrino's view about the death of Jesus is still at variance with biblical account. His analysis of some New Testament accounts about Jesus' death (Acts 2:23; 4:28; Mark 8:31), which indicated that God foreknew, planned and purposed it, and those which predicted that the Messiah should die (Luke 24:25, 26 and 1 Cor. 15:4) should bring the clarity he is looking for (Sobrino, 1978:188). The crux of Sobrino's argument is summed up succinctly by Núñez (1985:230) when he writes: "That scandal, he says represents the fact that Jesus died, being the Son of God, had to die, and that the Father was passive at the Cross." The scandal according Sobrino is that God abandoned Jesus on the Cross but instead of the New Testament reporting it as real-life scandal, it was reported as nothing more than a *noetic* scandal.

Sobrino is not the only liberation voice that argues against the New Testament account of the death of Jesus on the Cross. Boff presents some argument of his own but only a few will be examined. According to Boff (1981:313-315), Jesus died for the same reason that all the prophets before Him died. In other words, He did not die to save sinners, but because He challenged Jewish orthodoxy, upset the political and religious authorities and suffered the consequences of His action. Just like Sobrino, Boff (1981:317) accuses the early Christians of borrowing from the Old Testament to cover up for the shameful death of their Messiah. Boff also makes another observation that Jesus was not thinking about dying at the start of His ministry and did not consider Himself to be the suffering servant of Isaiah 53:65 (Boff, 1981:350-351). He further accuses

Christians of putting words on the lips of Jesus that give a vicarious and expiatory meaning to His death (Núñez, 1985:233).

Statements like these expose the faulty hermeneutical foundation on which liberation theology's Christology is formulated. They also demonstrate the doctrinal differences which exist between Pentecostalism and liberation theology especially on subjects which are integral to our faith. This chasm should not be taken lightly as if it is mere difference of opinion between the Pentecostalism and liberation theology. On the contrary, as they have wider implications in terms of how the dehumanising challenges of our contemporary society can be addressed. Núñez (1985:235) makes a noteworthy observation in stating that: "The discrepancy goes far beyond the political and ecclesial; it transcends the conflict between capitalism and socialism and touches the very foundations of our faith, as can be seen in the case of Christology." If Jesus is both fully human and completely God, how can it be explained that He did not know the reason for His death.

What is absurd is the attempt by liberation theology to discount the Gospel accounts of the life, ministry and death of Jesus as something legendary and fabricated by the early Christians. Núñez (1985:232-233) provides a perfect summary of what liberation theologians make of the New Testament account of the death of Jesus on the Cross: "The historically true event are the crucifixion, the condemnation by Pilate and the inscription on the Cross in three languages known by the Jews. The rest of the events are theologized or are pure theology developed in the light of the resurrection and reflection upon the Old Testament." In essence, the only believable evidence acceptable to liberationists is that which is historically verifiable. Revelation and Old Testament prophecies have been discounted. The explanation to the liberationists position is their over dependency on the historical-critical exegesis method of interpretation at the expense of all other methods. Their treatment of this important Christian event justifies beyond reasonable doubt, the Pentecostal rejection of their reflections and assumptions about the Cross. The Jesus of the Cross is the God-man who willingly went to the Cross as a ransom to accomplish the salvation plan of God.

5.9 The judgement of the Cross

Genesis 3:17 is clear that the penalty of sin is death. Ezekiel 18:4 identifies the one on who this penalty falls. It is the soul or the person that commits the sin. In essence, another person will not die for the sins of others. There will be no substitution where the children will die for the sins of their fathers (Ezekiel 18:20). This is an annulment of Exodus 34:7. Paul also makes it clear that the wages of sin is death (Romans 3:23). These verses corroborate the fact that the Bible says that the sinner will never go unpunished (Proverbs 11:21). On another level, Paul declares in Romans 6:23 that we have all sinned and have come short of God's glory. This is symptomatic of our relationship with Adam and Eve (Romans 5:18-19). Since we have fallen short of God's standard, the same penalty of death should be our just reward because of God's righteousness.

Rather than punish the guilty, God justified the sinner. This does not mean that sin was not justly rewarded. On the Cross Jesus bore the sins of all humanity and paid the price (Romans 5:6-8). He took the place of the sinner and died in his place by substituting Himself and allowing the judgement and the wrath of God to fall on Him (2 Peter 2:24; 3:18). The righteous died for the unrighteous.

Christ died once and for all to take away our guilt forever (Hebrews 9:26-28; 10:2). With this judgement of Christ on the Cross, Paul declares that there is no more condemnation for those who are in Christ, because Christ became a sin offering for us. Sin was judged and condemned on the Cross (Romans 8:1-4). In John 5:22, Jesus refutes the traditional belief that God is the Judge by pointing out that the Father had entrusted all judgments to the Son. Gunton (2002:162) commenting on this, points out that: "... on the Cross Jesus bears God's judgement on sin in order not that sinners should not be judged (condemned), but that they should endure judgement in a different form, as discipline."

The judgement of the Cross therefore has a ring of reversal about it. In the Old Testament, it was the priest who offered to God on behalf of the people. On the Cross the priest becomes the sacrifice. The gift brought to God is not animals

but Himself. He became the perfect sacrifice by offering His unblemished life to God (Hebrews 9:14). Gunton (2002:77) provides an apt definition of salvation in the light of the judgement of the Cross by declaring that: "The mystery of salvation is that those who by their unholy living put themselves outside the way to life may through their relation to this man come before God as his holy people." Since God has through His Son's condemnation overcome evil by good, we who have benefited in this way should follow His example (Romans 12:1-2).

McGrath (2011:335) draws our attention to the fact that the Cross should not be treated in an abstract sense, but as a place where violence (suffering and death) was inflicted on Christ. From anthropological perspectives, Girard (2001:154-156) helps us to understand that violence is integral to the sacred practices of all cultures and races. His work also provides great insights in evaluating the liberation approaches to solving conflicts in Latin America. In his view, when violence escalates in a community, it is possible to divert the violence to another object in order for the community to be saved. Girard refers to this object as the sacrificial victim or scapegoat using Old Testament imagery (Leviticus 16:10).

McGrath (2011:336) comments that this sacrificial victim is an innocent party to the violence who then becomes the focal point of the community and also the means to resolve the conflict and transform the community. As this innocent victim is sacrificed, the violence is diverted and the community is saved. Girard is quick to point out that the New Testament does not use the scapegoat imagery but a more superior term "the Lamb of God" and refers to an innocent victim sacrificed unjustly. Girard's idea is insightful in understanding the atonement or the violent judgement on the Cross.

McGrath (2011:336), however, sees it as a way of understanding "how an act of violence leads to a community which is characterized by its emphasis on reconciliation and peace". In essence, Christ's atonement becomes the fundamental prerequisite for a nonviolent community. This principle can be applied in the Latin American context. This necessitates the need for proper exegesis of Scripture in relationship to who Christ is and what His death on the

Cross accomplished for humanity. Peace and reconciliation void of violence and revolutionary means can be found in the passages of Scripture. Biblical salvation and not political and socioeconomic liberation is one of the plausible ways to solving problems inherent in underdeveloped and socially divided communities.

5.10 Jesus and the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalized

Gutiérrez (2001:251) makes it absolutely clear that poverty has become not just a central theme in contemporary Christian spirituality, but also a controversial subject. This observation is important especially as it is made by one of the arch proponents of liberation theology. Poverty is commonplace in the regions where two thirds of the world lives, which also happens to be the areas where Liberation Theology and Pentecostalism are thriving. During the Puebla conference (1979), Liberation Theology ratified that one of its fundamental tenets to stand in solidarity with the poor. By expressing a preferential option for the oppressed poor, liberation theologians argue that they are doing exactly what God is always impelled to do.

Their theological justifications are exemplified by Exodus 3:7, 9; Isaiah 1:10-17; 58:6-7 and Mark 7:6-13. Boff & Boff (2008:44) also argue that Christ made a personal option for the poor because they were the main recipients of the message He preached (Luke 6:20; 7:21-22 & 10:25-37). In their view all those who follow Christ should make this option for the poor and those in need as a mark of expressing their faith in Christ and in solidarity with the many living in poverty in our contemporary society. There is also an eschatological motivation based on Matthew 25, which liberationist interpret to mean that at the Last Judgment what will count is the extent to which we accepted or rejected the poor. In other words, the Supreme Judge will be on the side of those who made a preferential option for the poor, oppressed and marginalized (Matt. 25:40).

Affirming the liberationists' preferential option for the poor and oppressed, Boff & Boff (2008:48) contend that because God and Christ do not will the dehumanizing poverty they suffer, they stand in solidarity with them not on the basis of any good they have done but the wrong they suffer. From the liberationists' standpoint, poverty is a challenge to the innermost nature of God and the mission of Christ as the champion of what is just and right.

Despite the centrality of poverty in Christian discourse as observed by Gutiérrez above, he has equally noted that not much progress has been made due to ambiguity in the etymology of the concept. Gutiérrez (2001:254) argues that even though some exegetical studies have taken place "poverty is a notion ... in spite of everything is still unclear". This ambiguity has led to different meanings of poverty being used by liberation theology. Boff & Boff (2008:46-48) have identified two distinctive meanings of the term to include those who are socioeconomically or evangelically poor. Gutiérrez (2001:254-253) on the other hand uses different terms (material poverty and spiritual poverty) to explicate his understanding of poverty.

Even though both are ardent adherents of liberation theology, they have approached the subject from different standpoints. Notwithstanding their use of different terminologies, they agree that poverty must be prioritized in any Christian discourse. Socioeconomic and material poverty are dehumanizing and must be challenged. They advocate that this type of poverty is man-made (a product of unjust social structures and exploitation by capitalists). Boff & Boff (2008:48) explain that: "The evangelically poor will establish solidarity with the economically poor and even identify with them, just as the historical Jesus did." So whether one is spiritually poor (those who are not attached to the material goods of this world even if they have them in abundance) or socioeconomically poor (those who are deprived of the basic necessities of life), liberationists advocate that Christianity should manifest a preferential option for them. Despite attempting to unscramble the true meaning of poverty by using different terminologies, Gutiérrez (2001:256) also believes that the distinctions have created further misunderstandings in contemporary society.

The Old and the New Testaments are replete with chapters and verses which address the reality of poverty and what should be done to ameliorate their dehumanizing influences. The life and ministry of Jesus Christ also paints a portrait of how those who are materially and spiritually poor are to be treated. Proper exegesis of the relevant passages of Scripture should provide the prerequisite understanding to challenge poverty in today's world from a Christian standpoint. The overwhelming evidence in Scripture showing how Jesus Christ identified with those marginalized in society makes it impossible for anyone to explain it away by exegetical manipulations. God and Jesus Christ are on the side of those who are being exploited but not the type of solidarity advocated liberation theology. No evidence can be deduced from Scripture that God and Jesus manifested "a political prejudice of a Marxist type in [their] attitude towards social classes in biblical times" (Núñez, 1985:256).

What is clear is that the Godhead care about the poor and the oppressed, however, this does not translate into a wholesale hate of those who are not materially impoverished. Jesus Christ's invitation was not exclusively to the poor but all who have sinned and come short of God's standard. There was no classist dimension to this salvation call. All were welcome both the oppressed poor and the oppressor (Matt. 11:28; John 6:37). John 3:16 makes it clear that God loves everyone both rich and poor, especially if they realize their need for salvation. The oppressor who turns away from oppressing the poor will be useful to the Kingdom which Jesus advocates. The poor do not become part of this Kingdom purely because of their poverty and the wrong they are suffering. The poor who is a sinner needs salvation and the rich who continues to oppress others equally need salvation. This is why Jesus is not classist or prejudiced in His approach to the Kingdom business. On the Cross Christ died for all including the rich, the oppressed poor, and those marginalized because of their social, racial and cultural status in society.

So even though Jesus identified with those who were outcasts of the society in His days does not put Him in the same cast as the liberation theology preferential option for the oppressed poor. Jesus' approach to the poor is at variance with liberation theology's tenet, which asserts that in order to be in

solidarity with the poor one should oppose everything that produces the exploitation of man by man. In essence, a person can only speak for the poor by converting and becoming poor. If everyone became poor, it will be a case of the blind leading the blind. A rich person who has received grace and has accepted the message of salvation which Jesus taught will use their wealth to improve the life of others, like the Good Samaritan or Joseph of Arimathea who allowed Jesus to be buried in a tomb belonging to him.

In essence the differences between the way Liberation Theology and Pentecostalism address poverty in today's society is a matter of interpretation of what constitutes poverty and how it came about. It can also be attributed to the variance in their hermeneutical approach to the subject when using the various passages of Scripture that deal with the subject. What is needed is a biblically balanced approach which does not ignore the reality of poverty and other social classes in our society. When liberation theology's treatment of poverty is critically examined, it is not difficult to decipher the faulty hermeneutical foundation on which it is based.

The height to which the poor is elevated to is incomprehensible and unbiblical. Sobrino (2008:72) emphatically declares that: "There will be salvation or humanization if redemptive impulses do not emerge from that world of the poor." In his view, outside the poor, there is no salvation that is humane. This notion cannot be substantiated from the teachings of Jesus Christ or any Old Testament passage. It is also not exegetically correct to claim that in the poor one glimpses God. On the contrary, the poor would like to know the whereabouts of God in the light of their suffering. The suffering people of the Third World have not embraced the message of salvation because they are poor. The Bible does, not teach that poverty saves; salvation is the result of accepting the grace of God, which is found in the Gospel which Jesus preached (Roman 1:16-17).

Despite what Sobrino has said before, at least he is absolutely right on this one point: "The great salvific task, then, is to evangelize the poor so that out of their material poverty they may attain the awareness and the spirit necessary, first to escape from their indigence and oppression, second to put an end to

oppressive structures, and third to inaugurate a new heaven and a new earth ... the heart of the material world and in the heart of human history” (Sobrinho, 2008:76.) This is true if evangelization means spreading the message of Christ, which has the power to affirm one’s dignity and assurance of their belonging to the God who created them in His image.

This type of revelation can empower the poor to rise up and have dominion over life’s challenges and cultivate positive self-belief. This is the Pentecostal approach. The Gospel is preached in the power of the Holy Spirit and those who embrace the message are liberated. This is the way to apply Luke 4:18. Liberationists contend that, by Jesus announcing the good news to the poor, automatically confers to them preferential status. However, this understanding undermines the teachings of Jesus and rejected by Pentecostals.

Brown’s treatment of Luke 4:16-30 is interesting as he believes that it is the paradigm story of the New Testament just as exodus is to the Old Testament (Brown, 1984:90). Brown disparages the attempt within the Christian community to spiritualize this passage as ‘poor in spirit’ rather than see it as blunt as Luke saw it. He blames this on the nonpoor who he believes have taken over the interpretation of Scriptures to suit their own agenda. As a liberationist, Brown (1994:94) contends that this passage is about the prominence of the theme of social reversal where those who are oppressed and marginalized will be liberated. While it is important to adhere to Brown’s advice about spiritualizing poverty in this passage, it is equally inadvisable to see it as a paradigm passage which elevates the poor to the point which Christ did not intend. The fundamental error in liberation theology treatment of the poor lies in the term ‘preferential’ option. The episode in Luke 4 should not be seen as the manifesto of Jesus’ teaching and ministry. Jesus did not come to save just the poor but the sinner which includes the rich and the poor. This is the mission of the incarnate Son of God. God is not the God of partiality but the God of all mankind, rich and poor, oppressed and the oppressor.

5.11 The Gospel and salvation

The good news which brings salvation in biblical terms is that based on the life, teachings and ministry of Jesus Christ. The Gospel writers point to Jesus Christ as the only source of salvation for those who accept His finished work by faith. The Gospel is the good news about Jesus Christ who has come to save mankind from their sins. The relationship between the Gospel and salvation is clearly stated in the Bible. Jesus who embodies this salvation is also the good news that is being preached. The birth of John the Baptist was seen as the precursor to the imminent salvation of Israel (Luke 2:67-69, 71, 77-79; 3:3-6; 15-16). Jesus came principally to bring salvation (John 3:16-18, 1:12-13, 29, Luke 2:30-31, 38; Acts 4:12).

Paul also attests that the Gospel is the power of God for the salvation all who will believe. In his view the Gospel reveals God's righteousness which can be received by faith to merit salvation in the finished work of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:16-17). This symbiotic relationship between the Gospel and biblical salvation means one cannot exist independent of the other. For true salvation to be realised the Gospel which is preached must be based on the Jesus of the Bible who came to save mankind from their sins. This is what Paul meant when he contended that the grace of God had appeared to all men. People who were enemies of God can be saved by accepting God's son and the good news He brings (Titus 2:11).

As long as liberation theologians continue to advocate a Christology that is not based on accurate exegesis of Scripture, their tenets of salvation (liberation) will remain at variance with the Pentecostalism concept of salvation. By continuing to advocate a Christology based on the historical Jesus rather than the Jesus who is truly man and fully God, Pentecostals' criticisms will subsist. Liberation theologians have not done themselves favours by continuing to cherry-pick Biblical chapters and verses to substantiate their beliefs and practices. It has been firmly argued in this investigation that the liberation which is advocated by liberationists is not synonymous to Biblical salvation.

This assertion does not minimise the liberation which is inherent in the power of the Gospel of salvation. To be saved from sin and restored to God is a liberating experience, but it is not the same as being liberated from unjust social structures mediated by social analysis of concrete situations in Latin America. Those who are liberated from unjust social structures can still be miserable as they continue in sin, which causes alienation between them and their Creator. The teaching of Jesus is clear by putting premium on seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness rather than the material things of this life (Matthew 6:33). Salvation from sin must be prioritised over liberation from socioeconomic and unjust social structures. Jesus inferred this in His teaching by declaring that the salvation of one's soul is more precious than gaining the whole world. What Pentecostalism has demonstrated in the Third World is to prioritise the preaching of the good news to the disenfranchised, marginalised and the impoverished who in turn become self-confident and self-reliant. They become agents of social change by changing their own lives and by engaging in entrepreneurial endeavours and subsequently becoming self-sufficient to support themselves and the community at large.

5.12 Tackling contemporary challenges

The nature of challenges facing the Latin American society today is not so much different from that which existed at the incipient of Liberation Theology four decades ago. Affirming at Puebla in 1979 its commitment to take a "preferential option for the poor", Liberation Theology publically declared what it was set up to achieve in Latin America. The exponents of this movement made it clear that its focus will be to respond to the realities which face millions in Latin America. They became the champions and advocates against everything that was going wrong in Latin America. Some of the issues identified by Rowland (2007:5) include poverty, appalling living conditions, malnutrition, inadequate health care which when compared with not just those in the rich nations but, even those wealthy elites of Latin American cities were still diabolical and unacceptable.

Petrella (2008:80) makes an important observation with regard to the challenges facing liberation theologies across the globe but in particular the Americas. He argues that both the American and their Latin American counterparts share the same material context, even though for the purpose of self-identity and self-worth differing initial agendas may exist (Petrella, 2008:2). His view is that if the agendas are authentic, there must be a convergence irrespective of the name or location of that liberation theology movement. In the light of this assertion, he advocates that the material context of American liberation theology, which includes economic deprivation, racial/ethnic humiliation, and gender discrimination, are not dissimilar to the challenges in the Latin American milieu. He sees all forms of oppression stemming from economic deprivation. Concluding that all oppressions are the offshoots of economic deprivation is an important and insightful observation as he was able to justify it with Farmer's (2003) works in medical anthropology.

According to Farmer (2003:140), economic deprivation justifies the preferential option for the poor. He corroborates this fact by making reference to death rates among the rich and comparing it to those economically disenfranchised. Farmer (2003:147) notes that whether it is in the Third World or inner cities of the United States, tuberculosis which has an overall cure rate of 95% was the cause of 7.7% of deaths among those who are economically affluent compared to 58.6% of deaths among the poor. Farmer firmly acknowledges that other deviances like rape and slavery are more likely to occur, not on the basis of gender (women) or colour (black), but where poverty is a common denominator. Those who are economically deprived are more likely to experience injustice in society as they lack the economic power to defend their rights. Inequality is a fact of life in a society where the gap between those who have and those who do not is entrenched and continues to widen. Liberation Theology's *modus operandi* among other things include eradicating poverty, class divisions, confronting developmentalism as well as applying dependency theory to understand the socioeconomic reality of Latin America.

In order to assess the extent to which Liberation Theology successfully tackled the issues confronting its region, one needs to look at some current data. If the challenges facing Latin America today are not significantly different from that of four decades ago, then it will be necessary to re-evaluate its methods and practices. It will however not be fair to apportion all the blames on the inadequacies of Liberation Theology epistemology or methodology since other external factors affect what happens in Latin America. Notwithstanding, if Liberation Theology methods are effective, there should be evidence of transformation in the lives of those who are adherents of its message. Such evaluation will also determine whether their approach to tackling contemporary issues should be continued or whether an alternative approach should be put forward.

The challenges facing the Latin American countries today are well presented in a speech by Ricardo Lagos the former President of Chile (2000-2006) at the Centre for Latin American Studies (University of California, Berkley) in 2006 (Sehnbruch, 2006:1-6). President Lagos identified some of the positive things that have happened to include:

- Improvement in democratic institutions. Virtually all governments in Latin America are democratically elected.
- De-politicization of economic policy-making.
- Economic development in the region has improved to the extent countries in the region no longer qualifies for foreign aid.

However President Lagos also asserted that there are still challenges that must be addressed. He identified three major areas of concerns to include:

- The belief by many that growth is passing them. In essence, 5-6% economic growth means nothing to them if the school system, the health care system and the general infrastructure remain the same.
- How to deal with a past blemished by human rights violations, civil wars, guerrilla activities and the like.
- How to integrate the region into a globalized world.

The challenges identified by President Lagos are corroborated by another report presented in 2012 at the 7th Annual Latin American Conference under

the directorship of Susan Kaufman Purcell, who is also the World Bank VP for Latin America and Caribbean (Tuluy, 2012: 1-3). The report showed that Latin America is more stable, more equitable and growing. The region is less poor, more equitable and with growing middle class. 73 million people are now lifted out of moderate poverty. Gender equality and economic opportunities are taking place. 70 million more women are in the labour force than in 1980 and more girls than boys are in secondary or tertiary education.

The report equally identified some of the challenges still facing the region some of which are external to the region and many are internal and structural in nature. Crime and violence continue to pose a critical developmental challenge with drug and organised crime taking prominent positions. Unfortunately, Latin American countries remain the most unequal regions of the world. 149 million people or 1 in every 3 persons (28%) still live below USD 4/day.

The following data go a long way to show that the challenges facing Latin America has not changed. Poverty still remains the dominant challenge in contemporary Latin American society. It is clear from these reports that the issues facing liberation theology from its inception have not drastically changed. Even though some progress has been made, there is still a long way to go. What is also clear is that capitalism rather than being defeated and replaced by a more just and comradely society as envisaged by liberationists is now fully entrenched in the region. Bell (2001:66) is more perceptive when he states: "The heady revolutionary fervour of the late 1960s and early 1970s that filled liberationists with utopian expectation has evolved over the course of the last few decades into a more temperate enthusiasm for an emergent civil society." Bell questions how the world of the liberationists moved from the "irruption of the poor" to the birth of civil society and from revolution to democracy. He argues that the shift by liberationists from revolution to a more democratic impulse represents a significant transition in the development of liberation thought (Bell, 2001:66).

The liberationists' approach to dealing with contemporary challenges has failed even if they do not openly accept it. Bell (2001:68) declares: "The hopes borne by the socialist state having been dashed, liberationists are increasingly finding

their political centre in the concept of civil society." Despite this new alliance with civil society Bell (2001:70) contends that the state remains the hope for countering the depredations of the capitalist order. Bell is of the opinion that this new alliance with civil society is a backward step which might lead them to the same crisis position they were at "end of history" (Bell, 2001:70).

The failure of liberationists to adequately tackle the challenges facing Latin Americans can be attributed to their inability to rightly discern the reality of the Latin American society. Aurelius (1945:58) is absolutely right when he states that: "... the importance of the right perception of reality as a step toward properly encountering the world". It is not enough to interpret the world, even though that is important. Those who want to change society must first and foremost accurately interpret it before it can change it. Maybe seeing the world only from the "irruption of the poor" was not an accurate assessment of the Latin American condition after all.

Those who adhered to the liberation course have neither being liberated from unjust social structures nor received salvation from their sins. The Pentecostal approach offers liberation as they cooperate with owners of factors of production and at the same time preach the Gospel which confers salvation to the sinner. Pentecostal believers are also encouraged to be part of civil society by participating in the democratic process where they act as agents of change thus providing checks and balances in the system.

5.13 The missiological mandate of the Church

The complexity and multidimensionality of the concept of missiology has made it difficult to articulate what constitutes the missiological mandate of the Church with great precision. The difficulty is compounded as the multifaceted nature of missiology pulls together other disciplines such as theology, history, anthropology, geography comparative religions, Christian apologetics and many more to elucidate its etymology. Since the term Church can be denominationally nuanced, it is also important to examine missiology from interdenominational standpoints. The difficulty in identifying an overarching definition for the concept

is not limited to denominational differences, but also theological and hermeneutical variations including those within the academic community.

The theology one espouses will determine the type of missiological methodology and activities they will undertake. It also goes without saying that if missiology is the theology of missions, then an improper theology or a theology which is conceived on a faulty foundation will have an impact on what one believes about God, Christ and the Gospel. This fact helps to explicate the differences between Pentecostal and Liberation Theology missiological endeavours. Orthodox and orthopraxiological theological methods will develop missiological strategies based on Scripture and sociological analysis respectively.

It will not be inaccurate to speculate that churches or denominations which posit that the purpose of mission is to make God known to the world will also ensure that the proclamation of the word of God is at the centre of their missiological endeavours. While acknowledging the contributions of other disciplines (social sciences) in missiology and the way we think generally in contemporary society, these subjects should not take precedents over our views of God, Jesus and the Gospel. Our Christian worldviews should not be formulated in the light of social analysis of concrete situations. The word of God must be used to filter out anything which does not conform to what is written in the Bible regarding missions. This will require a proper hermeneutical analysis. When the text of Scripture is analysed in the light of other disciplines rather than the other way round, we end up with decisions or missiological activities that stray from what the Biblical mandate requires.

Since the missiological mandate originated from the Bible, it does not make sense whatsoever to abandon the Bible as the blueprint for missiological activities of the Church in place of social sciences or anthropological insights. As this investigation progresses to understand what constitutes the missiological mandate of the Church from the perspectives of Pentecostalism or Liberation Theology standpoints, the Bible will remain the final arbiter. It is also noteworthy that Pentecostalism and Liberation Theology's understanding of

missiology will be determined by their various conceptions of ecclesiology or the doctrine of the Church.

The debates as to what the missiological mandate of the Church is and how it should be undertaken is wide ranging. Verkuyl's definition of missiology provides a useful platform to unravel what the missiological mandate of the Church consists of. He states: "Missiology's task in every age is to investigate scientifically and critically the presuppositions, motives, structures, methods, patterns of cooperation and leadership which the churches bring to their mandate" (Verkuyl, 1978:5.) The global nature of the Church will mean that there are certain practices which are essential and obtainable in every culture. All the faith communities will adhere to these practices. On the other hand there will also be some non-essential practices which can be contextualised without compromising what the Bible teaches. What is required is an ongoing dialogue which critically analyses each practice in the context of the prevailing culture and in the light of the word of God.

Mission is not a new phenomenon. The issue is the way or the method churches have conducted their missiological activities. The approach employed by some missionaries from Western countries to the Third World countries have been criticized for using their economic and political powers in missiological and evangelization activities. Since this approach is viewed as imperialistic with the tendency to imposing foreign languages and cultures on the indigenous community, effort is now being made to construct a new paradigm of missions (Stuart, 2004:83-88). Pachuau (2000:539-555) observes that even though liberal Christians embrace the idea of mission, they equally argue that mission in terms of the conversion of the heathen is irrelevant in modern society. Pachuau further argues that liberal theologians view it "as an outdated enterprise belonging to the colonial past, and any Christian attempt to convert non-Christians to Christianity is arrogant and disdainful" (Pachuau, 2000:539-555). If the liberal stance is adopted, then mission will cease to be what is envisaged in Scripture (Matthew 28:16-20). Adherence to the Great Commission implies in principles preaching and teaching the message of Christ,

which can lead to conversion and baptism in the Christian faith. Evangelism is therefore implied in the Great Commission.

Different models of missiology have been developed to address the anomalies or the negative perceptions identified above. One of the new constructions of mission that emerged is *missio Dei* (mission of God). By perceiving God as the source and author of mission, the exponents of *missio Dei* place God at the centre of mission. In addition to applauding this approach to mission because of its alignment to Scriptures, Pachuau (2000:539-555) argues that it also "challenged the triumphalistic and paternalistic inclination of western missionaries under the protective umbrella of colonialism".

Even though *missio Dei* was seen as the best way to mission by the International Ministers Council (IMC) conference in 1952, the concept was further modified in the light of some difficulties. From 1974 onwards in particular at the Whitby meeting IMC introduced terms like *kerygma*, *koinonia* and *diakonia* to explain the concept of mission. With these additions, witness (*martyria*) became the dominant mode of doing mission. Pachuau (2000:539-555) concludes that this witness was also given by proclamation (*kerygma*), fellowship (*koinonia*) and service (*diakonia*). Mission as a witness is supported by the following scriptural references (John 3:11, 31-32, 18:37; Acts 1:8).

Bosch (1980:140) has suggested two models of mission which crosses ecclesiastical boundaries as evangelism and ecumenism. For those who perceive mission as evangelism the following Scripture usually use as reference (Matthew 28:19-20, John 3:16, 1 Tim 2:4, Rom. 10:9 & 14). Using this model, salvation is seen from the perspective of the other world. Heaven becomes the goal of mission as the Gospel liberates the individual from personal sin and making Jesus their Saviour. On the other end of Bosch's mission spectrum is ecumenism, which is a mission towards the world. Bosch (1980:142) declares that this model perceives salvation in terms of personal and social salvation from all kinds of oppression. He argues that this model will make life more fully human in every respect including the transcendent as well as the immanent (John 10:14). It is envisaged that the ecumenism model of mission will overcome the dualism that exist between eternal and temporal, between body

and soul, individual and society, religion and culture, salvation and liberation, religion and secular, church and the world (Bosch, 1980:142).

Liberation theology's concept of mission is more akin to the ecumenism mission model presented by Bosch. Both the Roman Catholic Church and Liberation Theology agree that the needs of the poor are relevant in any missiological discourse. However, the Catholic position articulated by Pope Benedict (*Instructions on certain aspects of the 'Theology of Liberation' 1984*) makes a distinction between the two. The Pope affirms the social, economic and political implications of the Gospel as well as the link between the Gospel and culture, faith and practice like the liberationists. However, the point of departure is in disagreeing with the liberationists' view that social and cultural problems should not be subordinated to the proclamation of salvation in Jesus Christ (Bosch, 1980:144). Since the liberationists are involved in a new way of doing theology, the concept of mission is bound to be different from how Pentecostals and other orthodox Christian churches perceive it.

Even though Vatican Council II influenced their ecclesiology and the "preferential option for the poor", their concept of mission is still distinct from the Catholic Church understanding. Bosch (1980:144) provides a succinct summary of mission from liberation theology standpoint by stating that "... mission is the proclamation of justice-love in Christ. It is the bringing into effect this salvation socially. Jesus Christ is what God means by man ... salvation refers to this world, to the whole human being, body and soul, individual and social, personal and cosmos".

The Pentecostal perspective is clearly distinct from Bosch's summation of Liberation missiological mandate. It is all about this present world here and now, social analysis of situations in Latin America and the impact of unjust structures. Pentecostals engage in missions on the basis of the Great Commission (Wigglesworth, 1976:393-399; Ma, 2007:1-14). They believe that their missiological mandate is to continue the work which Jesus started. Since Jesus came to make God known to the world, Pentecostals believe they have a mandate to continue that by the divine enablement of the Holy Spirit (Kraft, 1991:299-312). Warrington (2008:249) argues that Pentecostals see

evangelism as a matter of obedience and believe that God will hold them responsible if they are indolent. Pentecostal missiological mandate is Christocentric in nature with Pentecostals believing that they have a 'watchman' responsibility to warn nonbelievers through evangelism (Isaiah 21:11; Ezekiel 3:17; 33:7) the reality of heaven and hell (Warrington, 2008:249). Wilson (1997:15) is right in his assessment that mission is central to Pentecostalism asserting that the missionary task can be said to be the basis of its existence. The stark difference between Pentecostalism and Liberation Theology's conception of mission justifies the Pentecostal criticisms. Liberation Theology is more ecumenical but does not lead to Biblical salvation but liberation of the world and its inhabitants from socioeconomic and unjust structures.

Mission in this study is a biblical concept and therefore must have a biblical resonance about it. It should not be seen in the same light as the work of NGOs or other international agencies sending relief to the poor or disaster stricken regions of the world. The aim of mission according Matthew 28:16-20 is to spread the Gospel and make people become followers of Christ. Mission in this way will lead to conversion but not necessarily indoctrination as the term connotes accepting principles uncritically. Those who hear the preaching of the Gospel have every right to dialogue. This is the uniqueness of Christian mission. The hearers can accept or reject the love and the message without prejudice. In a politically correct and pluralistic world, neither conversion nor indoctrination is acceptable. Christian mission expects that lives will be transformed as the Gospel touches hearts. However, it is also expected that those involved in mission will respect the cultural norms of the land they visit and not coerce or violate existing and practices at the expense of evangelisation. This study does not agree with the liberals that the conversion of the heathens is arrogant and disdainful (Pachau, 2000:539-555). The comments by Verkuyl (1978:5) and Stuart (2004:83-88) in section 5.12 of this study are useful.

5.14 The role of the Church in the world today

The Church is defined in the Greek as *ekklesia*, which suggests "the called out ones". The term (ἐκκλησία) implies any assembly, which might include local body of believers or in another sense the universal body of all believers (Schmidt, 1964:501-536). The believers are called out of the world to live a life which is regenerate and different from those whose attitudes are hostile to Christ and the good news. Schmidt (1964:506) is apposite by making it declaring that, in this gathering (ἐκκλησία), God is responsible for gathering His own. In fact the assembly (ἐκκλησία), belongs to all those who are His.

Being called out does not, however, translate to a disengagement from the world and its systems. Bosch (1975:5) is right in warning the Church against becoming a Christian ghetto. What the Bible teaches is that the Church should not conform to the world but to transform it with the good teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 12:2). It is only when the Church engages meaningfully with the world can it model its God filled life for the world to emulate, not when it is in total isolation (Hauerwas, 2001:371-378).

The Church should model a countercultural way of life which epitomises an alternative society to the *status quo*. This concept is well articulated by (Hauerwas, 2001:371-391; Bosch, 1975:3-11; 1982b:6-10; Harvie; 2009:52). Historically, the Church has played important roles in society, especially in areas like education, health, socioeconomic and political lives of their communities. However, the role of the Church has visibly declined in countries in the developed world. Bosch (1975:3-11; 1982b:6-10) calls the Church to exist as an "Alternative Community" typified by the way Jesus lived providing an alternative to all other options available within Judaism of His time. Hauerwas (2001:371-391) also argues that the Church is a "Servant Community". In this way the Church should be different by displaying higher ethical values in the midst of a world filled with hatred and injustice. By becoming a servant community, the Church rather than having a social ethic, the Church becomes a "Social Ethic". Moltmann's concept of *Kontrastgemeinschaft* or the "Contrast Community" is well articulated by Harvie (2009:52). In a sustained dialogue with Moltmann, he affirms the view that the Church is an exodus or contrast

community. The Church is called to live the way the Holy Spirit led Jesus to live out the Kingdom in a hostile world. As a people of promise, the Church must live a life commensurate with the kingdom. Jesus cared for those who were rejected by society and so should the Church. Pentecostals are making great contributions in many developing countries including Latin America as agents of social transformation.

Latin American theologians are unequivocal about the role of the Church in their communities especially fighting for the oppressed poor and the marginalised in society. At the same time Núñez (1985:272) notes the lack of any systematization of ecclesiological thought in Liberation Theology. In order to gain some understanding of liberationists' concept of the Church, it was necessary to consult the numerous works of their leading exponents. Gutiérrez (2001:227) is not alone when he argues that "the Church today is somewhat out of steps with history which confronts it". He has argued strongly that this is due to the structures which the Church inherited in the past. Rather than dwell in the past, he is calling for a new ecclesial consciousness and a redefinition of the Church's role in today's society. This new ecclesial consciousness will be void of the old practice whereby ideologically, Christian influence were employed as a means of protecting and preserving the *status quo* (Bonino, 1975:159; Muñoz, 1980:155).

What Bonino (1975:159) advocates is a situation where "A Christian committed to the liberation becomes therefore involved in the struggle for the Reformation of the Church ... for the reconstitution of a Christianity in which all forms of organization and expression will be humanized and liberating." Following Vatican II, the Church was being perceived more and more as a sacrament. By emphasizing that the Church is a sacrament, Gutiérrez (2001:233) makes some insightful observations. He argues that "... the Church itself in its concrete existence ought to be a place of liberation ... If we conceive the Church as a sacrament of salvation of the world, then it has all the more obligation to manifest in its visible structures the message it bears".

As far as Latin America (a world of social revolution) is concerned, Gutiérrez (2001:234) sees the task of the Church as: "the Church must be the visible sign of the presence of the Lord within the aspiration for liberation and the struggle for a more human and just society". Gutiérrez (2001:239) also advocates that: "the Church must make a prophetic denunciation of every dehumanizing situation, which is contrary to fellowship, justice and liberty". Assessing the Chilean situation, Muñoz (1980:155) attests that the Church in Chile raised their voices to denounce unjust situations (particularly in labour fields) and to champion participatory socioeconomic structures. This is particularly important since the Church in the past contributed to impoverished situations in Latin America. In Gutiérrez's view the Church should not merely talk about these issues but should go the extra mile to ascertain the root causes and eradicate it.

5.15 The past, present and eschatological nature of salvation

The excellent work undertaken by Cullmann (1957) demonstrates how important time line is in understanding the redemptive plan of God. Having considered the conception of time from the Judaeo-Christian standpoints, Cullmann (1957:84) concludes that in Christ time is divided anew. Cullmann (1957:92) also declares that Christ is at the centre or mid-point of this new time division. This new spectrum of time starts from before creation and ends after the Parousia with Christ at the centre. Cullmann (1957:91) also notes that: "... the entire time before creation is now regarded as preparation for the redemption in Christ Jesus; it is a time in which God had already chosen ... in which the entire mystery of salvation ...to the last details of the destiny of the Gentiles" (Eph. 1:4, 3:8).

Placing Christ at the mid-point of 'before creation and after the Parousia', Cullmann (1957:83) correctly argues that from the perspective of the New Testament and the Synoptic Gospels, this mid-point should no longer be perceived as in the future but in the past. Another important observation is that anything that lies beyond the mid-point brings us nearer to the end. This is

validated by Paul when he declares that our salvation is drawing nearer more than when we first believed (Rom. 13:11).

The New Testament and in particular the teachings of Paul present salvation in a chronological order. McGrath's (2011:319) summation of the New Testament understanding of the chronology of salvation is presented as when "something has happened, something is now happening and that something further will still happen to believers". The first stage of salvation is seen as something which has already taken place by faith the moment the sinner is justified and brought into relationship with God (1 Cor. 6:10-11). Gunton (2002:72) brings greater clarity to this stage of salvation by making a reference to an Old Testament practice thus concluding that God is the one who redeems. Since redemption is perceived as a monetary transaction, God is the Redeemer who pays a ransom for the sins of humanity. Jesus is the ransom which was paid by His death on the Cross. The sinner is therefore forgiven and reconciled to God because of what was accomplished on the Cross. The process of justification does not however make the believer perfect. The Cross however does not totally remove human propensity to sin. Gunton (2002:73) articulates the situation better by stating that: "It is evident that they [principalities and powers] are not defeated in a sense of being abolished, for this is a victory in the light of which human struggle against evil continues and indeed has to be intensified" (Eph. 6:12). For Cullmann (1957:218-219) it is important for us as individuals to accept that what happened in the past indeed has an impact on our lives. It is only by faith can the past phase of redemptive history become efficacious for us today. By faith and faith alone, individual believers can appropriate the benefits of the Cross as a personal act of salvation wrought by Christ for them (Col. 3:1-4). This understanding makes salvation a personal affairs, rather than collective or societal business. Sin is personal and private (Pentecostal view), rather than social and communal as presented by Liberation Theology.

The Holy Spirit continues to renew the believer on daily basis through the process of sanctification. So not only is the believer saved, but being saved. Cullmann (1957:93) rather explains this process better by making reference to the movement of redemptive time line and the work of the Holy Spirit. He

contends: "That sin is still present, although the Holy Spirit is already at work, is definite proof that it is a 'redemptive necessity' for time itself to continue in order to carry the redemptive history to its goal" (Cullmann, 1957:93.) The Church plays vital a role in this process of being saved. The believer is transformed to take on the full image of Christ through the teachings of the Church (1 Cor. 1:18). The salvation of the believer does not come to an end at this point.

There is an eschatological dimension to salvation. This is when everything will be consummated and the believer is totally freed from the onslaught of Satan and his emissaries. This future dimension of salvation indicates that the believer is still to be saved (Phil. 2:15; 1 Pt. 1:5; Eph. 1:4; Rom. 8:24). A moment of glorification awaits the believer in Christ Jesus according to Romans 8:21, 30. Even though the believer has been justified by faith, sanctified by the Holy Spirit, there remains a final deliverance from the bondage of corruption into God's glorious inheritance, which He has prepared for those who will endure to the end. Arnold (1996:703) describes this period as a time when the believer will experience the presence of Christ in a new and resurrected body.

Cullmann is emphatic in identifying the continued role of the Holy Spirit, noting that it is the Holy Spirit who will quicken our mortal bodies. This is symptomatic of His role in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, according to the writing of Paul (Rom. 8:11). Cullmann (1957:237) argues that the continued role of the Holy Spirit in the eschaton explains the link between faith in the already realized resurrection of Christ and faith in the present working of the resurrection power. The argument is that unless we have faith in the redemptive works already accomplished by the death of Christ and the ongoing sanctifying activities of the Holy Spirit, we cannot participate in the eschatological salvation. Cullmann's (1957:237) insightful contribution in this debate culminates in his assertion that: "Because we on the basis of the resurrection of Christ and by faith in this redemptive fact are able in the present to gain possession of the Holy Spirit, we know that we may hope for resurrection of the body, which is effected through the same Spirit who dwells in us."

This investigation has continued to demonstrate that the salvation advocated by Liberation Theology is different from what the Biblical salvation is about. Since Liberation Theology hermeneutics regarding sin, salvation, and the ministry of Christ have been disputed in this investigation, it has not been possible to locate a common ground on the chronology of salvation. Liberation Theology is more concerned about the present reality of the people of Latin America. They advocate a kingdom of God which is imminent and seek ways of creating utopian society. It is not surprising that Gutiérrez (2001:149) declares that: "Salvation is not something otherworldly, in regard to which the present life is merely a test. Salvation - the communion of human beings with God and among themselves is ... Christ." For Liberation Theology matters relating to salvation are not spiritual but concrete historical realities. Gutiérrez (2001:166) argues among other things that: "the expectations of the parousia are also necessarily and inevitably historical, temporal, earthly, social and material realities". Salvation is also perceived as universal embracing all people. It is seen as the liberation action of the historical Jesus. To this end salvation is perceived purely as liberation from all struggles for a just society, the defense of the life of the poor and those enslaved by others. Pentecostalism as a movement proffers a theology that is generally in alignment with the salvation chronology, which has been discussed. It is important to note that universality of agreement does not exist in global Pentecostalism when social and cultural factors are taken into account. Suffice to say that the fivefold Pentecostal theological framework encapsulates these ideals. Thomas (1998:3-19) has reflected on the theological framework and has noted that it is generally accepted by Pentecostal theologians as the 'theological heart' of [Pentecostalism] the movement. This fivefold Pentecostal Gospel starts from salvation in Jesus, leading to sanctification, Spirit-baptism, healing and ending with Jesus as the coming king. A critical analysis of this framework will have in it the chronological stages of salvation in the past, present and future.

5.16 Summary

- How Pentecostals and Liberation Theology read and interpret the Scripture explain the fundamental difference in their theologies and practices and in particular how they address the challenges facing the impoverished Third World countries.
- Different methods of reading and interpreting the Bible produce different hermeneutic outcomes. Subsequently Biblical themes like salvation, sin, poverty are given different interpretations or meanings which create disharmony between the two movements.
- As it is with interpretations, every school of thought esteems their views to be the right view. Pentecostals claim that their hermeneutics are more in tune with the Scripture; Liberation Theologians are more concerned with the contextualization of the texts of Scripture in order to address concrete issues in the Latin American milieu.
- Pentecostals assert that personal sin rather than social sin is the main reason for salvation. Since the consequence of sin is separation from God, Pentecostals argue that Jesus came to restore the sinner back to God. This was achieved on the Cross.
- As long as Liberation Theology focusses on the historical Jesus, their Christology will continue to be at variance with the Pentecostal stance and subsequently, Jesus will not be seen as God who came to be incarnated for our salvation. Jesus will forever remain a liberator rather than the Saviour.
- Liberation Theology has made some progress in Latin America in the past. However, it is not clear whether the movement in its current form has much to offer the present generation. Progress seen in Latin America today is not attributable to Liberation Theology's endeavours but to various governments working in partnership with the international communities to develop new strategies to rid the countries of poverty and underdevelopment. Latin America has continued to experience ideological shifts; de-politicization of economic policy making, improvement in democratic institutions, embracing a form of capitalism and the encouragement of entrepreneurship among its citizens are evident.

- Despite the failure of the Liberation Theology agenda in Latin America, emerging churches and ministries have picked up where liberationists failed and have developed alternative strategies to address the socioeconomic conditions of the region. Pentecostalism through its social programmes has made great inroads in the economic emancipation of the people of Latin America. It is worth noting that Pentecostal achievements have not been realised at the expense of the true Gospel of grace and salvation. While addressing poverty, Pentecostals have not compromised on the power of the Gospel to bring hope and transformation to people who are destitute and impoverished.
- Since Pentecostals are able to uphold the true teachings of the Bible and at the same time develop feasible strategies that can challenge the dehumanising influences of contemporary society, it sees no justification for a theology that “starts from below” that relegates Jesus to a historical figure rather than the Jesus who is completely human and at the same time God with full divinity. To deny this is to commit theological suicide from the Pentecostal standpoint.
- The Pentecostal criticisms of Liberation Theology is justified on the basis of the way they read, interpret the Bible and their etymological stance on some important Bible themes which should never be compromised

6.0 CHAPTER SIX: PENTECOSTALISM: A THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR DEALING WITH THE DEHUMANISING INFLUENCES OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

6.1 Introduction

Underpinning this investigation is the quest to find a theological framework which can effectively address the dehumanising influences of contemporary society. Throughout the ages, churches continue to play pivotal roles in addressing the socioeconomic, political and cultural shifts plaguing our society. However, the efforts of the churches have not passed without difficulties. This is particularly so in the poorer regions of the world. The churches from the developed nations have been accused as agents of capitalism and multinational companies who exploit the indigenous people by setting up structures which did not accelerate the economic growth which can lead to self-sufficiency. The churches were accused of being on the side of foreign firms, which continued to siphon profits out of these countries leaving them underdeveloped and impoverished. Equally they were seen as imposing western cultural values without due cognisance of indigenous values which have shaped the local people from their existence.

The failure of the traditional churches which originated from Europe and North America necessitated the rise of liberation theology movements across the globe particularly in Latin America, Asia and Africa. Like their predecessors, the efforts of liberation theology have not gone without some entrenched problems. These continents are still massively underdeveloped after four decades of liberation movement endeavours. Their socioeconomic, anthropological and political challenges remain even though some progresses are evident. The liberation model rightly identified the causes of underdevelopment, marginalisation, poverty and sufferings in Latin America. Unfortunately, they failed in developing realistic and sustainable strategies that could ultimately alleviate the challenges they rightly ascertained. Rather than work in partnership with the multinational companies who had the capacity to employ, train and develop the workforce to become self-sufficient, they took the

revolutionary route. This approach created alienation, conflicts, uncertainties and mistrust across the Latin American countries. This further polarised the chances of reconstruction and investment.

6.2 The nature of contemporary society

In chapter four of this investigation the concept of contemporary society was clearly articulated with in-depth analysis of the various philosophical constructs that explicate its etymology. It is needless to repeat what has been clearly stated. The focus here will be on the challenges facing the global community. This analysis will not be purely from a theological or ecclesiological standpoint, but also from the perspectives of the rest of the global community. The challenges facing our contemporary society are diverse and will require a global effort and initiative to address them (Hauerwas, 2001:374). Churches have a role to play but the complexity of these challenges and the vast resources needed to address them mean that the faith community is ill-equipped to carry the problems alone. Richard (2012:119) reminds us that we need ecumenical solidarity, interreligious cooperation and even collaboration with those who might not necessarily be religious at all. This is an important observation because living in a global world means that in terms of time and space our world has shrunk and has necessitated global interdependency.

In order to provide a comprehensive assessment of the problems or challenges facing the global contemporary community, the United Nations (UN) Millennial Development Goals (MDGs) will be examined. In 2000, the UN identified eight goals which they believed represented the challenges facing our global contemporary society. The United Nations' MDGs Report 2012 identifies the goals as follow:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health

- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development

The analysis of these goals could present a perfect portrait of our contemporary society. Doubtlessly, they also represent the sort of challenges the Pentecostal and Liberation movements have been addressing in the Two-Thirds of the World. The UN is clear that these goals can only be achieved through the development of global partnership. This partnership brings together national governments, multinational corporations, private individuals, Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other agencies including churches and other faith groups. This is what liberation theology failed to do. Pentecostalism adopts a different approach. As much as it is possible, strong partnerships are forged with different indigenous and international agencies. This in no way side-tracks Pentecostalism from their ultimate goals, which include salvation and poverty alleviation.

Richard (2012:111-120), looking at the contemporary society as a theologian, has also identified the following problems:

- Ecological concerns
- Religious pluralism
- Discrimination against women
- Concerns for the poor and other marginalized groups
- Ecumenism
- Animation of daily life
- Decline of the churches in the West.

This list shows that Richard's assessment of the problems facing our contemporary society is not poles apart from the UN MDGs. Poverty, hunger, marginalization, discrimination and inequality, poor health, HIV/AIDS and disempowerment due to lack of education are the predominant challenges. A careful analysis also reveals that these problems are more prevalent in Latin America, Asia and Africa. These problems contribute to the dehumanising influences challenging our world today. On the other hand, social media (contemporary phenomenon) and other forms of technological communications

have made some positive contributions. They have played pivotal role in raising awareness of the challenges facing our world today. Global communities are able to galvanise themselves to campaign and fundraise to support those who are disenfranchised and live in the margins of society. Individuals can now donate money on the go through their mobile communication devices to struggling charities and NGOs to alleviate poverty and other forms of human sufferings (Darfur refugee crisis in 2003, Make poverty history campaign 2005 and BBC Children in Need Annual Campaign).

6.3 Dehumanizing influences of contemporary society

Monitoring and periodic assessments are necessary to determine whether the MDGs will be achieved by the 2015 deadline. The MDGs 2012 Report has used a series of appropriate statistical indicators to ascertain the level of progress in order to chart the way forward for the realisation of the goals set in 2000. Writing the foreword for this report, the UN Secretary General Ki-moon (2012:5) acknowledges the progress which has been made but also agrees that much work needs to be done. Despite the progress made, 600 million people worldwide will still be using unimproved water sources in 2015. Almost one billion will be living on an income of less than \$1.25 per day. Mothers will continue to die needlessly in childbirth and children will die from preventable diseases (Ki-moon, 2012:5). A further analysis of the report will be undertaken to ascertain the true level of progress and the gaps that need to be bridged. This analysis will further help to develop an understanding of how the churches and in particular the Pentecostal movement can respond to these challenges. It is only when these dehumanising influences are fully understood can a realistic theological framework be developed to address them.

An important observation with regard to the MDGs is that they are not isolated but interlinked. With the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger as the number one goal, it is clear that this cannot be achieved without proper education strategies. This is one of the most reliable ways to empower the people to become self-reliant.

In Richard's (2012:114) concept of 'animation of daily life'; he affirms that drawing from the sources of Christian theology can be directly relevant for human life. His view is that theology has to make sense of everyday life. If Richard is to be taken seriously, then his perspective is that we should rely on the truths inherent in classical Christian doctrines. These doctrines should be able to guide and equip us with the right principles for confronting everyday life. In essence, the person who imbibes these principles will be able to live as one created in the likeness and image of God. This could further lead to greater understanding of how we should treat our bodies. It could also ensure that we do not engage in activities which might cause sickness and pain (HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancies, maternal ill health and infant mortality).

Drawing from the Christian faith will empower people to appreciate their self-worth and at the same time treat others as they would like to be treated. Such understanding will minimise discrimination of women on the basis of gender or the discrimination of others on the basis of race or class. Sharing is a Christian virtue. Those who have will share with those who do not have as they become their brothers' keepers or good neighbours as instructed in the Bible (Acts 4:32-37; Luke 10:30-37). The concept of global interdependency is incarnated in these Christian virtues of loving your neighbour as yourself (Luke 10:27) or Paul's injunction that those who are strong should help those who are weak (Galatians 6:2).

This study is not advocating that the Pentecostal framework is a route to evangelisation. The reference to the texts of Scripture above merely shows that Christians are enjoined to live out their faith in communities. Richard (2012:115) makes it clear that the "expertise of theology is not social amelioration". He warns that theology will not offer relief from poverty. On the other hand, he argues that good governments and the passage of single law can be more beneficial for those in poverty than the whole history of theology. Therefore the development of Pentecostal theological framework does not necessarily guarantee success.

The MDGs 2012 Report shows that our contemporary society is still immersed in humanitarian crisis of epidemic proportion. World Bank figures show that the global poverty rate of \$1.25 per day fell in 2010 to less than half of its 1990 value. This is a great achievement as the 2015 target was reached five years in advance. However, this achievement is not evenly spread since 1 billion people will still be living in extreme poverty in 2015. Of this 1 billion, 4 out of every 5 living in extreme poverty will live in sub Saharan Africa or Southern Asia. The gap in labour productivity level between developed and developing countries is still wider with more women than men involved in vulnerable employment especially in North Africa (MDG report 2012:8-12). Hunger remains a challenge in sub Saharan Africa and Southern Asia. Eastern Asia has not seen a reduction in undernourishment since 2000; 1 in 5 children under the age of 5 in the developing world is underweight. In these regions children living in rural areas are more underweight compared to those living in the cities (MDG report 2012:15). Latin America and the Caribbean have the largest gap of underweight children between rural and urban households (MDG report 2012:16).

According to 2010 figures, 95 per cent primary age were enrolled in school in developing countries (Northern Africa, Eastern Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and South-East Asia). Not only did the enrolment figure improve, but the number of children completing primary school education stood at 90 per cent. During the same period, 61 million children of primary school age were still be out of school. A staggering 122 million people within the 15-24 age brackets were illiterates. The brunt of this young adult illiteracy is borne by Southern Asia (62 million) and sub Saharan Africa (45 million).

If education is the main strategy to end suffering, dehumanisation, marginalisation and underdevelopment, this is a missed opportunity by the global community. The lack of education means that the individual relies on others to make decisions on their behalf. The uneducated illiterates of sub-Saharan Africa are manipulated, exploited and recruited by war-lords and Jihadist militants to engage in terrorist and revolutionary activities. The current resurgence of increased *Al-Qaeda* activities in Mali, Niger and Chad as well as the emergence of *Boko Haram* (Western education is sinful) in Nigeria attest to

this fact. These recruits are promised liberation from suffering, poverty, and marginalisation. In addition, they are promised that their human and religious dignities would be restored to them. Unfortunately at the end, their activities further fracture their society economically, socially and politically. Terrorism and jihadist activities decelerate investment and development programmes which are necessary for economic growth and employment in the region.

An overview of the MDGs 2012 report presented by Zukang (2012:7), who is the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, also paints a grim picture. In his assessment, the number of people living in slum conditions has continued to grow and now estimated at 863 million people (MDGs report 2012:7). He also notes that according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) figures, it is estimated that 15 per cent of the world population is living in hunger. The UN and its global partners have taken stock and have reviewed what strategies to adopt to meet the millennial goals before 2015. The UN is always keen to address issues facing the global community. However, the failure on their part remains whether these ambitious goals can be backed with the right policies and strategies. It is also a question of whether the global partners will honour their commitments in terms of finance and the manpower to achieve these goals.

In 2012, the UN Secretary General appointed a group of eminent individuals (Yudhoyono, Sirleaf and Cameron) to review the achievements of the MDGs so far. Whilst upholding the MDGs agenda, the panel identified some shortfalls as stated in their executive summary (Yudhoyono, Sirleaf & Cameron, 2013:7-9). They were disappointed that not much effort was made to reach the poorest and the most excluded people in the world. The devastating effects of conflicts and violence on development were not prioritised. Another damaging indictment against the MDGs agenda was the failure to work together on issues that are interlinked particularly, environment and development. The effect of not integrating the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development is that expectations underrepresented the enormity of work undertaken (Yudhoyono, Sirleaf & Cameron, 2013:7).

The panel have identified and recommended five transformational shifts, which would be applicable to both developed and developing countries. They assert that if their recommendations are acted upon, extreme poverty will be eradicated from the face of the earth by 2030. As the world's population continues to increase, the problem of inequality and the lack of opportunities for the majority must be addressed. This is crucial as the world's population is expected to reach 8 billion by 2030.

Extreme poverty will not be eradicated if inequality continues to be normative in our global society. The UN vision should be translated into action to address the situation where: "1.2 billion poorest people account for only 1 per cent of world consumption while the billion richest consume 72 per cent" (Yudhoyono, Sirleaf & Cameron, 2013:7). These analyses have been undertaken to provide the ecclesial community with the most up to date and accurate indicators to work from. Churches should not be ignorant of the reality of the world they are trying to save. An informed church organisation will be able to develop the right strategies which can both liberate the people from material poverty, exploitation and marginalisation; and at the same time lead them to true salvation.

6.4 Ecclesiological concerns about contemporary society

The volume of scholarly works published by the faith communities, especially the traditional churches, attests to how serious they view these matters. Pope Paul VI (1965) promulgated the Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the modern world (*Gaudium et Spes*). In 1990, the World Council of Churches (WCC) also commissioned a study on church and world. These valuable documents and studies are replete with insights to affirm that the ecclesiological community fully understands that part of its God-given mandate is a call to take care of the world and its inhabitants by bringing them to the saving knowledge of Jesus. As the documents show, the Church is also concerned about other issues such as justice, discrimination, poverty, hunger and starvation; climate change and many more.

Since the WCC represents a community of churches in about 110 countries and 500 million Christians in Europe, North America, Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, its voice on contemporary issues cannot be ignored. The outcome of the 1990 study on church and world clearly identifies issues that WCC is concerned with. In this document, WCC acknowledges the reality of pain of hunger and brokenness of hopes, including those whose human rights have been abused (racism and sexism) as well as the exploitation of the oppressed and the poor (WCC Report, 1990:9). Notwithstanding the positive efforts exerted by international organisations to address these challenges, WCC advocates that churches and the Christian community should approach the matter from a different standpoint. Churches should affirm that God's saving action creates a hope for unity and renewal, for justice and reconciliation that can never be destroyed. Having analysed the challenges of contemporary society, WCC affirms that the Church is called and sent to struggle for renewal and life in this world marked by sin, suffering and death. If the churches ignore this call, then they cannot be seen as the people of God. The report asserts the WCC's conviction by declaring that: "It is in and for the world that God calls the Church that it may be a sign and bearer of the Triune God's work towards the salvation and renewal of all humankind" (WCC Report, 1990:11.)

In a speech presented at the Seventh Annual Telos Conference, Bishop D'Ercole (2013:1-2) provides an accurate summary of how the Catholic Church views the crucial issues facing humankind today. He argues that the publication of the encyclical *Pacem In Terris* and the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council (The Pastoral Constitution – *Gaudium et Spes*) are clear indications of the Catholic Church's concern for the issues facing our contemporary society. The Catholic Church must continue to find answers to the anthropological and social questions being posed by the global community. Since the anthropological and social questions are intrinsically linked to theology, they should not be treated as separate entities. The efforts of the Church community should not only be focussed on ensuring that humanities' material needs are met but also their spiritual needs, seeing that they are open to the transcendental (D'Ercole, 2013:1).

Having presented accurately the Roman Catholic Church's concern for the modern world, D'Ercole is also right to highlight that difficulties exist. In the light of this, he advocates that Christ who is mankind's truth and the meaning of history should be proclaimed. This is why the Church remains the most viable option to address the crucial crisis facing humanity. The Church, unlike modern cultures, should not downgrade humanity to mere ethical and social agency. The Church should continue as humanities' great companion, exposing them and helping them to fulfil their intimate nature by combining nature and reason (D'Ercole, 2013:2). The views advocated by D'Ercole are not just insightful but also biblical. His speech encapsulates what biblical salvation is all about. While the ecclesiological communities and other agencies have a role to play in addressing the issues facing our contemporary society, God cannot be taken out of the equation. The salvation which is found in Jesus Christ can deal with every human predicament irrespective of their socioeconomic, cultural and geopolitical milieu. The Church is called to be God's agent to lead humanity to a closer relationship with the Creator. D'Ercole (2013:2) captures this well by stating that: "Jesus Christ is not one God among many, but the only God who can respond to [humankind's] most intimate need for salvation... he can achieve salvation on his own but crumbles like sand when faced with illness, pain, or death."

6.5 Ecclesiological responses to contemporary society

The concern of the ecclesiological community is commendable, even though much needs to be done. The contents and the aspirations embodied in these ecclesial documents should be actualised through practical efforts. They should not be archived and allowed only to exist as historical documents of great speeches and papal dictums. The ecclesial community must demonstrate to the global community that it does not only exist to foster the spiritual wellbeing of society, but also its material, physical, socioeconomic and political needs.

The focus should not be on proselytization of the individuals or communities or enlisting them to become members of one's denomination or faith group. The

ministry of Jesus Christ provides a perfect paradigm. He first and foremost met real needs. Since the challenges facing our contemporary society are huge, individual faith groups might not have the resources to address them under the umbrella of their denominations. There are also geographical, cultural and language barriers which can put strains on one faith group pursuing this singlehandedly. Just as the UN is seeking global partners to fight poverty and achieve their MDGs, so should the faith community put aside their denominational and creedal barriers and jointly work to respond to human sufferings.

Ecumenical endeavours should be nurtured which can serve as a catalyst to alleviating human sufferings on a global scale. It does not so much matter whether it is spearheaded by the Pentecostals, the Catholics or the Evangelicals. Pertinent to this investigation is to find a theological framework that will serve as the best fit. Despite advocating for a new framework underpinned by Pentecostal epistemology, there is nothing wrong in appropriating some of the good aspects in liberation theology and other ecclesial communities.

Tillich's scholarly essay published in 1956 (reproduced and accessed from religion-online in 2013) is insightful on how the Church should engage with contemporary culture. Examining the notions of the sacred and the secular in religious discourse, Tillich (2013:1) argues that the universe is God's sanctuary. The division between secular and sacred in his view is one way of explaining the human predicament. The establishment of different realms between secular and sacred causes humanity to be estranged from his true being. Tillich does not see this estrangement between religion and culture. In his view, "religion is the substance of culture: culture is the form of religion" (Tillich, 2013:2).

Since culture underpins the present human condition, one way to discover its ultimate concern is to study and analyse culture. The Church cannot respond to the contemporary challenges facing humanity unless it discovers the culture which is ultimately the driving force in these cultural shifts. Tillich (2013:2), however, notes that: "One of the difficulties of analysing our present culture is its dynamic character, its continuous change, and influence which the protest

has already had on it." This should not exonerate the ecclesial communities for failing to discover the essentials and dynamics of modern culture.

For some time, our modern culture has primarily been dominated by the spirit of industrial society. Tillich asserts that the consequence of this is the removal of God from the centre of humanity's activities. Mankind rules and God is barred from interfering as this will disturb humanity's technical and business calculations. In this industrial society, mankind not God is the master of the universe. The Church can choose to address humanity's predicament through the route of traditions and doctrines, thus setting a supernatural realm above the natural realm. Since the Church is operating in a hostile environment, an environment which has dethroned God from the centre, this approach will further alienate the Church.

If the Church decides to adapt its creeds and practices to resolve the situation before it, it also risks losing its core values. Tillich (2013:3), while advocating the existentialist approach to this dilemma, also notes its implausibility. Even though mankind becomes the master of his world, at the same time he is also a part of the reality he has created. What Tillich is saying is that by becoming part of this reality, mankind also becomes an object among objects. The Church is challenged however to provide answers to explain our existence. Tillich (2013:4) acknowledges that the Church performs this role through evangelism. However, he contends that church should lead the way in ensuring that those outside the Church can accept that the symbols which the life of the Church expresses are the answers to the questions.

It is Tillich's view that the Church has what it takes to deal with the spirit of our industrial society and the human predicament it has created. One of the most insightful contributions from his essay is the link he makes between the Christian message and the concept of healing. Biblical salvation is intrinsically linked to the concept of healing and Tillich argues that the message of healing should be conveyed to the world of suffering humanity. He states that: "Because the Christian message is the message of salvation, and because salvation means healing, the message of healing in every sense of the word is appropriate to our situation" (Tillich, 2013:4).

The healing message inherent in the Gospel of salvation can restore hope to people who are destitute, marginalised and anxious and also despaired about life and its challenges. Rather than presenting the Christian faith as a set of doctrines, rituals or moral laws, the Church must show the suffering world that the good news can heal every human predicament. This approach resonates well with the Pentecostal way of dealing with challenges facing our contemporary society. Healing is a central theme in Pentecostal theology and practices. In Pentecostal epistemology, healing encompasses divine and physical healing. Like Richard (2012:19) and Hauerwas (2001:374), Tillich (2013:5) advocates that the Church should not only listen to its own voice. There is nothing wrong listening to voices which might not be active members of the Church. In essence, sometimes good results can come from those who might appear hostile to the Church. This of course is not asking the Church to abandon its role as the guardian of good biblical principles which fight against any distortions as the communist movement did. If judging means to see both sides, then the Church must judge culture to understand its ultimate concerns and to devise effective strategies that can address these concerns.

6.6 The failure of liberation theologies in contemporary society

Different exponents of Liberation Theology might have stated at one time or the other what they perceived to be the core objectives of the movement. Notwithstanding what their perceptions are, there are specific voices within the movement whose views can be deemed to provide accurate data on what Liberation Theology was set up to achieve. The views presented by these ardent exponents of the movement will serve a useful purpose in assessing whether the movement has been successful or failed especially in terms of its relevancy in the contemporary society.

It is clear that the movement was envisioned as a sustainable organisation that will outlast those who initially conceived the idea. After all one of the hallmarks of liberation theology is the notion of here and now. It is a movement that expects its adherents to reap the reward of their efforts in this world rather than

wait for a reward in heaven. It was not established as an otherworldly theological enterprise, but one that champions the process of transforming society and making it a better place for all who are nonpersons, oppressed, impoverished and marginalised. Eschatological mindset, which is the bedrock of the Christian faith is not advocated in liberation theology constructs. On the other hand, utopianism is fundamental to its epistemology and practices. This remains one of the fundamental reasons why liberation theology is different from Pentecostalism and helps to explain the divergence in their etymological constructs of salvation, which is the crux of this study.

It is not difficult to assess the achievements of Liberation Theology in the light of available data in Latin America and elsewhere. At this juncture, it is necessary to revisit some of the pronouncements made by some prominent voices during the promulgation of liberation theology. Gutiérrez is one of those voices who can be relied upon to provide excellent insights as to the 'what and why' of liberation theology. According to him, the movement is not just about reflecting on the world. He declares: "... in the protest against trampled human dignity, in the struggle against the plunder of the vast majority of humankind, in liberating love, and in the building of a new, just and comradely society - to the gift of the Kingdom of God" (Gutiérrez, 2001:59).

Liberation Theology aims to protest and fight the course of those whose human dignities have been violated by those who possess economic and political powers and even ecclesial control. In essence, the systems and the structures that confronted the advocates of liberation theology in Latin America needed transformation, which will subsequently change the economic, social and political wellbeing of the people. This new society to be brought about will be just and equitable. It is envisaged that economic resources will be allocated in fairness to meet the needs of the Latin American population, thus eradicating entrenched divide created by the class systems. Latin America will become a classless society.

The question that arises from this evaluative assessment of liberation theology in contemporary society is whether this just and comradely society has been achieved. The answer to the question is a resoundingly in the negative.

Evidence from the UN MDGs 2012 report, Sehnbruch (2006:1-6) report on former Chilean President Lagos speech at the Centre for Latin American Studies, California University and Tuluy's (2012: 1-3) report on Susan Kaufman Purcell's speech (World Bank VP for Latin America and Caribbean) corroborate this fact. Latin America is still a poverty-stricken region. Inequities are still prevalent in the region. The liberation theology agenda has failed to materialize.

A cursory glance at the statistical information presented by Bonino (1975:22-23) shows that not much has changed since 1975 when he compiled those excerpts from the UN report. Many in Latin America are still physically undernourished to the point of starvation in some parts of the region. Illiteracy is still high and millions of Indian labourers continue to live outside the economic, social and cultural pale of the Latin American community (Bonino, 1975:22). A large segment of the region continues to suffer from infectious and deficiency diseases. Nearly four decades after Bonino's analytical report, the UN MDGs 2012 report echoes similar views to what was prevalent then.

It is in the light of these findings that one can strongly argue that the liberation theology agenda failed to deliver what it promised. The exponents of the movement claimed that they understood the Latin American situation and were well equipped to liberate the people. The irony is that the countries which have been liberated are now all seeking neo-Liberal economic policies over and against Liberation Theology's pursuance of Socialism as the answer to all the economic ills. Extrapolating from the Puebla Final Document, Boff & Boff (1988:2) assert in strong terms what Liberation Theology intends to achieve in Latin America. Their portrait of Latin America was a continent of class struggles, where the poor were marginalised and exploited. Their society was marked by an exclusive partnership with a dependent capitalism. According to Boff & Boff (1988:2), the Latin American situation should be seen as scandalous and it is only from this perspective can a realistic approach be developed to address the dehumanising conditions of the people. Based on Puebla Final Document Boff & Boff assert that: "... And this situation finds expression in such things as high rate of infant mortality, lack of adequate housing, health problems, starvation wages, unemployment and underemployment, malnutrition, job uncertainty

[and] compulsory mass migrations” (Boff & Boff, 1988:2; Eagleson & Schaper, 1979:29). It is in this light that Boff & Boff (1988:116) declare in an interview summary that: "... liberation is the social emancipation of the oppressed. Our concrete task is to replace the capitalist system and move toward a new society - a society of a socialistic type".

Liberation theologians were confident from the start because they believed that they understood the Latin American environment more than anyone else. As Galilea (1980:166) notes, this new theology was the first to originate from Latin America. He is right in asserting that since the distinctive situation of this region is also part of its intrinsic content, liberation theologians were able to adopt a methodological approach which they believe will effectively address the current situation. This approach begins with an analysis of this concrete situation with the help of the social sciences. In his analysis, Galilea (1980:167), having identified the main concerns of liberation theology declares: "... The present situation is one in which the vast majority of Latin Americans live in a state of underdevelopment and unjust dependence ... overcome this situation".

Unquestionably, one can deduce from the evidence so far presented that liberation theology did not live up to the vision it espoused. There is no evidence of economic and social emancipation. The region is still divided and class struggles are evident as the indigenous Indians remain at the lower strata of the socioeconomic and political hierarchy. Using the economic, social and political indicators discussed so far as the litmus test, Latin America is still impoverished and lags behind on the global stage. This research will be incomplete without attempts made to explore factors which might have contributed to this lack of rapid progress in Latin America.

The success or failure of liberation theology remains a contestable debate among scholars and theologians in today's society. A prominent aspect of this discourse is the relationship between liberation theology and Marxism. Some (Novak, 1991, Rhodes, 1985, Smith, 2010 and Fawcett, 1994) argue that liberation theology failed in Latin America because of its closer association with Marxist principles. Kee (1990), while accepting that a relationship exists, argues that the failure of liberation theology is that it did not maintain a deeper

relationship with Marxism. Sexton (2007:1), whilst agreeing that differences exist between Marxism and Christianity, also argues that both ideologies have a lot in common. Sexton (2007:1) rightly argues that both Christianity and Marxism exist to promote and improve the welfare of the members of our society. At the same time he notes that both ideologies have long history of suppressing dissident voices and violently repressing infidel movements.

Unlike Novak (1991), who opposed Marxism and socialism for Capitalism, or Kee (1990), who subscribes to Marxism principles, Sexton (2007:1) does not believe that either Marxism or Capitalism offers the panacea for the Latin America situation. Sexton (2007:1) does not blame Marxism or Christianity *per se*. He lays the blame squarely on those "proponents of these ideologies [who] have severely undermined their cause through the organisation of vast bureaucracies that leave precious little time for doing the real work of making lives easier" (Sexton, 2007:1).

Novak (1991:33) attempts to ascertain whether Liberation theology can really achieve what it set out to accomplish in Latin America. In his analysis of liberation achievement in Latin America, Novak compares two approaches to dealing with the Latin American challenges. The utopian approach according to Novak looks at issues from the abstraction perspectives. This approach he argues aligns with socialist and Marxist principles whereby ideas about the future are projected without factoring in the institutional question (Novak, 1991:33). Ideas are good but they must be put into action. The question of who is going to make it happen should be considered from the beginning. Novak advocates an approach which he calls the realistic approach. In his view, if Liberation theology aims to establish a non-capitalist, socialist society, the advocates of this new society should spell out which institution will do what. It should also be clear which concrete model this new society can be compared with. It should not be abstract. Looking at liberation theology, Novak (1991:34) contends "... it criticizes. It exhorts. It stimulates. But it has not yet spelled out its future institutional form".

Welna (1991) has published an article which carried unedited excerpts from a meeting held by some religious workers and liberation theologians in Brazil. This meeting, which was later broadcast on the National Public Radio (NRP) is, now made available by Welna an NRP reporter. Insights from this meeting reveal that some who were strong advocates of liberation theology are having doubts about the movement as a whole. Welna's report admits that the group was concerned about how the collapse of communism has profoundly affected liberation theology. As such, since Marxism was declining in Eastern Europe, it was their view that liberation theology will follow the same fate.

Father Hugg (An American Jesuit Priest) portrays this collapse as the shattering of a dream for those millions of poor people who looked up to socialism to bring economic liberation. Not everyone who speaks or writes about liberation theology should be taken serious. However, when Maduro (an eminent Venezuelan Sociologist of religion) speaks, what he says carries a lot of weight. From this extract Maduro is expressing the same sentiments as Novak (1991:34) when he argued that liberation theologians embrace utopianism rather than a realistic approach with institutional forms firmly embedded. In Welna's report, Maduro is quoted as seeing liberation theology in a state of paralysis, which he attributes in part to liberation theology's strong identification with a failed ideology. In other words, Father Hugg and Maduro both agree that Socialism and Marxism are failed ideologies which have failed to deliver what it promised.

Maduro goes further to explain the state of affairs in Latin America. He declares: "We thought we were going to be the ferment of something much more important than a caution—than a cushion. And we criticized many of the agencies in the Church that did nothing but try to serve as cushions. And now that's what we are doing and probably that is what we are doomed to be and do ... 100 years." This is a serious indictment on liberation theology coming from someone who has been its ardent supporter. These are the consequences of adopting a utopian approach rather that a realistic approach. By not having institutions or structures that can actually bring about realistic changes which can transform dreams into realities, the movement becomes a cushion.

Maduro's assertion is that by embracing Marxism the way they did in Latin America, they became too often very naive and very a critical toward the actual experiments of socialism in the world.

Welna's own observation is that many in Latin America have become disillusioned with the liberation theology project. This has led many to abandon the basic Christian Communities in Brazil. Maduro is also thinking along the same line, positing that liberation theology has done little to actually improve living conditions during a decade of severe economic crisis in Latin America.

Those who previously bought into the liberation ideology have left their religious communities to struggle for change elsewhere. This shift has also included some of them running for office in Latin America's new democracies or holding union posts. On a whole, Maduro's assessment is that liberation theology he helped found, rather than liberating the poor from hardship, has for the most part simply helped them to endure it. This is a vivid account of the failures of the movement that promised liberation to millions in Latin America and the developing regions of the world.

Continuing with the comparative analysis between utopianism which liberation theology opted for and the realistic approach which he proposed, Novak (1991:35) draws valuable lessons from the liberals in North America. He argues that the liberals were successful in North America because they approached their liberation agenda from three dimensions. Novak (1991:35) contends: "They sought liberation from tyranny and torture in the political sphere; liberation from the tyranny of poverty in the economic sphere; and tyranny of conscience, information and ideas in the religious, cultural and moral sphere." This insightful analysis by Novak demonstrates that it is not just enough to postulate an idea, but it is also necessary to ensure that everything is done to bring it to materialization. Novak (1991:43) is absolutely right to ask liberationists what sort of economic institutions they put in place to ensure that the poor will no longer remain in poverty after they have declared a preferential option for the poor. Unless institutions are pioneered to block tyranny and prevent torture or guarantee liberty of conscience, ideas and information, liberation theology remains a theoretical rather than a practical construct that can bring about real

transformation of lives. The statement by one of its own (Maduro) that the movement is in a state of paralysis confirms what many theologians and scholars outside the movement have been saying for a long time.

Liberation theology has not faded in Latin America alone, but also in Africa. The move away by African theologians from the Latin American model is symptomatic of the demise of this movement worldwide. Africans are therefore reworking the original tenets of liberationism to determine a formula that will work in the African situation. It can be argued that Latin American liberation theology might have served as a catalyst to African liberation movement. However, this is not to say that the concept of liberation was not known and practiced in the Africa. Like the Latin American priests who returned to South America after studying in Europe, African Catholic priests returned to Africa (mid 1950s) to pursue an *Africanization* agenda.

The quest for the indigenization of liberation theology in Africa also stems from an ongoing tension between Latin America liberation and the African model on the one hand and on the other hand between Black and African theologians on both sides of the Atlantic (Torres & Eagleson, 1982; Martey, 1995). In addition, African theologians are aiming to bridge the gap that existed between culture, politics and socioeconomic forces. As Martey (2005:43) asserts, this is a fruitful dialogue that will foster greater harmony, which will accelerate the destabilization and dismantling of the structures of death and decay in Africa.

Addressing colonialism and liberation struggles on the continent, Martey (2005:38) contends that African theologians must find a theological framework that is peculiar to their situation. Oduyoye (1993:203) rightly points out that while the language of liberation featured in African politics it was absent from theological discussions. Liberation was seen as a political language which is associated with protest and violence and had the capacity to upset existing political order. Since Christian theologians did not want to be associated with anything that could bring about political instability leading to chaos and insecurity, liberation was absent from their discussions. Oduyoye's observation is a sharp contrast to what pertained in Latin America, where priests and theologians were heavily involved in the revolutionary struggles.

This however changed with the passage of time. These days, scholars, theologians, the ecclesial communities, national governments and international agencies are dialoguing on how to liberate Africa from poverty and massive underdevelopment. The dialogues also include the emancipation and empowerment of women to be in charge of their own destinies. Racial harmony, especially after the demise of the Apartheid regime in South Africa, has also featured in these discussions. By analysing Martey's (2005) article, it is clear that African Liberation Theology did not adopt the Latin American approach of "theology from below" where the Bible was relegated and the Latin American situation accepted as the main text. Martey (2005:39) presents a situation in which the Biblical text, the human conditions in Africa and the African worldview were brought together to resolve the African predicament. In essence, the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the excellent publications by the Institute of Contextual Theology in South Africa were instrumental in dealing with the issues arising from slavery, colonialism and racism. The "Kairos Documents and Kairos Liturgies" of the 1980's played pivotal role in challenging these inhumane practices and vicious policies.

This is a different approach from what was obtainable in Latin America. This Africanization paradigm flourished into other theological paradigms, which further helped to address the contemporary African situation. Martey (2005:39) notes that in addition to liberation and inculturation, other theological paradigms have evolved. Reconstruction Theology, Pentecostal-Charismatic Theology and African Initiated Church Theology have proved very useful in addressing the African situation. It is noteworthy that the Reconstruction theology in particular was developed to replace liberation theology (Mugambi, 1995) in order to achieve social transformation and reconstruction in Africa.

Unlike the Latin American situation, the Africanization paradigms also embraced Pentecostal-Charismatic and African Initiated Church theologies because of their emphasis on spiritual liberation (van Schaik, 1998). This approach is at variance with Latin American Liberation Theology, where the emphasis was purely on material liberation using Marxist principles. By focusing on liberation from unjust social structures which did not address the spiritual needs of the

people, Latin American liberation theology failed to understand the essence of true liberation. The prominent position accorded to the Gospel of Jesus Christ completely differentiates African liberation agenda from the Latin American liberation, which is in a state of paralysis and irrelevant in contemporary society. According to Martey (2005:39), African liberation theology “seeks to understand the African reality and to interpret this reality in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to bring transformation of the oppressive *status quo*”.

Advocating a liberation theology paradigm for Africa which focuses on reconstruction, Mugambi (1995:13) argues that the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5) should be regarded as "the most basic of all reconstructive theological texts in the Synoptic Gospels". A careful study of Mugambi's analysis further demonstrates why the Africanization of liberation theology is a better approach when compared to the failing Latin American construct. The African liberation framework (reconstruction), according to Mugambi (1995:16-17), involves three important levels: the personal level (dealing with individual motives and intentions), the ecclesial level (dealing with all areas of church life) and finally cultural reconstruction (dealing with politics, economics, ethics, aesthetics and religion). As can be seen here, the African reconstruction liberation agenda rather than ostracise, embraces different practices within the social realm (Libanio, 2000:172). This is what Mugmabi (1995:44) means when he draws our attention to the partnership between the Christian faith and the African culture in "exposing all negative elements in culture especially those that dehumanize women".

The liberation movement in Africa fully understands that the rebuilding of Africa and the eradication of poverty is not purely a theological task. The formation of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) confirms this view. With NEPAD (2002) the ecclesial and the theological communities work together with African political leaders "to eradicate poverty; place the continent on path of sustainable growth and development; participate in global economy and body politic; and liberate Africa from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalizing world" (Martey, 2005:48; NEPAD document paragraph 8, page 8).

Liberation of Africa from poverty and dehumanising influences is still a work in progress. African liberation epistemology is a true liberation based on the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This could explain why it remains on the ascendancy rather than in a state of paralysis. The formation of partnership with different agencies and their ability to work with willing leaders of the continent is a positive step. The growth of Pentecostal-Charismatic movements in African is a catalyst for development and liberation for the people. The efforts to work with the global community to attract investments to Africa from those willing to invest in the continent will create job opportunities and engender greater competitiveness on the global stage. Martey (2005:52) captures the very essence of the African liberation agenda when he concludes: "And it is this liberation and empowerment coming from the Trinitarian God of love, grace and hope that has given us the spirit of resilience not only to survive all kinds of dehumanizing and death dealing forces but also to join all those who seek to transform all forces of death and decay to bring humankind life in its fullness."

Kee's (1990) scholarly work does not blame Liberation theology's demise on its association with Marxism. Kee (1990:ix, 267) rather argues that the failure of the Latin American liberation movement can be attributed to the fact it was not Marxist enough. After all, Kee (1990:282, 283) argues that whilst liberation theology has led the way to ensure that religion is no longer perceived as the opiate to the poor or an ideology in favour of the rich it has not endorsed Marx's second ontological criticism. By rejecting this ontological issue (religion produces an inversion of reality), it can be argued that liberation theology is not completely Marxist. In other words, it has failed to comprehend the full implication of Marx's work. This is why Kee believes it is not Marxist enough. While this view is plausible, it does not exonerate liberation theology from been heavily influenced especially by neo-Marxism ideologies. Kee accepts that liberation theology has been affected by Marx's principles, but this has not resulted in liberation theology completely operating with Marx's ideologies (Kee, 1990:180). He questions why liberation theology continues to cling to models and repeat doctrines from a tradition which is so alien to experience in the modern world. Kee (1990:258) argues that this situation has arisen because of how Marx has been used by liberation theologians. Rather than give Marx a

free rein, he has been used only within limits. Whereas liberation theologians have invited Marx as a consultant to use his analysis to sort out the ills of society, Kee (1990:259) however bemoans that Marx has not been used as a true consultant would be used. Liberation theologians only used him selectively and he believes this is dangerous.

Analysing the failures of Liberation theology in contemporary society, Kee (1990:266, 267) makes some important observations. Firstly, that liberation theology has failed intellectually. Secondly, he argues that even though liberation theology has insights and has maintained some integrity and spirituality in ethical matters, its theology cannot be affirmed in the modern world. Thirdly, it has not just failed the academic community but more importantly the very people to whom it is committed to. The liberation is not capable of sustaining its adherents when they move into another social world. Looking at how people who were committed to the movement abandon it when their circumstances change, Kee (1990:266) vociferously states that: "... Liberation theology has indeed offered 'initial priming' ... the more committed they are, the more they are carried outside the Church and outside its religious interpretation of the world, as much beyond liberation theology and beyond traditional theology".

6.7 The Bible as a paradigm for dealing with societal issues

This investigation holds the view that if one carefully searches the passages of the Holy Scripture and with proper exegesis and hermeneutical analysis, helpful answers can be found to deal with the challenging issues facing contemporary society. It is commonly accepted within the Christian faith community that the Bible is a useful book to deal with issues facing the Church and humanity as a whole. This view is supported by Apostle Paul's charge to Timothy (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Particular attention should be given to the notions of teaching, rebuking, correcting and training. These ideas have the capacity to transform not only individuals but society as a whole. Education and training are vital for socioeconomic development.

The teachings of Jesus provide viable case studies which can be applied to challenges facing humanity in today's society. The Sermon on the Mount continues to provide exemplary principles for living in the 21st century (Matt. 5). The classical teaching on the Good Samaritan (Luke, 10:25-37) is timeless in application and apt in dealing with how developed nations can be of help to developing nations as part of the global neighbourhood. We are challenged by this parable to pursue peace in our world. Racial and cultural barriers can be broken just as the Good Samaritan cared for his historical enemy. Jesus' teaching here is useful in advocating racial and class harmony.

It is a well-known fact that the Jews and the Samaritans were enemies (Luke, 9:51-55; John, 4:20, 22 & Matt. 10:5). The Good Samaritan swept aside this enmity to help someone in appreciation of our common humanity. Paul in his teaching makes it absolutely clear that equality of all human beings is a sound biblical doctrine (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11). Jesus encouraged his followers to pay tax (Mark, 12:13-17) and Paul teaches that we should obey those in authority because they were put in place by God (Rom. 13:1; 1Pt. 2:13-21).

There are many challenges facing the 21st century society. It is not possible to itemise and deal with each problem in this investigation as the scope is limited. However, one way of understanding how the Bible can be a paradigm for dealing with global challenges is to re-examine the UN MDGs in the light of the word of God. The objective here is to ascertain how certain biblical principles can be used to address these goals. This is not an attempt to mine the Scriptures for solutions. What is intended is to exegetically look at Biblical texts to see what insights might be gleaned from the experiences of Bible characters, the teachings of the prophets, Jesus, the Apostles and Paul in particular.

Dignity is a prerequisite for every human being irrespective of where they live, what culture they hail from, what class they belong, whether rich or poor. Human dignity is for all regardless of gender. The UN MDG target 3 is unequivocal about promoting gender equality and empowering women. With this sound timeless biblical principle, society should be able to care for those who are hungry and living in extreme poverty (UN MDG target number 1). The Old Testament is replete with biblical principles on how to address issues about

oppression and exploitation and corruption (Micah, 6:8; Isaiah, 58:6-7; Amos, 5:11-16). Extreme poverty and hunger are the products of unfair trade practices and mounting debts in the developing countries. At the same time corrupt governments sign unfavourable trade agreements which continue to exacerbate the economic conditions, thus dwarfing the pace of development.

The Bible provides clear instructions about debt cancellation. This will be one of the best ways to restore dignity to those living in the developing nations (Deut. 15:1-11). Those who have should not be tight-fisted but open-handed toward those who do not have or are materially impoverished. God declared this because the poor will always be in the land. The Israelites were forbidden from charging interest on money lent to those who needed help (Exodus 22:2; Deut. 23:19-20). This is an important lesson, as the mounting debt problems of the developing countries are predominantly due to high interest rates charged by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, which are controlled by the richer nations. While it is true that the economies of the Old Testament is different from what is obtainable in today's competitive marketplace, the principle found in the Bible can be adapted to suit our current global market.

In addition to Paul's charge to Timothy on education and training, the Old Testament advocates the same sentiment. When one considers the UN MDG target 2 which focuses on universal primary education, Solomon urged parents to train up the child from the beginning in order to develop a positive character formation (Proverb 22:6). Solomon was very clear on instruction and education of the young (Proverbs 4, 5, 6:20-23).

The sixth target of the UN MDGs focuses on combating HIV/AIDs. The UN MDGs 2012 report estimates that in 2010, about 34 million people were living with the HIV virus globally. Despite many people having access to the life-saving antiretroviral therapy, the 2010 figure shows 17% increase from the 2001 figure. The fact that the number of people dying of AIDs related disease fell to 1.8 million is good news but sadly 2009 estimates also show that about 17.1 million children worldwide have lost one or both parents through the virus. The global community is investing a lot of valuable resources to combat this deadly

disease. In addition to providing medical treatments, education has played significant roles in ensuring that sexual behaviour is modified.

It is noteworthy that some teachings from the Bible can become effective instruments in modifying behaviours that result in a person being infected with the HIV/AIDS virus. According to available data, one of the main ways to catch the disease is through sexual activities. Information on the UK National Health Service (NHS) website reveals that in 2010, 95% of those diagnosed with HIV in the UK acquired it through sexual contact. It also states that most of those who have the disease got it by having unprotected sex with a person who has HIV.

The Bible is clear about how we should treat our bodies. Our body according to the teachings of Apostle Paul is the temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:15-20). Paul's argument is that since believers were bought with a price, they no longer own themselves. Since God has complete ownership of the believer, He has also chosen to reside inside of them. Since God has chosen to dwell inside the believers, they can no longer do what pleases them in their bodies. Paul was concerned particularly about sexual purity and therefore urged the believers to maintain this purity especially as God is holy and pure and cannot behold evil.

It is imperative according to Paul's teaching that the believer must honour God as He resides inside of us who believe. Sexual immorality defies the temple. Whilst it is not expected that the global pluralistic community will apply these biblical principles, the Church can and should as they participate in combating HIV/AIDS in our society. Through the process of evangelization, the Church can reach those who are battling with this dangerous disease. The Church should continue to echo the same instruction Paul gave to the Thessalonians about living to please God. Fundamental to this instruction is that it is God's will that they should be sanctified. They were instructed to avoid sexual immorality, not to do anything in their body that is unholy and dishonourable (1 Thess. 4:3-6).

Self-control is required of all those who love the Lord. This is pertinent to the HIV/AIDS challenges facing the world today. Fornication, adultery, illicit sex especially among those within 15-24 age bracket who also happen to be the

group most likely to be infected need to embrace the biblical teachings on self-control (Titus 2:11-14; Gal. 5:22-24). If our young people can exercise self-control by avoiding excessive alcohol, drug abuse, sex with multiple partners (without protection) and a care free lifestyle and embrace some of the principle articulated in the Bible, much progress will be made in combating HIV/AIDs in our society. The Bible clearly teaches monogamous rather than polygamous relationship (Matt. 19:3-6; Gen.1:27; Eph. 5:22-33; Exod. 20:17, 1 Tim. 3:2). Those who acquiesce this teaching will not practice open relationship or multiple sex partners, which could lead to promiscuity and subsequently accelerating HIV/AIDs epidemic in the world. Such indiscriminate sexual behaviour can also result in unwanted and unplanned pregnancies, which further worsen sub-standard living conditions of those in the developing world.

Having many children in a family that is not financially established could cause death due to undernourishment and poor living conditions. Death of children due to malnutrition constitutes one of the main challenges facing the global community according to the UN MDGS. Common sense exegesis of 1 Tim. 3:4, 12& 5:8 will explain why God endorses monogamy over polygamy. God expects the husband to be a good manager of his household, especially if the person is also an overseer or a deacon. If a man has many wives and many children, this could lead to unnecessary pressure on economic resources. Equally, it will have negative ramifications on the wellbeing of the children. Paul is so blunt when equates a person's inability to care for the family as denial of the faith and making the individual worse than an infidel (1 Tim 5:8). If society were to embrace these strong biblical principles and put them into action, some of the problems we face today could have been completely avoided or at least minimised.

One of the UN MDGs is to ensure environmental sustainability (Target number 7). This is an important target because the achievement of many other socioeconomic goals depends on this target. It is estimated that forest management alone provide employment to over 10 million people globally. Other benefits include food, fodder, timber, wild meat, medical plants and materials for construction just to mention a few. Climate changes remain an

important agenda on the world stage but a realistic consensus is still work-in-progress. The UN MDGs 2012 report states the target as: "To integrate principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources." This approach alone is not enough to solve the climatic challenges facing the global community. The Bible contains principles which can be applied to solve some of the environmental challenges facing our contemporary society

It should not take long for any Christian or theologian who reads the Bible with a critical mind to realise that God mandated humanity to manage the earth He has created. The stewardship role is clearly articulated in Gen. 2:15 where God commanded Adam to work and take care of the Garden of Eden. DeWitt (1994:40-41) makes an important observation noting that the Hebrew translation of the word "Keep" is *shamar*. In essence, when God commanded Adam to keep the Garden, it was not just merely looking after it. The deeper meaning derived from the Hebrew translation means a loving, caring and sustaining keeping. To demonstrate the deeper meaning of the word *shamar* or keeping, DeWitt (1994:40) explains its link with the Aaronic blessing of Num.6:24. He asserts that when God uses the word *shamar* or keep "... it is not merely that God would keep us in a kind of preserved, inactive, uninteresting state; instead, it is that God would keep us in all of our vitality, with all our energy and beauty" (DeWitt, 1994:40). As we become the custodians of God's creation, we must keep it so that it will not lose any of its essence but continue to glorify God and give Him pleasure.

Exodus 23 advocates some important principles that will allow the land and vegetation to fallow and replenish the essential nutrients to the soil. By following God's instruction and allowing the land to rest and replenish lost nutrients, the land becomes more fruitful. This biblical principle is completely against modern day intensive farming and deforestation, which have negative climatic consequences. God, who created the earth, has put plans in place for the earth to be taken care of so that in turn it will yield great harvest to sustain both humankind and animal lives. Since God is creation-friendly and held everything He created to be very good (Gen. 1:24-25) by delegating mankind to have

dominion and rule over creation, His intention must have been that of continuity. God did not hand the earth to humankind for destruction but for maintenance and preservation. These sound biblical principles are the very reasons why the Bible is still relevant in contemporary society. To completely ignore the timeless principles enshrined in the Bible because of postmodernism and cultural shifts inherent in our secular and pluralistic society is folly. Such injudiciousness on the part of those who are dealing with current societal issues will tantamount to missed opportunity.

6.8 Timeless and transcultural epistemology of biblical salvation

This investigation has focused on understanding the true etymology of biblical salvation in order to challenge the liberation theology conception of this important Christian theme. The work completed so far has established beyond reasonable doubt that the Pentecostal notion of salvation, which is synonymous with biblical salvation, is completely different from liberation theology perception of the concept. Whereas Liberation theology epistemology of salvation continues to maintain that liberation and salvation are one and the same thing, Pentecostal proposals accept that they are different. Pentecostal and orthodox theologians are in agreement in their etymology of biblical salvation.

Upholding the Pentecostal and orthodox theology standpoints is an affirmation that biblical salvation is both timeless and transcends across all cultures. In other words, biblical salvation is not limited by culture and time. The etymology and value of biblical salvation does not change or depreciate in value in relationship to time or the cultural environment within which it is articulated. This is important because both the Old and New Testaments posit that God is the originator of biblical salvation. The God who is both transcendental and immanent has not change and will never change. Since God designed one plan of salvation for the whole of humanity irrespective of the time and cultural timeline they find themselves, it was necessary for biblical salvation to have the capacity to engage people of all creeds, culture and race, medieval, enlightenment, pre-modern, modern or postmodern.

This investigation believes that this is necessary, if the death of Christ on the Cross is to atone for the sins of the whole world once and for all. If the efficacy of biblical salvation was reliant on time factors, events and cultural shifts, then Christ would have to die over and over again. When He died, the Bible records clearly that it is finished. Salvation is complete. All that is required is for individuals to accept the work accomplished on the Cross and believe that they can be saved. In Judeo-Christian thought, God is the embodiment of salvation in the Old Testament, but Jesus is the ultimate deliverer in the New Testament. The work completed in chapter two made reference to numerous scholars (Bruce, 1963, Hubbard, 1997; Hartley, 1980) to affirm this Old Testament worldview of salvation. This worldview also attests that God is the author of salvation (Is. 43:3, 11; 45:15; 21-22 & Hos. 13:4, Jonah 2:9, Psalm 3:8). The Old Testament view of salvation was also contrasted with those of their neighbours (ANE) in chapter two. The conclusion was that the biblical salvation was of greater value because of the supremacy and sovereignty of the God of the Jews when compared with the Babylonian and Egyptian gods. Therefore the Old Testament concept of salvation, despite some of its deficiencies, appears to be more efficacious than those of the ANE civilisations.

The New Testament points to Jesus Christ as the ultimate Redeemer. He is the Messiah promised to the patriarchs of Israel to bring salvation to all mankind but to the Jews first. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews is absolutely right when Jesus is said to be the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:7-8). This means that Jesus does not change. His teachings do not change with time and culture and more importantly, the salvation he embodies is as efficacious as it was the day He died on the Cross. The power of liberation in the atonement will continue to save people today and in the future as it did many years ago when His disciples preached the message of the Cross. The message of salvation is still a life-transforming message to all generations.

Luke who declared unambiguously that Jesus is the Saviour (Luke 2:11) also attested that only in His name can salvation be realised (Acts 4:12). Biblical salvation is timeless because the Lord Jesus is changeless. His salvation is beneficial to the whole of humanity without discrimination not in terms of

universalism of salvation. John wrote so powerfully to demonstrate that biblical salvation is for all mankind when he declared "For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son ... but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Continuing with the transcultural epistemology of biblical salvation Paul declares that "... is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes ... will live by faith (Romans 1:16-17). The key issue is that the person should believe. Everyone who believes indicates that biblical salvation is not discriminately but inclusive. Unbelief is the only excluding factor.

Again Paul consolidates this sentiment when he asserts that "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). There is therefore no doubt in the minds of the Gospel writers and Paul that biblical salvation is the only form of salvation that can really surpass time and culture. This does not in any way preclude the interpretation of the Gospel message in order to reach out to different cultures. It is therefore acceptable, to contextualise the Gospel message as long as the reinterpretation does not compromise the true message of the Bible. Jesus and the God of Israel must remain at the centre of the message of Biblical salvation. This is why liberation epistemology of salvation is at variance with biblical salvation. Any form of liberation which relegates Jesus to the side and enthrone humanism or Marxist principles cannot represent biblical salvation. Pentecostalism must continue to develop strategies that will ensure that the Gospel message which brings salvation to all people is proclaimed. This investigation affirms that only biblical salvation can bring true and lasting salvation to humankind in every generation. The salvation which can bring true liberation from all spiritual, socioeconomic, political and structural enslavement must have its meaning and foundation deeply rooted in the Bible.

6.9 Protestant Reformers: salvation & liberation

The salvation which can bring true liberation from all spiritual, socioeconomic, political and structural enslavement must have its meaning and foundation deeply rooted in the Bible. By making critical reflection on historical praxis its

main code of belief, the liberation advocated by the liberation theologians could bring political and socioeconomic emancipation. It is clear that liberation is a worthy concept and should be pursued by Christians. It is also important that its pursuance should not be at the expense of a true biblical salvation. This is why the focal point of this research continues to be the development of a liberation theology framework that can challenge the critical issues facing our society today. Since Pentecostalism embraces the essential tenets of biblical salvation, it is envisaged that ultimately this investigation will culminate in a liberation theology framework that is Pentecostal in outlook.

Invaluable insights can be gained for the development of this liberation theology framework by critically analysing some scholarly works on Protestant Reformers. The excellent works by Schaff (1996), Latourette (1999) and Shaull (1991) provide helpful information on the Protestant Reformers of the sixteenth century. Scholars Schaff (1996), Latourette (1999), Shaull (1991:17), Arnold (1999) all agree that Luther (1483-1546), Calvin (1509-1564) and Zwingli (1484-1531) are the key players. While it is understandable that the era of the Protestant Reformation is remarkably different from the 1960s when liberation theology was constituted and our present 21st century, vital lessons can be learnt. Shaull (1991:12) is convinced that inherent in the Reformation are principles which help transform the Church and our society today. He further argues that those who initiated the Reformation were those who were on the margin and as well as being closer to the suffering and struggle of the time. These individuals made every effort to relate their sufferings and struggles to their faith and responded accordingly (Shaull, 1991:13).

If the experiences of the Reformers are to provide valuable information to transform the Church and our society, it is necessary to examine some of the main causes of the Reformation. Despite the fact that some of the Reformers were contemporaries, Luther is held to be the chief pioneer of the sixteenth century Reformation revolution in Europe (Latourette, 1999:703). Luther amongst other things experienced an inner struggle for assurance. Latourette (1999:705) notes that Luther tried everything within the Church and monastic tradition to make himself acceptable God and to earn the salvation of his soul

but to avail. Schaff (1996:116) succinctly states: "He found no peace and rest in all his pious exercises." Shaul (1991:26) offers some explanations to elucidate what Luther was experiencing. The Church was at the centre of society within the framework of medieval Christendom thus knowledge of God and the struggle for salvation can only be achieved through the sacramental system. Functioning in this way the Church, rather than leading the way to liberation became the main protagonist for domination and oppression. As a major player in this oppressive system, the Church used its economic, political and spiritual powers to support it (Shaul, 1991:27). By adopting a hierarchical-sacramental system, the Church held a grip on the believers by teaching that the grace of God, offering of salvation and the sustaining of the believers life was all in the sacraments (Shaul, 1991:28). Through diligence in studying the Bible, Luther was liberated when he realised that there was no certainty that the Church and its sacramental system offered salvation. True biblical salvation and the forgiveness of sin did not come from the sacerdotal-sacramental system but freely from God by faith alone. Once Luther experienced true salvation which is by faith alone, he was truly liberated. He was now able to fight for both the salvation and liberation of others. Biblical salvation which gives the individual inner peace and assurance of God's justification can also lead one to work towards dismantling unjust structures in society. Shaul (1991:31) puts it better when he declares that: "... liberation from the burden of enslavement to rules and obligations ... liberation from domination by priest or political rulers who claim power over them in God's name".

Despite the excellent work done by Shaul, there are fundamental errors in some of his assertions, especially when he equates some of the Reformation principles to what is obtained in the Christian Base Communities (CBEs) and Liberation Theology in general. The common reading and sharing from the Bible cannot be compared with Luther's experience (Shaul, 1991:42 & 43). Luther was highly educated and could hermeneutically and exegetically handle Biblical texts. Most of those in CBEs were uneducated peasants who did not have the basic skills in interpreting the text of Scripture. Without a solid theological foundation, the text will not mean what it meant to be. By arguing that Luther's discovery of God's free gift of justification and forgiveness equates to Boff's

(1984:92) 'grand process of liberation', he has failed to understand that salvation and liberation are different. Even though liberation is seen as salvation in liberation thought, this investigation contends that they are different. Liberation theologians do not rely on the Bible for understanding Latin American situations. Luther did not engage in a critical reflection on historical praxis, but he went to the Scripture to understand what was happening to him personally and his environment. By his own admission Shaull (1991:59) posits that the Reformers hold that the Bible should be the supreme source of all theology and that all theological formulations should be based on the Scripture.

Herzog (1993), having reviewed Shaull's book, has made similar observation. Herzog does not agree with Shaull's assertion that 'The Liberation' is the continuation of the Reformation today. Herzog is not convinced that Shaull's assertion that Reformation and Liberation is in any way be coordinated as part of the same Protestant tradition is plausible. Even if there is a continuation between Liberation and Reformation, Herzog does not accept that they are not one and the same.

If the principles espoused by the Reformation movement are going to be useful in developing a robust liberation theology framework for transforming the Church and society, it is important to identify both the positive and negative aspects of it. Luther led the way to make sure that reading and interpreting the Bible were not left in the hands of the clergies but accessible to the common man. He argued for the priesthood of all believers. Latourette (1999:711) notes Luther's disapproval of the notion that the clergies were superior to the laity. The Papal's claim to have exclusive right to interpret the Scripture was contended.

The buying and selling of indulgence were one of the ways of enriching the Papacy. Schaff (1996:147) explains that *indulgentia* is the legal language of Rome which means amnesty or remission. This allows the Bishops and the Pope to grant temporal amnesty from punishment for sins committed by payment of money to the Church. With the realisation that only God has the power to justify and forgive sins, believers wanted to see this stopped as it amounted to deceit, corruption and exploitation. Luther's abhorrence of this

practice is clear. He saw it as an irrepressible conflict of principle which he could not ignore as it will amount to a betrayal of his theology and conscience (Schaff, 1996:155).

It is however disappointing that Luther could not maintain the same revulsion when he started the Lutheran church. The very tenets of his teaching were the discovery of the truth. As people gained open access to the Bible, they soon realised that they had to act to liberate themselves from economic and social disabilities they were subjected to by those who wield power. In essence, the Reformation was now becoming a revolution. Germany was gradually severing ties with Rome and advocating for their own sovereignty and the power to do things their way. This autonomy meant that the German Princes who ruled the territories needed no longer to send revenues to Rome, nor did they see the relevance of exerting ecclesiastical dues on their people. Rather than see this as an opportunity to redistribute income and improve the standard of living of the peasants, the Princes increased tax and instituted other measures which exacerbated the way of life (Latourette, 1999:725). The rise of aristocratic powers in the new Germany was followed by increased rent by landowners. Reformation has brought with it enlightenment, liberation and salvation due to open access to the Bible. If the Bible did not justify the feudal system (rents and dues) according to Luther's teaching, the peasants could not accept aristocratic powers as justified. They did not find this justified according to the knowledge and understanding they have gained from reading the Bible. For this reason, they did not only refuse to pay their rents and dues but tried to drive the aristocrats out of the land. Their quest for this economic and social liberation did not meet the approval of the man who has empowered them to liberate themselves from man-made enslavement. Luther relied on the support of the princes and political leaders to sustain his Reformation agenda. This alliance clouded Luther's judgement as he took side with the princes and aristocrats and repressed the peasants. Shaull (1991:41 & 42) writes: "... But when he [Luther] concluded that the Peasants' war (1524-1526) was getting out of control and was threatening the Reformation, not only denounced the peasants but urged those in power to suppress them". Latourette (1999:725) gives a more graphical account in corroboration with Shaull. Quoting from Luther's pamphlet

(Against the Murderous and Thieving Hordes of Peasants) he states: "... if they refused, to smite them, slay them and stab them as rebels who were like dogs and were outside the law of God" (Latourette, 1999:725). By resolving this revolt in such a brutal and unbiblical way one questions the integrity of Luther. By quashing the Peasant revolution this way, there appears to be no difference between him and Rome he was severing ties from. Luther has allowed pecuniary priorities to destroy the good relationship he had forged with the peasants who were at the core of his Reformation. Money will always be a vital component as we develop a liberation theological framework to transform our society. The real question is whether we will allow those who have the financial clout and willing to support the process to hijack the true biblical agenda to the detriment of those we are trying to liberate. Luther sided with the princes and the aristocrats whose agendas were revolution rather than Reformation. This mistake by Luther made the peasants in the South of Germany to regard him as a traitor and many left the Lutheran Church.

On the other hand, as Latourette (1999:725) puts it, "Moreover, Luther was led to a deep distrust of the common man, to a fear of chaos, and to rely increasingly on the princes." This is not the Reformation Luther advocated from the beginning. His Reformation was to liberate the common man from the clutches of extortionists, exploiters, abusers of power in the name of God. On this point Luther and the Lutheran Church have failed to live up to the true principles of the Reformation they espoused. The behaviour is not just unbiblical but unjustifiable and against the spirits of salvation and liberation.

Reformation was a European-wide phenomenon. While Luther led the German Reformation, Zwingli and Calvin made their contributions to the same course elsewhere. Generally Luther, Zwingli and Calvin agreed that salvation is by grace through faith in the finished work on the Cross alone. This does not however mean that they were in agreement in all other matters. Just as the German Reformation was guarded by nationalistic sentiments, the Swiss Reformation under Zwingli also aspired for democracy in their region. Latourette (1999:747) has however noted that because Switzerland was already divided into several cantons, they had already enjoyed some autonomy from Rome. So,

unlike the Germans it was not much of a problem for the Swiss to sever ties with Rome. As soon as Zwingli affirmed the authority of the Scriptures, he paved the way to denouncing everything the Roman Catholic Church practised that could not be authenticated by the Bible. Like Luther Zwingli affirms salvation by faith alone and not by good works. In 1523, he denounced monastic vows, clerical celibacy, the intercession of the saints, the existence of purgatory and the sacrificial character of the mass (Latourette, 1999:748). Zwingli however continued to forge closer links with civil authorities and the union between church and state was closer than what Luther achieved in Germany. While Luther advocated the forgiving grace of God in Christ, Zwingli's major preoccupation was the sovereign will of God as revealed in the Scripture. The key issue separating Luther and Zwingli was the Lord's Supper. For Luther, Christ was actually present in the elements, but Zwingli saw that as a memorial (Latourette, 1999:748).

Due to the commercial nature of Geneva, the Reformation was not just a religious affair, but also politically motivated. This helped Calvin to promote a Reformation agenda that paid attention to education, commerce, politics, thus making Geneva a theocratic state. Calvin was not just a theologian but also an excellent administrator. As a theologian, Calvin taught that apart from grace, every man is under the deserved wrath of God and that the salvation of every man is entirely from the initiative of God (Latourette, 1999:754). He also argued that the law was given out of love by God to sustain humankind's salvation pending when Christ should come. Like Luther, Calvin also believed that justification or salvation is by faith. He, however posited that the Holy Spirit moves the sinner to believe by faith what Christ has already accomplished. Latourette (1999:758) has detailed some of the exceptional achievements of Calvin in Geneva:

- Under his leadership close cooperation between Church and state was carried through
- He developed commerce and the weaving industry
- He encouraged the lending of money, but only at what he believed was a fair interest. This promoted a new industrial economy

- He encouraged education leading what is now called the University of Geneva.
- He believed that good education will be beneficial to both ministers and laity alike for the promotion of the true faith
- Under his leadership Geneva became a haven for the oppressed from many lands

Like Luther, Zwingli and Calvin did not spare those who rebelled against their precepts. This will be explored when the Anabaptists are examined (Radical Reformers). Having examined the Reformation which took place in Europe in the 16th century, the question that arises is if any lesson can be learnt and how this might help to formulate a new liberation theological framework to transform the 21st century society. Shaul has argued that the Reformation should be perceived a true paradigm to solve some of the entrenched challenges in Latin America. Whereas this can be accepted, one must exercise caution as some the Reformation agendas became revolutionary agenda. The repression of the peasants and the Radical Reformers cannot be factored into the liberation framework which can transform the 21st century society. Some sifting will be necessary. The legacy of the Reformation is that the Reformers by revelation and diligence discovered the true etymology of biblical salvation. Salvation can and should lead to physical, political and socioeconomic liberation. Liberation which is based on critical reflection on historical praxis can only offer temporary emancipation and will not transform the soul where all decision are made including those that enslave humanity. Re-reading and reinterpretation of the texts of Scripture must be encouraged. However, this must be checked so that it does not give rise to different doctrines and denominations which are not patterned according to the Bible. More denominations will also result in more fragmentation of the community of faith. This in effect will continue to weaken the foundation of the Church, which further erodes our ability to significantly transform the world.

6.10 Anabaptist Radical Reformers: salvation & liberation

The Anabaptist movement should not only be defined by their quest to see people have a second baptism. On the contrary, they should be perceived as a group of people who believed that the Reformation started by Luther, Zwingli and Calvin did not go far enough and therefore sort a way to realign the Church with their insights from the Holy Scripture. In essence, they were a group of people who had great insights about the word of God and held that there is no better way to perceive the Church except in the light of what the Holy Spirit has revealed from the Bible. For this reason alone they distanced themselves from the pioneers of the sixteen century Reformation.

Commenting on this, Schaff (1996:71) argues that whereas the Reformers focussed on reforming the Church by the Bible, the Radicals' intentions were to build a new Church from the Bible. The simple explanation to this assertion is that the Radicals believed that the Reformation did not go far enough. The Reformers did not go far enough to separate the Church from the state as can be seen with Luther in Germany and Zwingli and Calvin in Switzerland. The idea of a community Church which embraced all citizens and their families did not resonate with the Anabaptists' concept of salvation. The Reformers through infant baptism brought into the visible church all who were born in the community (Latourette, 1999:778). By rejecting infant baptism as scriptural, the Anabaptists advocated that baptism should only be administered to conscious believers who have experienced the new birth.

If the abiding legacy of the Reformation of the sixteenth century is the priesthood of all believers, then it is not difficult to understand the stance the Radical Reformers took. It is not unimaginable that they should break away from their mentors when they see from serious Bible studies that the mentors were going in the wrong direction. Intensive reading of the Bible has revealed to them that God was accessible to them directly and that forgiveness and grace were assured. This new revelation challenged them to follow the path of radical discipleship (Shaul, 1991:106). The Bible rather than the Church became the ultimate source of authority for the Radical Reformers. Franck (1957:284) is

absolutely right to assert: "... Again all that we have learned from Luther and Zwingli [must] all be abandoned and altered". Anabaptists were encouraged by their leaders to work towards total transformation of the world as they totally commit to discipleship through the exercise of their faith in Jesus Christ.

Stadler (1957:160) is more emphatic about this notion of transforming the world when he declares that the ordinances of Christ "should constitute the polity of the whole world". Shaull (1991:108) infers that while some of the adherents interpreted this to mean that social and political revolutions were the means of solving the struggle, others saw it in an entirely different way. Notwithstanding this stance, Shaull argues that the majority were concerned "with the creation of a community of faith in which God's will for the whole of humankind might be realized" (Shaull, 1991:108).

This stance ultimately explains why their standard of morality was very high and those members who continuously failed to meet these standards were expelled. Both Latourette (1999:778) and Schaff (1996:71) share similar views that the Anabaptists maintained a high ethical and moral standards and were prepared to expel from their members those who would not separate from the world and the state. Salvation was an important concept and they advocated that salvation should not be by work. However, they argue that genuine salvation in an individual will give rise to good works (Latourette, 1999:779).

The position taken by Anabaptists made them the object of persecution by the Roman Catholics, the followers of Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, and the state. In the light of this investigation and the way Liberation Theology addressed the challenges facing Latin America, it will be necessary to compare the Anabaptist's approach to Liberationists' approach. This is necessary since scholars (Shaull, 1991; Rutschman, 1989; Swartley, 1989; Sider, 1989 and Snyder, 1989) have drawn some parallels between Liberation Theology and the Anabaptists. Rutschman (1989:58) argues convincingly that: "Consistent with the call of discipleship and emphasis upon the Church of believers is the ethic of nonviolence." Swartley (1989:66) draws our attention to the Munsterite era of violence to (1534-1536) to show that the Anabaptists were not pacifist and non-resistant from the beginning. He further argues that Munsterite Anabaptist used

violence because they believed that God had called them to establish the New Jerusalem (Swartley, 1989:66).

Rutschman (1989:58) further explores the relationship between Liberation Theology and Anabaptists with particular reference to:

- the source and nature of authority
- the identification and role of people of God in the liberation struggle
- the place of Christology in Christian thought and action
- the question of final goals or eschatology

Looking at the source and nature of authority, Rutschman notes the Catholic tradition which puts tradition and Scripture and compares it with liberation hermeneutical circulation where Scripture and situation are the texts which validate theology. This observation is contrary to what is generally accepted in Protestantism where the Bible (pure doctrine) remains the main source to validate the inner word. Liberationists' notion of rereading of Scripture allows for contextualisation which might bring insights different from what the original author intended. While this is commendable, caution must be exercised. Even though this approach allows the Scripture to have reservoir of meanings to accommodate different changing situations it reduces the chances of a consensus among liberation theologians. Some like Assmann hold that the situation is the text, while Gutierrez argues that theological authority must be based upon Christian sources (Rutschman, 1989:59; Gutierrez, 1984:72-76, 79-82; Dussel & Richard, 1981:99-101). Generally speaking the Anabaptists hold the Bible especially the New Testament as the source of authority even though differences existed between the leaders - Denck, Grebel, Simons and Marpeck (Rutschman, 1989:59).

Furthermore, Rutschman (1989:60) concludes that: "the early Anabaptists were also liberated through the study of the Bible that led them to reject the alienating social, political and ecclesiastical structures of their period". This goes to show that the Anabaptists believed that their fight for social justice and liberation is legitimised by the Bible. The New Testament was their Torah. Both the Anabaptists and liberationist reject dualism with liberationist claiming that

history under God is one. In the light of this assertion, liberationists do not see the need to separate spiritual and the physical or the spiritual and the profane. In their own epistemology, such distinctions are merely dialectical because everything should converge into one reality. The Radical Anabaptists while rejecting dualism advocate a clear separation between the Church and the state or for that matter the world. Their members are called to live a life of radical discipleship which is contrary to worldliness.

There are no secrets that in the past liberationists have advocated liberation by any means including violence. Standing in solidarity with the poor means taking arms to fight for justice, if that is the only option available. Not doing this is interpreted by liberationists to be passive. The Anabaptist on the other hand abhorred violence following from the example of Jesus Christ who refused to take the revolutionary Zealot route to advance the course of salvation and liberation of His people. They were pacifists by nature and deeds. There appears to be some common grounds with regard to the Christological positions of liberationists and Anabaptists. They all agree that Christ fulfilled His role as a Suffering-Servant whose actions liberated the poor and the oppressed.

Rutschman (1989:63) notes that the death of Jesus whilst liberating the oppressed also unmasked the oppressors and at the same time identified Himself with their victims. He also observes that the death of Jesus could not liberate the nations as long as they continued to perpetuate unjust social and religious structures. These observations show that there are some convergences between liberation and Anabaptist thoughts. However, these meeting points cannot hide the unambiguous differences between them. All the adherents of liberation theology must stand in solidarity with the poor in their struggle and this not optional. The Radical Anabaptists have similar sentiments in the radical discipleship concept. The difference is well noted by Rutschman (1989:63) when he states that: "... the follower of Jesus not only takes an option for the poor but is called to share the sufferings of Christ who is found in those who are helpless and defenceless [according to] Matthew 25".

What is clear in this discourse is that liberationists, Anabaptists and the Munsterites, no matter what means they adopted had one fundamental objective, they wanted a different society from the one they were living in. They all wanted to change and liberate their community or followers from their oppressors. It is also clear that they all read the Bible howbeit from different hermeneutical standpoint. There is no doubt the three movements believed that the Bible provides insights and could serve as a blueprint to advance their cause. Swartley (1989:73) is absolutely right in asserting the ubiquity of liberating events at the heart of the Gospel narrative on the one hand and the costly call to a life discipleship by Jesus on the other hand. In essence Liberationists and Anabaptists can all justify their beliefs and practices as biblical and in line with the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Viewed in this way the liberationists' cause to repudiate all oppressive forces in society is a noble thing to do and can be biblically validated in the light of the power of Jesus in the Gospel narratives. Without a balanced hermeneutics of the Gospel texts, one will conclude erroneously that the call to discipleship and the call to liberate are contradictory. Jesus taught and practiced both. Swartley (1989:73) is justified to assert that the call to discipleship should be given the same emphasis as the call to liberation and that failure to do this will amount to distorting and repudiating the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Since Liberationists and Anabaptists have developed different approaches to achieve their goals it is important to gauge which movement operates more in line with biblical tradition. Fundamental to the teaching of Jesus is that we should love our enemies and this includes the oppressors who take away lands and create unjust social structures. There is no injunction in the teachings of Jesus Christ for believers to arm themselves and engage in guerrilla warfare. This is why Swartley (1989:73) has argued strongly that both the liberation and the Munsterite movements have failed this command because of their violent approach to liberation. The non-resistant pacifist Anabaptist approach in Swartley's views is more in line with Scripture (Rev. 5:8; Eph. 2:13-14).

Liberation thought based on a balanced hermeneutical analysis of the text of Scripture is the only way to advocate true liberation. Swartley (1989:79) and Snyder (1989:122) argue strongly that the Biblical text should remain the final arbiter and guide for our lives. While accepting that there are some elements of truth in what is advocated by European materialist biblical scholars, Swartley (1989:74) concludes that "... we can only understand economic reality, political praxis and ideological vision as we submit ourselves to the critical scalpel of the divinely authoritative word for our lives". Having analysed the deplorable situations in Nicaragua, Snyder (1989:122) firmly understands why the nonviolent theological concepts will not be acceptable to the Nicaraguans. This is understandable as they did not have naval fleet, nuclear power or the constitution protecting them. While arguing against violence, Snyder also affirms that: "... silence and passivity in the face of violence are actually complicity in violence" (Snyder, 1989:122). Since nonviolence is the Christian way to go, it is imperative to develop new and Christ-like avenues to challenge injustice, violence, abuse which are now prevalent in our society. Snyder believes that the Anabaptist way is still relevant today. According to Snyder (1989:122), the Anabaptist vision we should recover for the future is "the totally engaged Anabaptism that dies to self only to rise fearlessly in Christ". Snyder's view is that those who embrace this way of life will not be afraid to fight for the cause of those who are powerless to defend themselves. As faithful disciples, they will do exactly as their master did by laying his life down for the benefit of others. This Anabaptist stance justifies the Pentecostal challenge of the Liberation Theology approach to addressing the dehumanising influence facing our contemporary society and Latin America in particular.

6.11 The growth of Pentecostalism in Two-Thirds of the world

Whereas disagreement exists among scholars as to who is the founder of Pentecostalism (Goff, 1988:7; Hollenweger, 1997:20-23), there is a general consensus that the movement is growing exponentially (Anderson, 1999:19; Cox, 1996, Barrett, 1997:24-25; Martin, 2002: xviii, 1; Poloma, 2000:1-3;

Assamoah-Gyadu 2006:1). Different figures have been banded to quantify this rapid growth of Pentecostalism. According to Barrett (1996:24-25) in 1970, Pentecostals/Charismatics were estimated at 74 million representing 6% of the World's Christian population. This rapid growth continued and in 1997, Barrett (1997:24-25) estimated Pentecostals/Charismatics at 497 million representing 27% of Christian population worldwide. Barrett asserts that this figure is more than all the number of other "Protestants" and "Anglicans" combined. Barrett (1997:24-25) also projects, that by 2025 there will be 1,140 million Pentecostals/Charismatics; representing 44% of the total number of Christians in the world if this trend continues. In a recent (May 2012) conference, Johnson, the Director of the Centre for the Study of Global Christianity which is located at Gordon-Conwell Seminary estimates that the "Renewalists" (Classical Pentecostals, Main-line Denominational Charismatics and Independent Charismatics) will be 584 million or 26 % of all Christians.

Anderson (1999:19) is absolutely right in pointing out the inevitable uncertainties surrounding these statistics. The fragmented and multidimensionality of Pentecostalism corroborate Anderson's curiosity about the reliability of the data on the growth of Pentecostalism. Whereas it is possible to quantify the rate of growth in developed countries with some degree of accuracy, it might not be that easy in the developing regions of the world where this growth is prevalent. Mayrargue (2008:6) comments decisively on the lack of accurate and reliable indicators to measure Pentecostalism growth in Africa. He points out that census figures rarely distinguish Pentecostals from Evangelicals and counts undertaken by churches are not always systematic or rigorous. He therefore concludes that at best evaluation of growth should be based on observations from the fields which also give fragmented data. It is noteworthy that neither Anderson nor Mayrargue disagree that the movement is growing exponentially globally.

Another difficulty is the definition of the term Pentecostalism. The definition of the term will probably mean different things to different people in different parts of the world. The Christians in the west tend to use western standards to define Pentecostalism and these features may not take into account the indigenous

groups springing up in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Using western standards to define Christianity and Pentecostalism will tantamount to exclusivism rather than inclusivism. Indigenous religious movements always try to make the faith relevant and accessible to their people through the process of adaptation. The west tends to view this cultural sensitivity in a negative way asserting that it amounts to syncretism on the part of those from the Third World. Hollenweger (1972:149) advocates the need to broaden the definition of Pentecostalism in order to accurately measure what is happening outside the western milieu. McGee (1994:275-281) is at variance with Hollenweger and questions how the Zionists in Southern Africa, Kimbanguists in Central Africa and Spiritual Baptists in Trinidad can be grouped as Pentecostals. Anderson (1999:20) strongly argues for both African Pentecostal-type churches and many other indigenous Pentecostal churches to be included as genuine Pentecostal movements. After all this is where growth is being experienced thus making Pentecostalism a true Third World phenomenon. Notwithstanding the diversities of views and the inaccuracies that exist with regard to the statistics on the growth of Pentecostalism worldwide, what cannot be disputed is the fact that Pentecostalism is the fastest growing component of Christendom today.

There is enough credible evidence (Hollenweger, 1997; Anderson, 1999; Sepulveda, 1999; Stoll, 1990, Martin, 2002; Cox, 1992; Miller and Yamamori, 2007) to support the fact that Pentecostalism is now predominantly a Third World phenomenon. Land (1993:21) attests that less than a quarter of Pentecostals worldwide are white notwithstanding the significant growth in North America. Poloma (2000:1-2) notes that the Pentecostal population in North America is between, 5% to 12%; depending on the measurement used. Poloma (2000:2-3) therefore argues that what is happening in U.S. Assemblies of God (AG) can be used to understand what is happening to Pentecostalism worldwide. The U.S. AG is one of the oldest and largest white Pentecostals with about 2.5 million followers; when compared with AG 35 million adherents worldwide; it clearly shows that Pentecostalism is very much alive in Third World countries.

Stoll (1990:107) strengthens Poloma's argument by stating that in 1984, 9.9 million of AG 12.9 million "members and adherents" outside the U. S. were in Latin America. Poloma (2000:4) concludes that: "The growth-rate for the Western churches has reached a plateau or increased only slightly while Pentecostalism worldwide is growing at an exponential rate. Pentecostalism, according to some, has its origins to the black roots of African-American revivalist William Seymour, and it appears to be returning to its non-white roots with great force and magnitude. "Anderson (1999:25) concludes that "the greatest quantitative growth of Pentecostalism has been in sub-Saharan Africa, South East Asia, South Korea and especially in Latin America, where growth has been so phenomenal that scholars are asking whether the whole continent is turning Pentecostal".

This statement by Anderson further justifies Hollenweger's call for the definition of Pentecostalism to be broadened. Limiting the definition to Classical Pentecostalism or their affiliated offshoots in other parts of the world will ignore the emergence of the African Indigenous Churches (AICs) and their phenomenal growth in sub-Saharan Africa. Studies by academics both western and African origin and well know research organisations (GloPent, PewResearch, Lausanne World Pulse, the Institut Français des Relations Internationales) attest to the phenomenal growth of Pentecostalism in sub-Saharan Africa. This is important because several studies (Assamoah-Gyadu, 2006:1-4, 2006, 1988; Anderson, 1999:90; Hastings, 1979:67; Cox, 1996:228; Kalu, 1998:3) have shown that most Pentecostals in Africa did not come about as a result of western missionaries visiting the continent. Mayrargue (2008:3-4) also argues that Pentecostalism has been in Africa longer than popularly believed. He notes the arrival of the first missionaries in the 1910s; AG missionaries from U. S. arrived in Liberia in 1914 and in Burkina Faso in 1921. He further contends that the British Missionaries arrived in Nigeria and Ghana in the 1930s even though early presence of missionaries in South Africa is as far back as 1908.

In the light of these data, Mayrargue (2008:4) concludes that the first Pentecostal communities date from these times whether they are local groups linked to western churches or those who became autonomous or those indigenous churches influenced by Pentecostal missionaries. Assamoah-Gyadu (2006:1) has also identified indigenous African prominent prophets (William Wade Harris in Ghana; Garrick Sokari Braide of Niger Delta; Simon Kimbangu of Congo and Isaiah Shembe of South Africa) who he believes were the precursors to Pentecostalism in Africa. These Prophet figures challenged their hearers to throw away their traditional false gods to embrace the God of the Bible. Hastings (1979:67) reiterates how 1914, William Wade Harris, a native of Liberia will travel to the Ivory Coast and the Western Region of Ghana preaching and converting tens and thousands of people to have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. All these go to show the impact AICs have made in the phenomenal growth of Pentecostalism in Africa. It is therefore irrational to exclude the AICs as Pentecostal on the basis of the doctrine of "initial evidence". Anderson (1979:4) is insightful when he argues that: "the Pentecostal movement ... concerned primarily with the experience of the working of the Holy Spirit and the practice of spiritual gifts".

The PewResearch published in 2006 has given some important overview on Pentecostalism in Africa. According to this report 12% or 107 million out of the 890 million people in Africa are Pentecostals. The report also states that additional 40 million or 5% of the total African population are either from AICs or Charismatics from mainline denominations. The PewResearch reports that the first Pentecostal congregation was set up Seoul, South Korea in 1932 by an American missionary who attended the Azusa Street meeting. By 1937 there were 6 Pentecostal churches by joint efforts of Koreans and missionaries. The report claims that now one-in-ten South Korea's urban population is Pentecostal and four-in-ten Korean Protestants are either Pentecostals or Charismatics. On the whole Africa and Latin America share the bulk of the Pentecostal population. Asia has 3.5% of its total 4 billion populations as Pentecostals representing 138 million people in 2005 (PewResearch 2006). This data is eight years old. One can expect that this figure would have gone up dramatically in the light of the rapid growth of Pentecostalism worldwide.

6.12 Pentecostalism as a viable theological framework

Pentecostalism will remain a global phenomenon into the twenty second century and beyond if the current growth trend continues. By extrapolating from evidence produced globally, one can safely assert that Pentecostalism has thrived where others (The Catholic Church and some traditional Protestant denominations) have failed, not to forget Liberation Theology. This is indicative that the movement is doing something its predecessors and contemporaries failed to do. It is important to explore those factors which have made the movement so successful in the last hundred years. Understanding these success criteria can help in the formulation of a viable theological framework; which is underpinned by Pentecostal principles and at the same time embedded in the Holy Scripture.

Some notable scholarly works (Stoll, 1990; Cox, 1995; Martin, 2002; Sepúlveda, 1999; Gooren, 2010; Willems, 1967; Lalive d'Epina, 1969; Miller & Yamamori, 2007) provide insightful information in the formulation of this Pentecostal theological framework. Stoll (1990:311-314) makes some important observations why he thinks Liberation Theology will not work. It is important to reaffirm here that this investigation is hypothesizing that Pentecostalism is an alternative to Liberation Theology. Even though Stoll's focus was on what was happening in Guatemala where oppression was fiercest, he believes his views can equally be applied to other situations in other parts of Latin America. He argues that Catholic priests involved with liberation theology contributed to the military associating the Church with subversive activities. It is also clear that Stoll does not believe that liberation theology fully understood the challenges facing the poor. He states: "... there is the risk of failing to speak to the actual needs of the poor, as opposed to idealized version of those needs" (Stoll, 1990:312).

Stoll continues to argue why liberation theology failed to liberate. He notes that the message of liberation espoused by liberation theology contradicted how the poor would actually like to approach their oppressive condition. In essence, a peasant resistance methodology, notably a subtle combination of deference, foot dragging and evasion were preferable. Liberation method of offering to turn

religious symbols into revolutionary action worked against what the poor and the oppressed of Latin America would have opted for if given the choice. Stoll (1990:314) contends that the method adopted by liberation theology to deal with the challenges facing the poor made it easy for them to fall out of touch with the very people they purported to be representing. This has led some to say "... despite all the liberation theologians brave talk about preferential option for the poor ... but the poor seem to have a preference for the Pentecostals" (Cox, 1995:176; Miller & Yamamori, 2007:12)

Stoll's account demonstrates how Pentecostalism is able to offer an alternative theological framework to address the abhorrent conditions facing the poor. His thesis emphasises the differences in approach between Pentecostals and liberation theology. Stoll (1990:314) recounts how Evangelicals (including Pentecostals) invited survivors into their churches when the Guatemalan revolution shattered. In contrast to liberation theology, Stoll (1990:314) argues that: "... evangelicals offered to improve one's life through a simple decision to surrender to Christ". By making this personal, the Evangelical/Pentecostal approach is to empower the individual to change their own destinies by engaging in activities they can actually manage. Whereas they cannot change the whole region and pull down all unjust social structures, they can transform their own lives. At least they can change personal habits such as excessive drinking, drug abuse, domestic violence and other personal deviance.

To argue that Pentecostalism provides a viable theological framework to address the challenges facing our contemporary society is corroborated by the movement's ability to adapt to different cultures. Stoll (1990:112) puts it rather succinctly by referring to what scholars (Chordas, 1980:166; Martin, 2002:7; Sepúlveda, 1999:128-129) postulate as a "Pentecostal complex" indicating how Pentecostals can easily adapt to local circumstances. Sepúlveda (1999:128) elucidates the notion of cultural adaptation with particular reference to Chilean Pentecostalism. His intention is to explicate why Chilean Pentecostalism has made significant progress in attracting the poor, whereas traditional Protestantism has not. Sepúlveda (1999:128) notes that Chilean Pentecostalism's success is attributable to its ability to translate the Protestant

message into forms of expression of the local popular culture. Stoll (1990:112) presents similar argument emphasizing that Pentecostal movements in Latin America rechanneled the popular religiosity of folk Catholicism.

Westmeier (1986:22) theorises from his study of churches in Bogotá, Colombia how Pentecostalism manifests certain practices which are normally deemed to be Catholic in origin. Martin (2002:6-7) is absolutely right to insist that adaptation does not necessarily mean that Pentecostals accept cultural practices without checks and balances. These practices are reassembled under a Christian aegis with set boundaries which are rigorously marked out. Sepúlveda (1999:129) is not so sure of the view that Pentecostalism adopted forms but never contents from the local religious culture. He argues that the theoretical clear-cut distinction between content and form are not easily realisable in practice. Even though the concept of cultural adaptation is a commendable feature of Pentecostalism it should not be accepted without criticism.

Conway (1980:7-25) makes a crucial point in this regard. He contends that in Haiti "Pentecostal healing tends to validate belief in voodoo and represents an innovation within the traditional belief system rather than the restructuring of it." If Conway's concern is not addressed, then it will give credence to those who contend that Pentecostalism should be vetted (McGee, 1994:275-281) using classical Pentecostal and Western archetypes as the norm. Sepúlveda (1999:129) whilst acknowledging the importance of cultural adaptation also makes it clear that the process is not free from problems. In fact he declares that it is not always smooth and homogeneous. What might be acceptable to Chilean Pentecostalism may not be acceptable to other Pentecostal churches in Latin America. Since there is no homogeneity in cultural adaptation process, it is clear that Pentecostalism cannot solely be defined by a single overarching definition. This justifies Hollenweger (1972:149) and Anderson (1999:20) calling for a broader definition of the Pentecostalism.

By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Pentecostals are sensitive to allow God to speak to them in terms of how to make Christ manifest in that cultural environment. This unique characteristic is what gives Pentecostalism success

where others have failed. Martin (2002:95) comparing liberation theology and Pentecostalism declares "Where liberation theology has provided the ideological element, Pentecostalism has provided a cultural component." Sepúlveda (1999:133) is justified to assert that the fact that Chilean Pentecostalism is different from so called "classical Pentecostalism" in no way disqualifies it as a true Pentecostal. This sentiment corroborates the quest for a broader definition of Pentecostalism but not at the expense of choosing culture over sound biblical principles.

Fundamental to the identity of a true Pentecostal according to Sepúlveda is: "... the rediscovery of pneumatology by modern Pentecostalism has to do mainly with the spiritual freedom to 'incarnate' the Gospel anew into diverse cultures". God created all cultures; the Western culture should not be seen as the only culture that God uses to speak to people. Pentecostalism fully understands that God truly wants to speak to His creation through cultural mediation. This understanding underpins the success of Pentecostalism globally where others have failed. The Gospel must be preached to all people and if their culture is the vehicle through which this Gospel can be understood, then that is what should be done. Pentecostalism with all its difficulties can provide that viable theological framework that transcends all cultures. This viable theological framework must have the capacity to reach lost humanity with the Gospel and at the same time meet their physical, emotional, social and economic needs. The "Pentecostal complex" truly helps to elucidate the progress being made by the movement and justifies why it is experiencing phenomenal growth across the globe.

6.13 Evaluation of Pentecostalism in dealing with contemporary issues

This investigation has continued to demonstrate that Pentecostalism can develop a viable theological framework that can be used to address contemporary issues. The investigation has also shown beyond doubts that Pentecostalism has become the alternative movement to deal with the issues which were the focal point of liberation theology. This is by no means to suggest

that Pentecostalism is the panacea to the problems facing humanity today. What can be inferred however is that the movement has shown that it possesses the strengths and strategies to effect a lasting change as long as the resources are made available. A critical study of the deprived regions of the world where Pentecostalism has taken a foothold has shown that the lives of individuals and communities have been transformed. Broken families have been restored and both men and women have been empowered to take responsibilities for rebuilding their homes through entrepreneurial endeavours and character Reformation.

This task of transforming society and dealing with the dehumanising influences of our global community must also be done in conjunction with others. In other words, Pentecostalism must work with notable competent national and international organisations, faith groups and businesses (local, national and multi-national) and governments to promote a culture of change. Whereas, Pentecostalism might have the skills, experience and the connections, it might not have the infrastructure, the human capital or the financial clout to effect a lasting change on a global scale. The main objective is for Pentecostalism to demonstrate that it has been effective in meeting needs and aspirations of people across the globe. The movement must demonstrate that these strategies which have been successful can be refashioned and used trans-globally. It is also important to state from the onset that the variegated nature of Pentecostalism makes it difficult if not impossible to coordinate any global effort from a given headquarter or central command centre. What is envisaged in this global effort is that Pentecostals will forge partnerships nationally, regionally and locally to address issues affecting their particular locale. It also means that those who have the resources will identify with the Pentecostal endeavours to address any particular issues they are interested in. In this way the "Pentecostal complex" will be harnessed and put into use to replicate what is happening elsewhere. In recognition of the need to work collaboratively, the eighth UN MDGs advocates for the need to develop a global partnership for development. Partnership is the only way to make progress in dealing with the issues facing our contemporary society.

The scope of this research does not lend itself to mapping out with great precision all the issues facing our contemporary society. However, there are certain challenges which are prominent and need urgent attention. The UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2012 report discussed (6.2) above gives a snapshot of what constitutes the contemporary issues facing our society today. This section of the investigation will evaluate how Global Pentecostalism has dealt with some of these issues. The evaluation will attempt to understand the impact of the Pentecostal contributions in Africa, Asia and particularly in Latin America.

The investigation undertaken by Miller & Yamamori (2007) is insightful in understanding how different churches across the continents engage in social ministry. It is also noteworthy that 85% of the churches recommended to them prior to their investigation were all Pentecostals. Subsequently, the investigation took them to twenty four different countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe over a period of four years. This overwhelming evidence has led Miller & Yamamori (2007:6) to conclude that: "... some of the most innovative social programmes in the world are being initiated by fast-growing Pentecostals churches". This evidence supports the fact that Pentecostals are generally perceived as the purveyor social ministry globally.

Miller & Yamamori (2007:2) use the term "Progressive" to describe the variant of Pentecostalism they are investigating. They emphasise that the otherworldly portrayal of Pentecostals is not characteristic of Progressive Pentecostals. Their focus is not just on personal salvation but also a consideration on how to transform social reality. In essence Progressive Pentecostalism is not oblivious to what is happening in the world. While "... affirming the apocalyptic return of Christ, but also believes that Christians are called to be good neighbours, addressing the social needs of people in their community" (Miller & Yamamori, 2007:2).

The eradication of extreme poverty and hunger are the foremost concerns of the United Nations. Poverty disenfranchises and marginalizes a person or community as a whole. The UN is not the only organisation concerned with the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. This should be the concern of

national governments, religious organisations, business and local people. This was the same sentiment echoed by Richard (2012:119). By advocating for the need for a global partnership for development, the UN is conceding that a concerted effort must be galvanised if progress is going to be made. It is necessary at this juncture to explore and evaluate some of the poverty and hunger alleviation strategies employed by Pentecostalism.

Miller & Yamamori (2007:10, 12) were confronted by people who lived in abject poverty especially in places where there were no institutions providing social services. They were however impressed by the efforts made by the Pentecostal churches to address these challenges. They note how the Pentecostal churches had to be innovative in the area of holistic ministry. A number of the churches they visited in Brazil operated church-based programmes dealing with poverty and providing excellent medical clinics.

Education is at the centre of poverty alleviation. One of the UN MDGs is to achieve universal primary education. Many of the churches Miller and Yamamori visited had projects that addressed the educational needs of young people. There were many facets to this endeavour. In Johannesburg a network of nursery schools were operated under the auspices of the Assemblies of God. In Singapore, the City Harvest Church provides arts education and tutoring programme with many other social ministries. (Miller & Yamamori, 2007:8). In Calcutta a husband and wife (Pentecostals) were running a school for the children of prostitutes and a boarding school that caters to abandoned children. A vocational school in which mentally handicapped were employed was also discovered in Hong Kong (Miller & Yamamori, 2007:9).

The Pentecostal Churches visited were also interested in the physical wellbeing of the people and expended a lot of to ensure that health was paramount. Health issues feature prominently on the UN MDGs. They aim to combat HIV/AIDS; malaria and other diseases. The reduction of child mortality and improvement of maternal health is also a feature of the UN goals. All these goals were identified in some ways in all the churches studied by Miller and Yamamori (2007). From their studies, Miller & Yamamori (2007:2, 7) attest how Progressive Pentecostals like the Kampala Pentecostal Church in Uganda are

addressing the issue of AIDS pandemic in Africa. An individual believer like Florence Muindi, a medical doctor runs a programme of “health evangelists” in Addis Ababa, implementing public health programmes to help the poverty ravaged community Miller & Yamamori (2007:8). In Argentina another Pentecostal church developed a youth volunteering project dealing with people hospitalized with schizophrenia and other mental disorders (Miller & Yamamori 2007:10). In Poland ex drug addicts and prostitutes are restored through encounter with Pentecostals.

The social ministries undertaken by Pentecostal are diverse. The Mayan Pentecostal in Guatemala devoting a whole sermon to political empowerment is as equally important as the Pentecostal members supporting the plight of miners on strike in Chile. Miller & Yamamori (2007:2) have proved that Pentecostal churches have a conviction that they are called to holistically address the spiritual, physical and the social needs of people in their respective community. This conviction is borne out of what the Holy Scripture reveals in the life and ministry of Jesus. It is also in consonance with Paul’s teaching that those who are strong should help those who are weak. The Holy Spirit is still at work in the hearts of believers pointing them to continue the ministry Jesus started by loving their neighbours.

The Pentecostal efforts in dealing with contemporary issues are not confined to the overwhelming empirical evidence from Miller & Yamamori (2007). The marginalisation of women in terms of gender inequality is so crucial that it earned the attention of the UN in the MDGs 2012 report. This is why the UN MDGs reports aims to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in today's society. Richard (2012:111-120) argues strongly against the discrimination of women in society. The ethnographic field research with Pentecostals in Colombia by Brusco (2010) is commendable. This work helps to elucidate how Pentecostalism continues to play a significant role in affirming the importance of women in society. However, Brusco (2010:78) also unpicks those aspects of Pentecostalism which needs to be improved if the movement is to claim that gender equality is a goal worth pursuing.

Scholarship discourse is not in contention that more women than men are attracted to Pentecostalism (Yamamori, 2007:209; Brusco, 2010:77; Martin, 2001:52-66). The issue, however, is what Martin (2001:52-66) refers to as "The Pentecostal Gender Paradox." What Brusco (2010) and Martin (2001) are trying to unravel is, despite having more women than men in Pentecostalism, women more often than not are found to have lower responsibilities in the movement. Brusco (2010:78) also questions why more women are attracted to Pentecostalism even though she believes that Pentecostal doctrines and practices are oppressive toward women.

Brusco (2010:77) rightly acknowledges that scholars under the guise of "the marginality thesis" have ignored women as a subject as well as devalue them in terms their social and cultural roles. Brusco, however, is contending that marginality is not the reason why more women are attracted to Pentecostalism. On the basis of her investigation in Colombia, she declares: "women are drawn to Pentecostalism ... because it simply affords them an opportunity for expression and status not available to them in mainstream society" (Brusco, 2010:77). There are those who argue that the Bible and the Church act as bottlenecks to women liberation (Daly, 1968; Stanton, 1974) by making reference to Paul's instruction (Eph. 5:22-33).

The Biblical justification of patriarchal dominance should appeal to men and therefore attract them the Church. However more women are attracted to church than men. This is what Hardacre (1993:129-150) advocates that scholarship should continue to explore. Brusco (2010:78), adds her own voice by declaring that: "... biblical justification for patriarchal dominance is relevant and ... inescapable in contemporary scholarship on gender in Pentecostalism ... here". Notwithstanding the divergence of views on Pentecostalism and gender equality, Miller & Yamamori (2007:208-210) asserted how the women in their studies were empowered to become social entrepreneurs.

While women might not become senior ministers in some Pentecostal churches, they are viewed as equal citizens who can be empowered by the Holy Spirit to manifest Spiritual Gifts such as prophesying and speaking in tongues. The feminist views propounded by (Daly, 1968; Stanton, 1974) are not the norm.

Many women have founded independent Pentecostal churches and ministries without discrimination from the Pentecostal community. Aimee Semple McPherson (1890-1944) of the Four-Square Gospel Church is a case in question. It is not always the case that the women are co-ministers to men, there are many instances locally and internationally where men are co-ministers to senior female ministers. The Pentecostal movement must continue to be a liberating institution for both genders. There is evidence to suggest that husbands have been liberated and transformed. These same husbands have turned away from machismo mentality to love their wives as Paul instructed in Ephesians 5. The woman who sees her husband demonstrate love and care to the entire family; work hard to earn an honest living, refrain from abusive behaviour emanating from drunkenness and extra marital affairs will be evoked to submit unreservedly. This is reciprocal and confirms the power inherent in the word of God to transform. This phenomenon cannot be fully explained by sociological and psychological analysis. This is why the sociologists' and the feminists' assertions that the Bible and the Church including Pentecostals are obstacles to women's emancipation are untenable.

By teaching and upholding sound biblical principles, the Pentecostals will continue to adapt their practices in the light of postmodern and cultural challenges. The Pentecostal credentials justify their ability to deal with issues affecting our society today. The Scripture declares that we are stewards of all of God's creation and that includes the earth. Pentecostals can challenge human activities that damage the environment knowing fully well that there is a biblical backing for such a stance.

6.14 Summary

- The failure of Liberation Theology to achieve the expectations and aspirations of the people of Latin America and elsewhere justified the need to postulate a new theological framework that can deal with the dehumanising influences of contemporary society.

- This new theological framework must not only have the ability to fully analyse and articulate the realities facing contemporary society but must be true to the inerrant word of God upholding all sound biblical principles as demonstrated in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.
- The theological framework must not only seek to liberate humanity from physical, material, political or socioeconomic depravity but offers true salvation which leads to total restoration of mankind to their Creator.
- This investigation posits that Pentecostalism is the clear alternative to Liberation Theology. Having carefully analysed the strengths and weaknesses of Pentecostalism it is absolute right to conclude that Pentecostalism has the intrinsic ability to adapt to divergent cultural and local situations across the globe. The exponential growth of this movement can provide a sustainable framework that can forge a change in the world.
- Pentecostalism has demonstrated cogently through its social ministries that it fully understands the main challenges facing our contemporary society. Pentecostals across the world have operated in way that shows that they are not just otherworldly but passionate about liberating people from the entanglements of culture, marginalisation, socioeconomic challenges, sicknesses and diseases here and now while they maintain their apocalyptic stance.
- Across the globe the Pentecostals have forged partnerships with NGOs, local and international organisations including multinational business. This credential helps them to work across denominational and faith boundaries while maintaining their doctrinal position and faithful to the Holy Scripture.
- This Pentecostal framework should not be seen as a panacea that completely solves the world's problem. It must be seen as work-in-progress which will continue to evolve as new challenges erupt in our global communities. As we face new challenges the framework will be reworked.
- Underpinning the Pentecostal framework is the notion that the immanent God who created the world and all humanity is interested in what happens to His creation and that He will inspire men and women by His

Holly Spirit to act on His behalf to ensure that this world is safe for all to dwell in. Biblical salvation is therefore the hallmark of this Pentecostal theological framework.

7.0 CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

7.1 Summary of Content

This study was set up to explore the concept of biblical salvation and to identify how Pentecostalism can challenge the etymological rendering of the concept by liberation theology. The study has identified the nature and forms of salvation which are not synonymous to what is contained in the Holy Scripture. This outcome demonstrates the fact that differences exist in the meaning of the concept depending on whether the subject is approached from sociological, anthropological, philosophical, and political or liberation theology standpoints. This study has also sought to know whether Pentecostalism can provide a liberation theological framework to challenge the dehumanising influences in contemporary society. The importance of this study cannot be overemphasised, considering the critical position salvation occupies in Christian thought. In the light of the divergent of views it is logical that this study employs proven hermeneutical methodologies that can provide accurate etymology of salvation that is biblically acceptable. This is important as this research posits that biblical salvation provides the framework necessary to address the dehumanising influences of contemporary society.

By taking this stance, this research contends that neither the Liberation Theology concept of salvation (liberation) nor the salvation underpinned by western philosophical idealism is capable of addressing the central question in this thesis. The gulf created by the divergent notions of salvation (orthopraxis and orthodox) proffered by liberation theology and conservative orthodox Christianity must be addressed. A new theological framework that is embedded in Scripture and at the same time sensitive to the daily realities facing humanity is what is advocated in this research. Salvation that is biblically determined is reflective of social and historical situations and also cognisant of the eschatological realities of the Christian faith. For this reason, this thesis aims to determine how the concept of biblical salvation is understood within liberation theology and how it is perceived from the Pentecostal standpoint. By properly analysing the different notions of salvation from liberation theology and Pentecostal standpoints; the outcome envisaged is the development of a

theological framework to challenge the dehumanising influences of contemporary society.

The argument propounded by this thesis is that there is a vast difference between the concept of salvation advocated by liberation theology and Pentecostalism notion of salvation. It is clear from the analysis undertaken so far that liberation theology focuses on liberation from unjust structures and reflective of the social and historical situations facing its adherents. Salvation perceived as liberation falls short of its true biblical etymology. On the other hand the Pentecostal notion of salvation is not similar to that advocated by conservative orthodox Christianity. Pentecostal concept of salvation is true to Scriptures and also relevant in addressing real socioeconomic, political and anthropological challenges of modern society. Even though the general theoretical literatures on this subject are inconclusive on some of the questions raised; this thesis argues cogently that the Pentecostal concept of salvation is intrinsically aligned to biblical salvation. For this reason, the Pentecostal concept of salvation will be recommended as a workable paradigm to be adopted.

7.2 Revisiting the main objectives

The study set out to achieve six main objectives. Firstly, the study critically assessed the existing contributions by various scholars on the concept of salvation in general and with the view to identifying and reflecting on the areas of concerns highlighted by their studies. Secondly, the study achieved its purpose in evaluating the extent to which liberation theology promotes its ideologies rather than elucidating the concept of biblical salvation. Thirdly, the study explored how the deep concerns expressed by liberation theologies can be addressed without compromising the message of the Gospel. Fourthly, the Pentecostal criticism of liberation theology was analysed with the view to developing an alternative option. Fifthly, the study was successful in critically analysing the differences between Pentecostal and liberation theologies in order to posit a new theological framework to address the socioeconomic challenges

of modern society. Lastly, the study achieved its purpose in exploring whether the success of Pentecostalism in Third World countries, where liberation theology is so influential can serve as a new paradigm to propagate the true message of the Gospel.

7.3 Summary of Findings

The evidence from this study suggests that despite the overwhelming work in this subject, scholarship varies and there seems to be no overarching consensus in terms of what constitutes salvation. The implication of this finding is serious especially when the lack of consensus is not limited to academics who come from different disciplines but among Christian theologians. One would expect that those who use the Bible will to some extent harmonise in their etymology of this important subject.

The gap between liberation theology concept of salvation and other Christians persists. The view that liberation theology hermeneutics is faulty gives leverage to its detractors to nullify their notion of salvation. The conclusion is that since preunderstandings and exemplaristic principles underpin liberation theology epistemology of salvation it is unbiblical. The study further concludes that it is not possible to uphold the liberation theology tenets without compromising the message of the Gospel. As long as liberation theology continues to espouse a Christological paradigm that sees Jesus as a liberator rather than, a Saviour or equates liberation to biblical salvation, a gulf will continue to exist between liberation theology and orthodox Christians.

In view of the aforementioned outcomes, this study concludes that the Pentecostal criticism of liberation theology should be upheld. As long as liberation theology continues to present etymological challenges with cardinal biblical concepts like sin and salvation, justification and redemption or advocate a preferential option for the poor as the basis of doing theology, Pentecostalism criticism will be justified. Mining the Bible to extrapolate texts which justifies their practices without proper biblical exegesis and hermeneutics is also unbiblical and theologically flawed. Bible passages should not be used to justify violence

and the rendering of the Exodus event to justify their liberation epistemology is grossly exaggerated. Salvation is more than liberation. Biblical salvation includes liberation from personal, private, social and institutional sins.

Salvation is more about the human condition in relation to God. Liberation can be purely external leading to socioeconomic and political emancipation without a restoration to God. Taken together, these evidences support why liberation theology continues to decline. This study concludes that the concept of salvation advocated by Pentecostalism is holistic and a realistic viable option to replace of liberation theology.

The evidence from this study shows that there is a fundamental difference between Pentecostalism and liberation theology. These differences justify the *modus operandi* used by Pentecostalism and liberation theology. Whereas differences exist, there is no evidence in this study to suggest that liberation theology cares more or less about the dehumanising challenges facing the people of Latin America, Asia or Africa when compared with Pentecostalism. What is clear however is that liberation theology has declined whilst Pentecostalism has experienced exponential growth worldwide.

The implication of this finding is that it gives credence to the search for a liberation theology framework that is underpinned by Pentecostal ethos. It could also go to show that the demise of liberation theology is in no way a justification to write off all its achievements especially in Latin America. It will therefore be grossly disingenuous to proffer a thesis that marginalises the achievements of liberation theology.

Despite its faulty hermeneutical foundation, it served as a catalyst to highlight the failure of the Church to address the sufferings of those who live on the margin of society. The excellent achievements of the Christian Base Communities are a testament to liberation theology. The legacy of liberation theology is that it helped to dismantle the ecclesiological hierarchy inherent in the Catholic Church that created a dichotomy between the laity and the priesthood and perpetuated the marginalising of the poor. It also helped to awaken the Church to commit to its social responsibilities. In essence it can be

concluded that it was a harbinger or surrogate for Pentecostalism. This argument is valid because those who were in the Catholic Church yearning for a change and true liberation are now the converts of Pentecostalism.

Pentecostalism could not have succeeded if it was not privy to the failures of liberation theology. It was clear to the proponents of Pentecostalism that what needed was not mere political revolution but something that could transform both society and individuals. Hearts and minds needed to be renewed not with political and revolutionary slogans or ideologies but something that can permeate the heart. Liberation theology offered liberation from concrete and historical situations; however this was not sustainable because it lacked the financial and the political infrastructure to make it a reality. The outcome of this is that liberation theology lost touch with the very people they were aiming to liberate. The conclusion deductible from this instance is that liberation theology is ill equipped to deal with spiritual matters.

Mankind is a complex entity with complex challenges that requires satisfaction from both the physical and spiritual dimensions. The Pentecostal liberation theology framework addresses both the spiritual and social dimension of humankind. This is why it is beneficial to conclude that salvation perceived from the Pentecostal standpoint has the tenacity to address the dehumanising influences of contemporary society. This is clearly evidenced in the studies undertaken by all the scholars (Anderson, 1999; Miller & Yamamori, 2007; Martin, 2002; Stoll, 1990; Brusco, 2010; Cox, 1995) who contributed to the Pentecostal discourse. The social ministries of the Pentecostal churches studied in Asia, Africa and Latin America suggested that their mission was not just about salvation and inner healing but also empowering people to become independent and self-sufficient. Families are restored, husbands wake up to their responsibilities, women are empowered and gender inequalities reduced.

7.4 The Significance of the Findings

There is no doubt that this research will serve as a base for future studies in a number of areas especially partnership and development projects between the state, national, multinational agencies and businesses, interfaith groups and NGOs globally. This is important because some of the issues discussed in this study have not been exhausted and may act as a launching pad for anyone or groups who are concerned about the increasing dehumanising challenges facing contemporary society. Even though the scope of this work imposed a limit in terms of how far the argument could stretch, there is no doubt that it has gone some way towards enhancing our understanding of the challenges facing our world today; the reasons for the exponential growth of Pentecostalism, the importance of upholding the biblical etymology of salvation and the fact that the faith communities are playing their parts as stewards of God's creation. The research offers hope that God's salvation is holistic and refutes the notion that the Church community is otherworldly and not mindful of the sufferings the ordinary members of our society are going through.

7.5 The Research and the Future

Pentecostalism is in vogue at the moment. Liberation theology and other traditional faith groups were once in vogue too. Unless the Pentecostalism framework that brought this growth phenomenon is sustained and adapted with the passage of time it might become a religious relic. The lesson is to remain faithful to the course, to uphold sound biblical principles not tossed about by any wind of doctrine or fad especially the prosperity Gospel that has no biblical foundation. True salvation that transforms life is the one that is faithful to the Holy Scripture and relevant in addressing our diverse and evolving cultural milieu. The proposed Pentecostal theological framework can be adapted to suit different situations including those which are outside the remit of the Christian religion.

7.6 Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the overwhelming evidence gathered in this research it is fair to conclude that the objectives have been achieved. It is also reasonable to deduce that the Pentecostalism concept of salvation can help in addressing the challenges facing our global community. Suffice to say that it is only a framework that requires further work. In essence, this research has painted a portrait, howbeit not tried and tested to undertake a project of a global magnitude. This is of course a qualitative research rather than quantitative. The absence of empirically and scientifically generated evidence can introduce elements of bias whether intentional or not. The qualitative nature of the data collected can also lead to subjectivity in analysis and outcome determination even though every effort has been made to remain as objective as possible. The literatures used were compiled by different scholars for different reasons at different geographical locations and cultural milieu. Even though the research is proposing a theological liberation framework, one is not sure how it might work in reality. The principles are sound. However to posit this for people in different cultural environment with different financial and infrastructural challenges needs further studies. The cost and labour force implications have not been factored into the equation. Barriers brought about by language, commerce and technology need further research. If international, national and local agencies are to forge a partnership, the logistic complication will require further studies and analysis. The conclusion being made here is that whereas the Pentecostal framework is serving different communities at the moment without national or international coordination, the case will be different if the UN wants to partner with Pentecostal groups across the globe. The religious pluralism of our globe has to be addressed if discrimination sectarian conflicts are to be avoided.

7.7 Final Thoughts on the Research

Salvation is a concept that permeates every facet of religious, social, economic and political life. As a result, there exists an explicit or an implicit definition of the concept from the perspectives of each group. Each group also believes that they have fully unravelled the etymology of this ubiquitous subject. On the

contrary, it is clear that despite the primacy of this subject, there is no overarching etymology that can be used as a common frame of reference for all. The author of this study has a passion in understanding the nature of the doctrine of salvation. The differing conceptions of the subject became a matter of concern. This was not because the different religions understood it differently but because within the Christian faith consensus was lacking on such an important subject. As different etymologies of salvation surfaced, the author was concerned on the impact it might have in understanding and accurately interpreting related biblical themes; especially if these other themes depended on the proper etymology of salvation for their conceptualisation. In the absence of an overarching meaning of salvation, the author was challenged to explore a framework that can bridge the gap created by orthodox and orthopraxis theologies. Such a framework should provide a meaning and an application of salvation that is sound biblically and relevant contemporarily. The author is satisfied that this study has in principle acknowledge that the Pentecostal concept of salvation is the best alternative to fill the void created by western conservative Christianity and Liberation Theology. The author is equally satisfied that this framework transcends all culture and denominations and gives the opportunity for contextualization to achieve the best outcome.

8.0 Bibliography

- Adams, D.J. 1997. Toward a Theological Understanding of Postmodernism. *Metanoia*, Spring – Summer, 1992 Accessed: <http://www.crosscurrents.org/adams.htm> on 24/7/2012: 03:03.
- Aichele, G. et al. 1995. *The Postmodern Bible: The Bible and Culture Collective*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 398p.
- Altizer, T.J.J. 1966. *The Gospel of Christian Theism*. Philadelphia: Westminster. 157p.
- Alves, R. 1969. *A Theology of Human Hope*. Washington and Cleveland: Corpus Books. 199p.
- Alves, R. 1979. From Paradise to the Desert: Autobiographical Musings. (*In* Gibellini, R., ed. *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*. SCM Press, London. p. 284-303.)
- Anderson, A. 2004. *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 302p.
- Anderson, A., Bergunder, M., Droogers, A. & Van Der Laan, C. (eds) 2010. *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories + Methods*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 325p.
- Anderson, A.H. & Hollenweger, W.J., (eds). 1999. *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspective on a Movement in Transition*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. 226p.
- Anderson, A.H. 1999. Dangerous Memories for South African Pentecostals. (*In* Anderson, A.H & Hollenweger, W.J., eds. *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspective on a Movement in Transition*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. p. 89 –107.)
- Anderson, G.L. 1994. Pentecostal Hermeneutics: Part 2. *Paraclete*. 28(2):13-22, Spring.

- Anderson, R.M. 1979. *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism*. New York: Oxford University Press. 334p.
- Archer, K.J. 2004. *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century: Spirit, Scripture and Community*. London: T&T Clark International. 219p.
- Archer, K.J. 2009. *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic: Spirit, Scripture and Community*. Cleveland: CPT Press. 292p.
- Arnold, WT. 1996. Salvation. (*In* Elwell, W.A., ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*: Grand Rapids, Michigan: Paternoster Baker Books. p. 701–703.)
- Arns, P.E. 1980. Easter and the Hope of Victory.
<http://isc.temple.edu/evanson/LASC050/Readings/ARNS.pdf>. Accessed on 15/12/2011.
- Arrington, F.L. 1994. The use of the Bible by Pentecostals. *Pneuma*, 16(1):101-108, Spring.
- Asamoah- Gyadu, K.J. 1998. The Church in the African State: The Pentecostals/ Charismatic Experience in Ghana. *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 1(2):56.
- Asamoah- Gyadu, K.J. 2006. African Pentecostal/ Charismatic Christianity: An Overview. <http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/worldreports/464?pg=all>. Accessed: 3rd January 2014.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, K.J. 1998. The Church in the State: The Pentecostal/Charismatic Experience in Ghana. *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 2(1):51-57.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, K.J. 2004. *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*. Leiden: Brill. 390p.
- Assmann, H. 1979. The power of Christ in History: Conflicting Christologies and Discernment. (*In* Gibellini, R., ed. *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*. SCM Press, London. p. 133-150.)

- Aulen, G. 1931. *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of Atonement*, trans. A. G. Herbert. New York: Macmillan. 163p.
- Aurelius, M. 1945. *Meditations*. New York: Walter J. Black. 306p.
- Barrett, D. 1970. AD 2000: 350 Million Christians in Africa. *International Review of Mission*, 59(233):39-54.
- Barrett, D.B. 1997. Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission 1997. *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 21(1):24-25.
- Barton, S. 1997. *Invitation to the Bible*. Great Britain: SPCK. 166p.
- Bauman, Z. 1992. *Intimations of Postmodernity*. New York: Routledge. 260p.
- Becker, M.L. 2004. *The Self-Giving God and Salvation History: The Trinitarian Theology of Johannes von Hofmann*. London: T & T Clark International. 287p.
- Beckmann, D.M. 1975. *Eden Revival: Spiritual Churches in Ghana*. London: Concordia Publishing House. 9-10p.
- Bell Jr., D.M. 2001. *Liberation Theology After The End Of History: The Refusal to Cease Suffering*. London: Routledge. 208p.
- Bennett, Z. 2007. Action is life of all: the praxis – based epistemology of liberation theology. (In Rowland, C., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 39-54.)
- Bentzen, A. 1948. *Introduction To Old Testament: The Canon of The Old Testament, The Text Of The Old Testament & The Forms Of Old Testament Literature Vol. 1*. Copenhagen: Nielsen & Lydiche. 264p.
- Bentzen, A. 1949. *Introduction To Old Testament: The Canon of The Old Testament, The Text Of The Old Testament & The Forms Of Old Testament Literature Vol. 2*. Copenhagen: Nielsen & Lydiche. 300p.
- Berger, P. 1969. *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. Garden City, New York: Anchor/Doubleday. 229p.

- Bleeker, C.J. 1963. Isis as Saviour Goddess. (*In* Brandon, S.G.F., ed. The Saviour God. Manchester: Manchester University press. p. 1-16.)
- Bloch, E. 1972. Atheism in Christianity: The Religion of the Exodus and the Kingdom. New York: Herder and Herder. 273p.
- Blocher, H.A.G. 2005. Atonement. (*In* Kevin j. Vanhoozer (ed). 2005. Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Division. Electronic edition WORDsearch 9 Database © 2009 Application created by WORDsearch Corp. Access: C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\WORDsearch\Library\DictTheoInterpret\)
- Bloesch, D.G. 2000. Introduction to The Holy Spirit: Works and Gifts, Christian Foundation Series. Illinois: Inter Varsity Press. 415p.
- Blue, J.R. 1990. Major Flaws in Liberation Theology. *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 147(585):89-104, January. Available: Logos Library System: Theological Journal Library Journal Version 4. [CD-ROM]
- Bock, D.L. & Herrick, GJ. 2005. Jesus in Context: Background Readings for Gospel Study. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. 286p.
- Boff, L & Boff, C. 2008. Introducing Liberation Theology. Maryknoll, New York, 10545: Orbis Books. 95p.
- Boff, L and Boff, C. 1988. Salvation and Liberation: In search of a Balance between Faith and Politics. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books. 119p.
- Boff, L. 1992. Good News to the Poor: A New Evangelization. Tunbridge Wells, Kent: Burns & Oates. 128p.
- Bond, J. 2001. Civil Rights Now and Then. (*In* Challenges to Equality: Poverty and Race in America. Chester Hartman (ed.) New York: M.E. Sharpe. P. 13-15.)
- Bonhoeffer, D. 1972. Letters and Papers from Prison. Enlarged edition. Trans. Verlag, C.K., ed. Bethge, E. New York: Macmillan. 437p.

- Bonino, J.M. 1975. *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 179p.
- Bosch, D.J. 1980. *Witness to the World*. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scot. 277p.
- Bosch, D.J. 1982. How my Mind has Changed: Mission and the Alternative Community. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 41:6-10, Dec.
- Bosch, D.J. 1995. The Church as the Alternative Community. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 13:3-11, Dec.
- Bowker, J. 1991. *A Year to Live*. London: SPCK. 185p.
- Brandon, S.G.F. (ed). 1963. *The Saviour God*. Manchester: Manchester University press. 242p.
- Bray, G. 1996. *Biblical Interpretations: Past And Present*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter varsity Press. 608p.
- Brereton, V.L. 1991. *From Sin to Salvation: Stories of Women's Conversions, 1800 to the Present*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 152p.
- Brown, R.M. 1984. *Unexpected News: Reading the Bible with Third World Eyes*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. 166p.
- Brown, R.M. 1993. *Liberation Theology: An Introductory Guide*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox press. 143p.
- Browning, G., Halcli, A. & Webster, F. (eds) 2000. *Understanding Contemporary Society: Theories of the Present*. London: SAGE Publications. 502p.
- Bruce, F.F. 1963. Our God and Our Saviour. (*In* Brandon, S.G.F., ed. *The Saviour God*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. p. 51-66)
- Brusco, E. 2010. Gender and Power. (*In* Anderson, A., Bergunder, M., Droogers, A. & Van Der Laan, C., eds. *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories + Methods*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California press. p. 74-91.)

- Büchsel, F. 1964. Atonement. (*In* Gerhard, K. & Gerhard, G.W. eds. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT 10 Vols). Trans. Bromiley, G.W. Eerdmans. Electronic edition. WORDsearch 9 Database ©2013 C:\ProgramData\WORDsearch\Library\TDNT\Vol 1\ p. 254-259.)
- Bueno, R.N. 1999. Listening to the Margins: Re-Historicizing Pentecostal Experiences and Identities. (*In* Dempster, Klaus and Petterson (eds.) The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made To Travel. Cumbria, UK: Paternoster Press. p. 268-288.)
- Bultmann, R. 1958. Jesus Christ and Mythology. New York: Scribner. 96p.
- Bultmann, R. 1961. New Testament and Mythology: In Kerygma and Myth. H. Bartsch (ed). NewYork: Harper & Row. 228p.
- Cargal, T. 1993. Beyond the Fundamentalist- Modernist Controversy: Pentecostals and Hermeneutics in a Postmodern age. *Pneuma*, 15(2):163-187, Fall.
- Chafer, L.S. 1945. Soteriology. *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 102(405):9-18, Jan. Electronic edition by LogosLibrary System: Theological Journal Library Journal Version 4. [CD-ROM]
- Chan, S. 2005. Whither Pentecostalism? (*In* Anderson & Tang (eds.) Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia. Baguio City, Philippines: Regnum Books International. p. 575-586.)
- Cho, D.Y. 1987. Salvation, Health and Prosperity: Our Threefold Blessings in Christ. Altamonte Springs: Creation House. 165p.
- Chordas, T. 1980. Catholic Pentecostalism. (*In* Glazier, S.D (eds). 1980. Perspectives on Pentecostalism: Case studies from the Caribbean and Latin America. Washington, D.C: University Press of America. p. 143-175.)
- Cohen, R. & Kennedy, P. 2007. Global Sociology (2nd Ed) New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 584p.

- Cone, J.H. 1997. *God of the Oppressed*. Maryknoll, New York, 10545: Orbis Books. 225p.
- Cone, O. 1889. *Salvation*. Memphis, Tennessee: Universalist Publishing House. 33p.
- Connor, S. 1989. *Postmodernist Culture: An Introduction to Theories of the Contemporary* Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 274p.
- Conway, F. 1980. Pentecostalism in Haiti. (*In* Glazier, S.D (eds). 1980. *Perspectives on Pentecostalism: Case studies from the Caribbean and Latin America*. Washington, D.C: University Press of America. p. 7-26.)
- Costas, O.E. 2002. *Liberating News: A Theology of Contextual Evangelization*. 150 West Broadway, Eugene, OR 97401: Wipf and Stock Publishers. 182p.
- Coutler, D.M. 2001. What Meaneth This? Pentecostal and Theological Inquiry. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, 10(1):38-64.
- Cox, H. 1995. *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and The Reshaping of Religion In the twenty-First Century*. Massachusetts: Da Capo Press. 346p.
- Cox, H. 1996. *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and The Reshaping of Religion In the twenty-First Century*. London: Cassell. 368p.
- Crespy, G. 1971. Recherchesur la signification politique de la mort du Christ. *Lumiere et Vie*, 101:89-109, Jan-Mar.
- Croatto, S. 1973. *Liberación y libertad: pautashermenéutics*. Buenos Aires. 150p.
- Cullmann, O. 1957. *Christ And Time: The Primitive Christian conception of Time and History*. 56 Bloomsbury Street, London, WC1: SCM Press Ltd. 242p.

- d'Epinay, C.L. 1969. *Haven of the Masses: The Study of the Pentecostal Movement in Chili*. London: Lutterworth Press. 263p.
- D'Ercole, G. 2013. *The Catholic Church and the Challenges of the Modern World*. <http://www.telospress.com/the-catholic-church-and-the-challenges-of-the-modern-world/>. Accessed: November 12 2013.
- Daly, M. 1968. *The Church and the Second Sex*. New York: Harper & Row. 187p.
- Danker, F.D. & Bauers, W. 2001. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*. University of Chicago Press. Electronic edition. WORDsearch 9 Database ©2014
C:\ProgramData\WORDsearch\Library\BDAG\
- Dawson, A. 2007. The origins and character of the base ecclesial community: a Brazilian perspective. (*In Rowland, C., ed. The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 139-158.)
- de Gruchy, J. W. and Villa-Vicencio, C. (eds) 1994. *Doing Theology in Context: South African Perspectives*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books. 236p.
- de Matviuk, M.A.C. 2002. Latin American Pentecostal Growth: Culture, Orality and the Power of Testimonies. *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies*, 5(2):205-22.
- Del Colle, R. 1998. Theological Dialogue on the Full Gospel: Trinitarian Contributions from Pope John Paul II and Thomas A. Smail. *Pneuma*, 20:41-60, Fall.
- DeWitt, C.B. 1994. *Earth- Wise: A Biblical Response to Environmental Issues*. Grand Rapids: CRC Publications. 86p.

- Dodd, C.H. 1937. *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Development*. Chicago: Willett, Clark & Company. 167p.
http://openlibrary.org/books/OL6368432M/The_apostolic_preaching_and_its_developments. Date of access 13th March 2012.
- Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. Second Vatican Council.
http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html. Accessed 13 March 2012.
- Doriani, D. 1996. Sin. (*In* Elwell, W.A., ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. GrandRapids, Michigan: Paternoster Baker Books, p. 736-739.)
- Dryness, W.A. 1990. *Learning About Theology From The Third World*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Academie Books, Zondervan Publishing House. 221p.
- Dube, C. 2002. From Ecstasy to Ecstasis: A Reflction on Prophets and Pentecostal Ecstasy in the Light of John the Baptizer. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, 11(1):41-52.
- Dunn, J.D.G. 1970. *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Re-Examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Holy Spirit in Relation to Pentecostalism Today*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster. 248p.
- Dussel, E. 1981. *A History of the Church in Latin America: Colonialism to Liberation*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company. 360p.
- Eagleson, J & Scharper, P (eds). 1979. *Puebla and Beyond: Documentation and Commentary*. MaryKnoll, New York: Orbis Books. 395p.
- Ellington, S.A. 1996. Pentecostalism and the Authority of Scripture. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, 9:16-38, Oct.

- Ellis, M.H. & Maduro, O. (eds). 1989. *The Future of Liberation Theology: Essays in Honour of Gustavo Gutierrez*. Maryknoll, New York, 10545: Orbris Books 518p.
- Elwell, W.A., (ed). 1996. *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*: Grand Rapids, Michigan: Paternoster Baker Books. 933p.
- Erickson, M. 2013. *Christian Theology*: 3rd edition. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books. 1186p.
- Fairbairn, D. 2007. Patristic Soteriology: Three Trajectories. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 50 (2):289-310, June.
- Farmer, P. 2003. *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 419p.
- Farnemann, WS. 2004. Contemporary Issues: Four: Liberation Theology. <http://bible.org/print/book/export/html/428>. Date accessed 9 September 2009
- Fawcett, B.G. 1994. A Critical Analysis of some Hermeneutical Principles Found in Latin American Theologies of Liberation. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 37(4):569-581, Dec. Available: Logos Library System: Theological Journal Library Journal Version 4. [CD-ROM]
- Fee, G.D. & Stuart, D. 1994. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding the Bible*. Scripture Union, 207 – 209 Queensway, Bletchley MK2 2EB, UK. 245p.
- Feinberg, J.S. 1981. *Salvation in the Old Testament Tradition and Testament: Essays in Honor of Charles Lee Feinberg*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1981. Hbk. ISBN: 0802425445. p. 39-77. Accessed November 22 2010 19:23. http://www.theologicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/salvation-ot_feinberg.pdf
- Feinberg, J.S. (ed). 1988. *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments, Essays in Honour of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.* Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway. 410p.

- Fierro, A. 1977. *The Militant Gospel: A Critical Introduction to Political Theologies*. Maryknoll: Orbis. 459p.
- Fowl, S.E. 1998. *Engaging Scripture: A Model for Theological Interpretation*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers. 232p.
- Franck, S. 1957. *Cherished Instructions on Sin, Excommunication, and Community of Goods*. (*In* Williams, G.H. & Mergal, A.M (eds). 1957. *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*. London: SCM Press. p. 147-160.)
- Freire, P. 1996. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London: Penguin Books. 164p.
- Galbiati, E. 1978. *The History of Salvation in the Old Testament*. Slough, England: St Paul Publications. 427p.
- Galilea, S. 1980. *Liberation Theology and New Tasks Facing Christians*. (*In* Gibellini, R., ed. *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*. SCM Press, London. p. 163-183.)
- Geivett, R.D. & Phillips, W.G. 1995. *A Particularist View: A Evidentialist Approach*. (*In* Gundry, S.N., Okholm, D.L., Phillips, T.R. (eds.) 1995. *Four views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan. p. 211-245.)
- Gellner, E. 1992. *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion*. London: Routledge. 108p.
- Gerhard, K. & Gerhard, G.W. 1964. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT 10 Vols)*. Trans. Bromiley, G.W. Eerdmans. Electronic edition. WORDsearch 9 Database ©2013
C:\ProgramData\WORDsearch\Library\TDNT\Vol 1\10
- Gibellini, R. (ed). 1980. *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*. London: SCM Press. 321p.
- Gilkey, L. 1991. *Through the Tempest: Theological Voyages in a Pluralistic Culture*. Minneapolis: Fortress. 252p.

- Girard, R. 2001. *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 199p.
- Goff, J.R. 1988. *Fields White unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism*. Fayetteville, Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press. 263p.
- Goldingay, J. 1995. *Models For Interpretation of Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 328p.
- Gonzalez, J.L. & Gonzalez, CG. 1980. *Liberation Preaching: The Pulpit and the Oppressed*. Nashville: Abingdon. 127p.
- Gooren, H. 2010. Conversion Narratives. (*In* Anderson, A., Bergunder, M., Droogers, A. & Van Der Laan, C., eds. *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories + Methods*. Berkeley: University of California Press. p. 93-112.)
- Gottwald, N.K. 1989. The Exodus as Event and Process: A Test Case in Biblical Grounding of Liberation Theology. (*In* Ellis, M.H., & Maduro, O. eds. 1989. *The Future of Liberation Theology: Essays in Honour of Gustavo Gutierrez*. Maryknoll, New York, 10545: Orbis Books. p. 250-260.)
- Grenz, S.J. & Olson, R.E. 1992. *20th Century Theology: God & the World in a Translational Age*. Downers Grove, Illinois 60515: InterVarsity Press. 315p.
- Grenz, S.J. 1996. *A Primer on Postmodernism*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 204p.
- Grenz, S.J. 2000. *Theology for the Community of God*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 691p.
- Griffin, W. A. 1988. Kingdom Now: New Hope or New Heresy? *Eastern Journal of Practical Theology*, 2(1):28.
- Groothuis, D. 2000. *Truth Decay: Defending Christianity Against the Challenges of Postmodernism*. Leicester, England: IVP. 303p.

- Gros, C. 1999. Evangelical Protestantism and Indigenous Population. *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 18(2):175-97.
- Grudem, W. 1994. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction To Biblical Doctrine*. Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press. 1290p.
- Gundry, R.H. 2003. *A Survey of The New Testament*. 4th ed. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan. 542p.
- Gundry, S.N., Okholm, D.L., Phillips, T.R. (eds.) 1995. *Four views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan. 283p.
- Gunton, C. 1988. *The Actuality of Atonement: A Study of Metaphor, Rationality and the Christian Tradition*. Edinburgh: T & T. Clark. 222p.
- Gutierrez, G. 2001. *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation*. London: SCM Press. 390p. Gutiérrez, G. 1980. *Liberation Praxis and Christian Faith*. (*In* Gibellini, R., ed. *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*. SCM Press, London. p. 1-33.)
- Hagner, D.A. 1976. *The Old Testament in the New Testament*. In: *Interpreting The Word of God* (ed.) Schultz, S.J, & Inch, M. Chicago: Moody. 281p.
- Haight, R. 1989. *The logic of the Christian Response to Social Suffering*. (*In*: Ellis, M.H. & Maduro, O. (eds). 1989. *The Future of Liberation Theology: Essays in Honour of Gustavo Gutierrez*. Maryknoll, New York, 10545: Orbis Books. p. 139-153.)
- Hardacre, H. 1993. *The Impact of Fundamentalisms on Women, the Family and Interpersonal Relations*. (*In* Marty, M.E & Appleby, R.S eds. 1993. *Fundamentalisms and Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p. 129-150.)
- Harris, R.L. 1980. (gā'al): I redeem, avenge, revenge, ransom, do the part of a kinsman. (*In* Harris, R.L., Archer, G.L., Jr. & Waltke, B.K., eds. *Theological Wordbook of The Old Testament Vol. 1*. Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute, p. 144-145.)

- Harris, R.L., Archer, G.L. Jr. & Waltke, B.K. (eds) 1980. *Theological Wordbook of The Old Testament Vol. 2*. Chicago: The Moody Bible Press. 1124p.
- Hart, T. 1995. *Faith Thinking: The Dynamics of Christian Theology*. London: SPCK. 208p.
- Hartley, J.E. 1980. *yāshaʿ and its derivatives to include Salvation & Deliverance*. (*In Harris, R.L., Archer, G.L., Jr. & Waltke, B.K., eds. Theological Wordbook of The Old Testament Vol. 1*. Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute, p. 414-416.)
- Hastings, A. 1979. *A History of African Christianity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 352p.
- Hauerwas, S. 2001. *The Hauerwas Reader*. Berkman, J., & Cartwright M. (eds). Durham & London: Duke University Press. 729p.
- Havir, T. 2009. *Jurgen Moltmann's Ethics of Hope: Eschatological Possibilities for Moral Action (Ashgate New Critical Thinking in Religion, Theology and Biblical Study Series)*. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing. 238p.
- Hawk, L.D. 1991. *Every Promise Fulfilled: Contesting Plots in Joshua*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Publishers. 172p.
- Heidegger, M. 1962. *Being and Time*. trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. New York: Harper & Row. 589p.
- Heidel, A. 1942. *The Babylonian Genesis: the story of creation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 131p
- Herzog, F. 2009. *A Protestant Liberation Theology - A Review of a Book by Richard Shaull on the Relation of the Reformation and Liberation Theology*. <http://www.pubtheo.com/page.asp?pid=1423>. Accessed January 4, 2014.
- Hick, J. 1995. *A Pluralist View*. (*In Gundry, S.N, Okholm, DL, Phillips, T.R. (eds.) 1995. Four views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan. p. 29-59.)

- Hirsch, E.D. 1967. *Validity and Interpretation*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 287p.
- Hodge, C. 2007. *Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans*. Electronic edition WORDsearch 9 Database © 2007 Application created by WORDsearch Corp. 712pp. Access: C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\WORDsearch\Library\HodgeRom\
- Hollenweger, W.J. 1972. *The Pentecostals*. London: SCM Press. 584p.
- Hollenweger, W.J. 1997. *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*. Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers. 495p.
- Hollenweger, W.J. 2001. Pentecostalism, Past, Present and Future. *The Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association*, 21:41-48.
- Hopkins, H.A.E. 1944. *The Inadequacy of Non-Christian Religion: A Symposium*. London: Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Unions. 82p.
- Hubbard, R.L., Jr. 1997. Yahweh as gō'ēl – Salvation, Deliverance, Ransom and Rescue. (*In* VanGemeren W.A., General eds. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, Vol. 5. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, p. 789-794.)
- Jacobsen, D. 2010. The Ambivalent Ecumenical Impulse in Early Pentecostal Theology in North America. (*In* Vondey, W., eds. *Pentecostalism and Christian Unity: Ecumenical Documents and Critical Assessments*. Eugene, Oregon: PICKWICK Publications. p. 3-19.)
- Jensen, A.S. 2007. *Theological Hermeneutics: SCM Core Text*. SCM Press. 221p.
- Johnston, D.C. 2005. *Richest Are Leaving Even the Rich Far Behind*. In: *Class Matters*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/06/05/national/class/HYPER-FINAL.html?pagewanted=all>. Accessed 18/06/2012

- Kaiser, W.C. Jr. 1991. *Toward an Old Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House. 303p.
- Kalu, O.U. 1998. The Third Response: Pentecostalism and Reconstruction of Christian Experience in Africa, 1970-1995. *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 1(2):3.
- Kärkkäinen, V.M. 2004. *One with God: Salvation as Deification and Justification*. Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press. 144p.
- Kärkkäinen, VM. 2010. *Holy Spirit and Salvation: The sources of Christian Theology*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Know Press. 470p.
- Kay, W.K. 2009. *SCM Core Text: Pentecostalism*. London: SCM Press. 358p.
- Keathly, J.H. 111. 2004. *Soteriology – The Doctrine of Salvation: The Meaning and Scope of Salvation*. Biblical Study Press, www.bible.org. Date accessed 1 October 2009.
- Kee, A. 1990. *Marx and the Failure of Liberation Theology*. London: SCM Press LTD. 302p.
- Keil, C.F. 2003. *Pentateuch. Commentary on The Old Testament, Vol. 1: Pentateuch*. In: WORDsearch 9 Electronic Database Application created in 2004 by WORDsearch Corp. 1023p.
- Keil, C.F. & Delitzsch, F. 1866. *Commentary on The Old Testament, Vol. 1: Pentateuch*. In: WORDsearch 9 Database Application created in 2003 by WORDsearch Corp. 1023p.
- Kerswill, WD. 1904. *The Old Testament Doctrine of Salvation*. Bibliobazaar. 215p.
- Killen, R.A. 1983. *Kingdom of God & Kingdom of Heaven*. (In Pfeiffer, C.F., Vos H.F., & Rea J., (eds). 1983. *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia: Complete and Unabridged*. Chicago: Moody Press. p. 991-992.)

- Ki-moon, B. 2012. The UN Millennium Development Goals Report 2012.
<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202012.pdf#page=60>. Accessed January 8th 2014.
- Kirk, J.A. 1979. *Liberation Theology: An Evangelical View from the Third World*. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott. 246p.
- Klein, W.C, Bloomberg & Hubbard, Jr.,R. 1993. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Dallas: Word Publishing. 518p.
- Klooster, F.H. 1988. The Biblical Method of Salvation: A Case for Continuity. (*In* Feinberg, J.S., ed. *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments, Essays in Honour of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.* Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway. p. 131-160.)
- Kosmin, B.A. and Lachman, S.P. 1993. *One Nation Under God: Religion in Contemporary American Society*. New York: Harmony Books. 312p.
- Kraft, C.H. 1991. A Third Wave Perspective on Pentecostal Missions. (*In* Dempster, K & Petersen (eds). *Called and Empowered*. Peabody: Hendrickson. p. 285-298.)
- Ladd, G.E. 1991. *A Theology of the New Testament*. Hagner, D.A., Wenham, D. & R.F. France (eds.) Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press. 764p.
- Land, S.J. 1993. *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*. 1 Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology supplement Series*, 1:19-46.
- Larbi, E.K. 2002. The Nature of Continuity and Discontinuity of Ghanaian Pentecostal Conception of Salvation in African Cosmology. *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies*, 5(1):87-106.
- Lark, M.S. & Lederle, H.I. 1991. *What Is Distinctive about Pentecostal Theology?* South Africa: University of South Africa. 196p.
- Latourette, K.S. 1999. *A History of Christianity: Reformation to the Present* Volume 2. Massachusetts: Prince Press. 1552p.

- Levy, Z. 1988. On Deconstruction- Can There Be Any Ultimate Meaning of the Text? *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 14(1):1-23, Jan.
- Libanio, J.B. 2000. Praxis/ Orthopraxis. (In Fabella, V & Sugirtharajah, R.S. (eds). *Dictionary of Third World Theologies*. New York: Orbis Books. 261p.)
- Lindstrom, H. 1956. *Wesley and Sanctification*. London: Epworth. 228p.
- Livingstone, G.H. 1980. (ḥāṭā') the Principle word for Sin, Sinfulness or missing the Way. (In Harris, R.L., Archer, G.L., Jr. & Waltke, B.K., eds. *Theological Wordbook of The Old Testament Vol. 1*. Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute, p. 276-279.)
- Lopez, R.A. 2003. Old Testament Salvation: From What? *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society*, 16(31):49-64, Autumn.
<http://www.faithalone.org/journal/2003ii/lopez.pdf>. Date of access 22nd November 2010: 19:27.
- Lossky, V. 1985. *Redemption and Deification*. (In *In the Image and Likeness of God*. Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary press. p.97-139.)
- LUMEN GENTIUM #16 & 49.
<http://www.ewtn.com/library/councils/v2church.htm>. Date of access 20th February 2012.
- Lyotard, J.F. 1984. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Translated from the French by Bennington, G. & Massumi, B. Oxford Road: Manchester University Press. 110p.
- Ma, W. 2005. Asian (Classical) Pentecostal Theology in Context. (In Anderson & Tang (eds.) *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*. Baguio City, Philippines: Regnum Books International. p. 59-91.)

- Ma, W. 2007. Selected Areas for Pentecostal Mission Studies: Current Status and Future Agenda. EPCRA conference paper: University of Uppsala. P. 1-14.
- MacArthur, J. 1985. The MacArthur New Testament Commentary. (*In* WORDsearch 9 Database Application created in 2008 by WORDsearch Corp.)
- Machen, J.G. 1976. Cook, W.J. (ed). The New Testament: An Introduction to its Literature and History. 3 Murrayfield Road, Edinburgh EH12 6EL: The Banner of Truth Trust. 387p.
- MacLeod, D.J. 2002. The Year of Public Favor, Part 1: Jesus' Inaugural Sermon. *The Emmaus Journal*, 11(2):3-39, Summer.
- Maduro, O. (eds). 1989. The Future of Liberation Theology: Essays in Honour of Gustavo Gutierrez. Maryknoll, New York, 10545: Orbis Books. 518p.
- Martin, B. 2001. Pentecostal Gender Paradox: A Cautionary Tale for the Sociology of Religion. (*In* Fenn, R.K. (eds). 2001. The Blackwell Companion to Sociology of Religion. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing LTD. p. 52-66.)
- Martin, D. 1990. Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Pentecostalism in Latin America. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 256p.
- Martin, D. 2002. Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers. 197p.
- Martey, E. 2005. Theology and Liberation: The African Agenda. *Voices from the Third World: Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians*, 28(1):38-54, June.
- Mayrargue, C. 2008. The Paradoxes of Pentecostalism in Sub-Saharan Africa. http://www.ifri.org/?page=contribution-detail&id=5622&id_provenance=97. Accessed: December, 3 2013.

- Mbiti, J.S. 1986. *Bible and Theology in African Christianity*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press. 264p.
- McGee, G. 1994. Pentecostal Missiology: Moving Beyond Triumphalism to Face the Issues. *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society of Pentecostal Studies*, 16(2):275-281.
- McGrath, A.E. (ed). 1995. *The Blackwell of Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. 701p.
- McGrath, A.E. 2011. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell. 499p.
- McGrath, A.E. 1995. A Particularist View: A Post-Enlightenment Approach. (*In* Gundry, SN, Okholm, DL, Phillips, TR. (eds.) 1995. *Four views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan. p. 149-180.)
- McKnight, S. 2005. Covenant. (*In* KJ. Vanhoozer, (General ed.) 2005. *Dictionary of Theological Interpretation of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker House Publication, p. 141-143.)
- McQuillan, J. 1998. *The Literary Crisis: False Claims, Real Solutions*. Portsmouth: Heinemann. 109p.
- Meadors, G.T. 1996. Restore Review. (*In* Elwell, W.A., ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*: Grand Rapids, Michigan: Paternoster Baker Books. p.675-676.)
- Menzies, R.P. 1992. The Essence of Pentecostalism. *Paraclete*, 26(3):1-9 Summer.
- Merrill, E.H. 1991. A Theology of The Pentateuch. (*In* RB. Zuck, (ed). 1991. *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*. Chicago: Moody Press. p. 7-87.)
- Mesters, C. 1981. The Use of the Bible in Christian Communities of the Common People. (*In* Torres, S & Eagleson, J. (eds). 1981. *The*

Challenge of Basic Christian Communities. New York: Orbis. p. 197-250.)

Meyer, B. 1998. Make a Complete Break with the Past: Memory and Post-colonial Modernity in Ghanaian Pentecostal Discourse. *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 27(3):316-349.

Meyer, B. 2010. Pentecostalism and Globalization. (In Anderson, A., Bergunder, M., Droogers, A. & Van Der Laan, C., eds. *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories + Methods*. Berkeley: University of California Press. p. 113-130.)

Migliore, D. 1991. *Faith Seeking Understanding*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans. 312p

Miley, J. 1879. *The Atonement in Christ*. New York: Phillips & Hunt. 351p.

Miller, D.E. & Yamamori, T. 2007. *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press. 261p.

Min, A.K. 1989. *Dialectic of Salvation: Issues in Theology of Liberation*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press. 207p.

Most, G.W. 1990. *The Church and Salvation: Basic Catholic Catechism Part Five: The Apostles' Creed IX - XII Ninth Article: "The Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints"*.
<http://www.ewtn.com/faith/teachings/chura5.htm>. Date of access 20th February 2012.

Mugambi, J.N.K. 1995. *From Liberation to Reconstruction: African Christian Theology after the Cold War*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers. 258p.

Muñoz, R. 1980. *The Historical Vocation of the Church*. (In Gibellini, R., ed. *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*. London: SCM Press Ltd. p.151-162.)

- Niebuhr, R. 1951. *Christ and Culture*. New York: Harper & Row. 320p.
- Niehaus, J.J. 2008. *Ancient Near East Themes In Biblical Theology*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications. 203p.
- Noll, M.A. 1991. *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 592p.
- Norman, S. & Gentry, P. 2003. *Kingdom of God*. (In Brand, C., Draper, C., & England, A., (eds). 2003. *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary: The Complete Guide to Everything You Need to Know About the Bible*. Nashville, Tennessee: Holman Bible Publishers. p. 987-989.)
- Noth, M. 1966. *The Old Testament World*. London, Adam and Charles Black. 404p.
- Novak, M. 1991. *Will it Liberate? : Questions about Liberation Theology*. New York: Madison Books. 311p.
- Núñez, E.A. 1977. *The Theology of Liberation in Latin America*. *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 536(134):343-357, Oct. Available: Logos Library System: Theological Journal Library Journal Version 4. [CD-ROM].
- Núñez, E.A. & Taylor W.D. 1989. *Crisis in Latin America: An Evangelical Perspective*. Chicago: Moody Press. 439p.
- Núñez, E.A. 1985. *Liberation Theology*. Chicago: Moody Press. 304p.
- Oduoye, M. 1993. *Liberation and the Development of theology in Africa*. In: Reuver, M., Solma, F & Huizer, G. (eds). 1993. *The Ecumenical Movement Tomorrow*. Geneva: Kok Publishing House/ WCC. 203p.
- Oepke, A. 1964. *Restoration*. (In Gerhard, K. & Gerhard, G.W. eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT 10 Vols)*. Trans. Bromiley, G.W. Eerdmans. Electronic edition. WORDsearch 9 Database ©2013 C:\ProgramData\WORDsearch\Library\TDNT\Vol 1\ p. 381-393.)

- Okorochoa, C. 1994. The Meaning of Salvation: An African Perspective, in Emerging Voices in Global Christian Theology. William A. Dryness (ed). Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 255p.
- Onyinah, O. 2002. Deliverance as a Way of Confronting Witchcraft in Modern Africa: Ghana as a case History. *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies*, 5(1):107-134.
- Osborne, G. 2003. Cross, Crucifixion. (In C. Brand, C. Draper & A. England (eds). 2003. Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary: The Complete Guide to Everything You Need to Know About the Bible. Nashville, Tennessee: Holman Bible Publishers. p. 368-371.)
- Pachuau, L. 1999. Missiology in Pluralistic World: The Place of Mission Study in Theological Education.
<http://www.religiononline.org/showarticle.asp?title=1177>. Accessed on 09.04.13 at 15.04.
- Packer, J.I. 1973. The Way of Salvation – Part IV: Are Non-Christians Faiths Ways of Salvation? *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 130(518):110-117, April.
 Electronic edition by Logos Library System: Theological Journal Library Journal Version 4. [CD-ROM]
- Pannenberg, W. 1991. Systematic Theology. trans. Geoferey W. Bromiley, 3 vols.(1). Grand Rapids:Eerdmans. 486pp.
- Pannenberg, W. 1994. Systematic Theology. trans. Geoferey W. Bromiley, 3 vols.(2). Grand Rapids:Eerdmans. 515p.
- Payne, J.B. 1962. The Theology of the Older Testament. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 554p.
- Pazmiño, RW. 1995. Foundational Issues in Christian Education:An Introduction in Evangelical Perspective. Michigan, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. 232p.

- Pedersen, E.M.W., Lam, H. & Lodberg, P. (eds.) 2002. For All People: Global Theologies in Context. Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K.: Eerdmans Publishing Company. 242p.
- Petersen, D. 1996. Not by Might, Nor by Power: A Pentecostal Theology of Social concern in Latin America. Oxford: Regnum. 260p. Petrella, I. 2008. Beyond Liberation Theology: A Polemic. London: SCM Press. 176p.
- Pettegrew, L.D. 1991. Liberation Theology and Hermeneutical Preunderstandings. *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 148(591):274-288, July. Available: Logos Library System: Theological Journal Library Journal Version 4. [CD-ROM]
- Phillips, J. 1980. The Commentary Series: Exploring Genesis. (*In* WORDsearch 9 Database © 2007 Application created by WORDsearch Corp. Access: C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\WORDsearch\Library\PhillipsCmty\ExpGenesis\.)
- Pinnock, C.H. 1995. An Inclusivist View. (*In* Gundry, S.N, Okholm, D.L, Phillips, T.R. (eds.) 1995. Four views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan. p. 93-123.)
- Pixley, G.V. 1987. On Exodus: A Liberation Perspective. Mary Knoll, NY: Orbis. 236p.
- Pohle, J. 2009. Soteriology: A Dogmatic Treatise on the Redemption. London: BiblioLife. 169p.
- Poloma, M.M. 2008. The Spirit Bade Me Go- Pentecostal and Global Religion: A Paper Prepared for Presentation at the Association for the Sociology of Religion Annual Meetings, August 11-13, 2000. Washington, D.C. 18p. http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/pentecostalism_polomaart1.html. Accessed: 10th December 2013.
- Price, I.M. 1925. The Monuments and the Old Testament. Philadelphia: The Judson Press. 482p.

- Rahner, K. 1966. Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions: Theological Investigations. trans. By Karl H. Kruger Vol. 5. 115-35.
- Rahner, K. 1976. Ecclesiology, Theological Investigations. Vol. 9, trans. David Bourke. New York: Seabury. 342p.
- Ratzinger, Joseph Cardinal. 1984. Liberation Theology: Preliminary notes to 1984 Instruction,
<http://www.christendoawake.org/pages/ratzinger/liberationtheol.htm>.
 Date accessed 21 September 2009.
- Rhodes, R. 2005. The Complete Guide to Christian Denominations: Understanding the History, Beliefs, and Differences. Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers. 397p.
- Rhodes, R. Christian Revolution in Latin America – The Changing Face of Liberation Theology. Part One in a Three-Part Series on Liberation Theology. <http://www.ronrhodes.org/Liberation.html>. Date accessed 21 September 2009.
- Rhodes, R. Rightly Interpreting the Bible.
<http://www.ronrhodes.org/Interpretation.html> Date accessed 1 October 2009.
- Richards, J. 2012. The Problems We Face and The Theology We Need. *Voices: EATWOT's International Theological Commission in Collaboration with The World Forum on Theology and Liberation*, 35(2012/3-4):111-120, July-December.
- Ridderbos, H. 1978. The Coming of the Kingdom. Raymond O. Zorn. trans. By H. de Jongste. St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada: Paideia Press. 555p.
http://Reformationalpublishingproject.com/pdf_books/Scanned_Books_PDF/TheComingOfTheKingdomI.pdf Date of access: 15th March 2012.
- Robbins, J. 2004. The Globalization of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 33:117-143.

- Roberts, J.D. 2005. *Liberation and Reconciliation: A Black Theology*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press. 119p.
- Robinson, J.A.T. 1963. *Honest to God*. Philadelphia: Westminster. 143p.
- Ross, A.P. 1988. *The Biblical Method of Salvation: A Case for Discontinuity*. (In Feinberg, J.S., ed. *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments, Essays in Honour of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.* Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway. p.161-178.)
- Roszak, T. 1973. *Where the Wasteland Ends*. Garden City, New York: Anchor. 451p.
- Rowland, C (ed). 2007. *The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 307p.
- Rutschman, L.A. 1989. *Anabaptism and Liberation Theology*. (In Schipani, D.S., ed. *Freedom and Discipleship: Liberation Theology in an Anabaptist Perspective*. New York: Orbis Books. p. 51-75.)
- Ryrie, C.C. 1987. *Basic Theology*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books. 277p.
- Röckle, C. 1963. *Die biblische und die geistige Entrückungslehre*. *Philadelphia brief*, 15(165/ 66):2-13, March – April.
- S. Augustinus, *Quæstiones in Heptateucum*, 2, 73: PL 34, 623; cf Conc. Œcum. Vat. II, *Const.dogmatica de Divina Revelatione Dei Verbum*, 16.
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20070427_lineamenta-xii-assembly_en.html#_ftnref60. Date of access 29th February 2012.
- Saarinen, R. 1977. *Faith and Holiness: Lutheran-Orthodox Dialogue 1959 - 1994*. Göbttigen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. 293p.
- Sabugal, S. 1978. *¿Liberación y Secularización?* .Barcelona: Herder. 370p.
- Sailhamer, J.H. 1995. *Introduction to Old Testament Theology: A Canonical Approach*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House. 327p.

- Schaff, P. 1996. History of the Christian Church: Ante-Nicene Christianity A.D. 100-325 vol. 2. Peabody, Massachusetts: Henderickson Publishers, Inc. 877pp.
- Schaff, P. 1996. History of the Christian Church: The German Reformation 1517-1530- Volume 7. Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers. 755p.
- Schipani, DS. (ed). 1989. Freedom and Discipleship: Liberation Theology in an Anabaptist Perspective. Maryknoll, New York 10545: Orbis Books. 188p.
- Schmidt, K.L. 1964. Kingdom of God. (*In* Gerhard, K. & Gerhard, G.W. eds. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT 10 Vols). Trans. Bromiley, G.W. Eerdmans. Electronic edition. WORDsearch 9 Database ©2013
C:\ProgramData\WORDsearch\Library\TDNT\Vol 1\ p. 579-597.)
- Schmidt, K.L. 1964. Church. (*In* Gerhard, K. & Gerhard, G.W. eds. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT 10 Vols). Trans. Bromiley, G.W. Eerdmans. Electronic edition. WORDsearch 9 Database ©2013
C:\ProgramData\WORDsearch\Library\TDNT\Vol 3\ p. 501-536.)
- Schwarz, H. 2005. Theology in a Global Context: The Last Two Hundred Years. Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 597p.
- Schweitzer, A. 1911. The Quest of the Historical Jesus - A Critical Study of its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede. Trans. W. Montgomery. London: Adam and Charles Black. 432pp.
- Schweitzer, A. 1914. The Kingdom of God: The Secret of Jesus' Messiahship and Passion.
trans.<http://archive.org/stream/questofhistorica00schwrich#page/238/mode/2up>. Date of access 17th February 2012
- Scott, J.B. 1980. ('Ih) as the Assumed root of God or gods. (*In* Harris, R.L., Archer, G.L., Jr., Waltke B.K., (eds). 1980. Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament Vol. 1. Chicago: Moody Press, p. 41-45.)

- Segundo, J.L. 1980. *Our Idea of God: A Theology for a New Humanity*. Dublin: Gill And Macmillan. 206p.
- Sehnbruch, K. 2006. Challenges for Latin America. Accessed on 03.04.2013 at 12:13:<http://www.clas.berkeley.edu/Events/fall2006/09-18-06-lagos/index.html>
- Sepúlveda, J. 1992. Reflections on the Pentecostal contribution to the Mission of the Church in Latin America. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, 1(1):93-108.
- Sepúlveda, J. 1999. Indigenous Pentecostalism and the Chilean Experience. (*In* Anderson, A.H & Hollenweger, W.J (eds). 1999. *Pentecostals after a Century: global Perspective on a Movement in Transition*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. p. 111-134.)
- Sexton, T. 2007. Marxism and Liberation Theology Part 2. <http://voices.yahoo.com/marxism-liberation-theology-part-ii-441544.html?cat=34>. Accessed January 10, 2014.
- Seymour, W. J. 1906. Back to Pentecost. *The Apostolic Faith*, 1(1):3, October.
- Shaul, R. 1991. *The Reformation and Liberation Theology: Insights for the Challenges of Today*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/ John Know Press. 136p.
- Shelton, J.B. 2000. *Mighty in Word and Deed: The Role of the Holy Spirit in Luke – Acts*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 196p.
- Sider, R.J. 1980. An Evangelical Theology of Liberation: This article appeared in *The Christian Century*:314-318, March. Date accessed 21 April 2010 at 16:38 <http://www.religion-online.org/>
- Smart, N. 1963. The Work of the Buddha and the Work Christ. (*In* Brandon, S.G.F., ed. *The Saviour God*. Manchester: Manchester University press. p. 160-173.)

- Smith, J.K.A. 2006. *Who's Afraid of Post Modernism: Taking Derrida, Lyotard, and Foucault to Church*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic. 156p.
- Smith, R.S. 2005. *Truth and The New Kind of Christian: the emerging effects of postmodernism in the Church*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books. 206p.
- Snyder, C.A. 1989. *The Relevance of Anabaptist Nonviolence for Nicaragua Today*. (*In* Schipani, D.S., ed. *Freedom and Discipleship: Liberation Theology in an Anabaptist Perspective*. New York: Orbis Books. p.112-127.)
- Sobrinho, J. 1978. *Christology at the Crossroads: A Latin American Approach*. London: SCM Press Ltd. 434p.
- Sobrinho, J. 1994. *Jesus The Liberator: A Historical-Theological Reading of Jesus of Nazareth*. Tunbridge Wells, Kent: Burns & Oates. 308p.
- Sobrinho, J. 2007. *No Salvation Outside the Poor: A prophetic – Utopia Essays*. Maryknoll, New York, 10545: Orbis Books. 128p.
- Sobrinho, J. 2008. *No Salvation outside the Poor: Prophetic-Utopian Essays*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books. 147p.
- Spittler, R.P. 1994. *Are Pentecostals and Charismatics Fundamentalists? : A Review of American Uses of these Categories*. (*In* Poewe, K. ed. 1994. *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture*. Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina. P. 103-116.)
- Stadler, U. 1957. *Cherished Instructions on Sin, Excommunication, and Community of Goods*. (*In* Williams, G.H. & Mergal, A.M., eds. *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*. London: SCM Press. p. 147-160.)
- Stanton, E.C. 1974. *The Woman's Bible*. New York: Arno Press. 384p.
- Stanton, G.N. 1977. *Presuppositions in the New Testament Criticism*: (*In* *New Testament Interpretation*, edition. Grand Rapids: Marshall, I.H. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. p. 60-74.)

- Stein, R.H. 1996. Kingdom of God. (*In* Elwell, W.A., ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*: Grand Rapids, Michigan: Paternoster Baker Books. p. 451-454.)
- Stein, R.H. 2006. *A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible: Playing by the Rules*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic. 202p.
- Stewart, A. 2008. *Pentecostalism in the Modern World*. 1ST Year PhD Religious Studies. University of Waterloo. Waterloo, Ontario.
<http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/axismundi/2007/Pentecostalism.pdf>.
 Accessed October, 10 2012.
- Stoll, D. 1990. *Is Latin America Turning Protestant? : The Politics of Evangelical Growth*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press. 424p.
- Strauss, C. and Quinn, N. 1994. *A Comparative/Cultural Anthropology*. (*In* Borofsky, R. (ed.) *Assessing Cultural Anthropology*. New York: McGraw-Hill. p. 284-300.)
- Swartley, W.M. 1989. *Liberation Theology, Anabaptist Pacifism and Münsterite Violence: Hermeneutical Comparisons and Evaluation*. (*In* Schipani, D.S. ed. *Freedom and Discipleship: Liberation Theology in an Anabaptist Perspective*. New York: Orbis Books. p. 66-75.)
- Thomas, J.C. 1998. *An Appreciation and Critique*. *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, 6(12):3-121, April.
- Thorpe, R.S. 1998. *Christian Faith and Ministry*. Acton, Massachusetts 01720: Copley Custom Publishing Group. 565p.
- Tillich, P. 1956. *The Church and the Contemporary Culture*. <http://www.religiononline.org/showarticle.asp?title=2521>. Accessed: 10th December 2013
- Trotter Jr., A.H. 1996. Cross, Crucifixion. (*In* Elwell, W.A., ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*: Grand Rapids, Michigan: Paternoster Baker Books. p. 136-137.)

- Tuluy, H. 2012. Latin America: Facing the Challenge of Productivity to Sustain Progress.
<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/speech/2012/05/11/productivitylac>.
 Accessed on 03.04.2013 at 12:52
- Turner, M. 1998. Readings and Paradigms: A Response to Thomas, J.C.
Journal of Pentecostal Theology, 6(12):23-38, April.
- Turner, M. 1998. The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts. (*In The New Testament Church and Today*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. p. 337-355.)
- Valea, Ernest. "Salvation and eternal life in world religions." *Comparative Religion*. Date accessed 13 June 2009.
<http://www.comparativereligion.com/salvation.html#10>
- Van Buren, PM. 1963. *The Secular Meaning of the Gospel*. New York: Macmillan. 205p.
- VanGemeren, W.A. 1988. The Spirit of Restoration. *Westminster Theological Journal*, 50 (1):81-102, Spring. Electronic edition by Logos Library System: Theological Journal Library Journal Version 4. [CD-ROM]
- Vanhoozer, K.J. (ed). 2005. *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Division. Electronic edition WORDsearch 9 Database © 2009 Application created by WORDsearch Corp. Access: C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\WORDsearch\Library\DictTheoInterpret\
- Verkuyl, J. 1978. *Contemporary Missiology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 414p.
- Virkler, H.A. 1981. *Hermeneutics- Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books. 263p.
- von Rad, G. 1962. Translated by Stalker, DMG. *Old Testament Theology: The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions Vol. 1*. Edinburgh & London: Oliver and Boyd. 483p.

- von Rad, G. 1965. Translated by Stalker, DMG. *Old Testament Theology: The Theology of Israel's Prophetic Traditions Vol. 2*. Edinburgh & London: Oliver and Boyd. 483p.
- Wacker, G. 2001. *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 367p.
- Waltke, B.K. & Yu, C. 2007. *An Old Testament Theology: An exegetical, canonical, and thematic approach*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan. 1040p.
- Walton, J. & Hill, A.E. 1991. *A Survey of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House. 461p.
- Walton, J.H. 1989. *Ancient Israelite Literature In Its Cultural Context: A Survey of Parallels Between Biblical and Ancient Near East Texts*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House. 249p.
- Walzer, M. 1985. *Exodus and Revolution*. New York: Basic Books. 177p.
- Warrington, K. 2008. *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter*. London: T&T Clark. 336p.
- Weiss, J. 1985. *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God*. Richard H. Hiers & D Larrimore Holand (eds.) Chico, California: Scholars Press Reprints and Translation. 148p.
<http://www.avaxhome.ws/ebooks/religion/0891308598.html> Date of access 15th March 2012
- Welker, M. 1994. *God the Spirit*. trans. John F. Hoffmeyer. Minneapolis: Fortress Press. 352p.
- Welna, D. 1991. *Did It Liberate? Liberation Theology: Post Mortem*
<http://www.acton.org/pub/religion-liberty/volume-2-number-1/did-it-liberate-liberation-theology-post-mortem>. Accessed: November 12, 2013.

- Westmeier, K. 1986. *The Enthusiastic Protestants of Bogatá, Colombia: International Review of Mission*. Geneva: WCC. 297p.
- White, J.E. 2001. *Evangelism in a Postmodern World*. (In Dockery, D.S., ed. 2001. *The Challenge of Postmodernism: An Evangelical Engagement*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic. p. 34-52.)
- Wigglesworth, I. 1976. *The Great Commission*. (In Brewster ed. *Pentecostal Doctrine*. Cheltenham: Grenehurst Press 399p.)
- Willems, B. 1965. *Who Belongs to the Church: The Church and Mankind, Dogma, Vol.1 in Concilium*. Marcel Vangenhel (ed.) New York and London. 62-71pp. <http://www.bijbel.net/concilium/?b=24916>. Date of access 18th February 2012.
- Willems, E. 1967. *Followers of the New Faith: Culture Change and the Raise of Protestantism in Brazil and Chili*. Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University Press. 290p.
- Wilson, E.A. 1997. *Strategy of the Spirit: Hogan, JP and the Growth of the Assemblies of God Worldwide 1960 - 1990*. Oxford: Regnum Books. 214p.
- Woudstra, M.H. 1980. *A Critique of Liberation Theology by a Cross-Culturalized Calvinist*. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 23(1):3-12, March. Available: Logos Library System: Theological Journal Library Journal Version 4. [CD-ROM
- Wright, P. A. 1993. *Exodus 1-24: A Canonical Study*. Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Vienna, Austria. Yarbrough, RW. 1996.
- Yarbrough, R.W., 1996. *Paul and the Law*. (In Elwell, W.A., ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*: Grand Rapids, Michigan: Paternoster Baker Books. p. 590-597.)

- Yong, A. 2010. *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 377p.
- Yudhoyono, S.B., Sirleaf, E.J. & Cameron, D. 2013. Letter from Co-Chairs of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. <http://www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/UN-Report.pdf>. Accessed: June 15th 2013.
- Zaehner, R.C. 1963. Salvation in the Mahābhārata. (*In* Brandon, S.G.F., ed. *The Saviour God*. Manchester: Manchester University press. p. 218-225.)
- Zuck, R.B. (ed.) 1991. *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*. Chicago: Moody Press. 452p.
- Zukang, S. 2012. *The UN Millennium Development Goals Report 2012*. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202012.pdf>. Accessed: January 8th 2014.