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Generational Differences in Assemblies of God Ministers Regarding Assemblies of God Doctrinal Beliefs

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Generational Differences in Assemblies of God Ministers Regarding Assemblies of
God Doctrinal Beliefs

Submitted to Southeastern University

Jannetides College of Business, Communication, & Leadership

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Organizational Leadership

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Jannetides College of Business, Communication, and Leadership
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**GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN ASSEMBLIES OF GOD MINISTERS
REGARDING ASSEMBLIES OF GOD DOCTRINAL BELIEFS**

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Abstract

Ministers with a strong belief in the Assemblies of God's Statement of Fundamental Truths and doctrine are essential to the future success and proliferation of the Assemblies of God mission and churches. This study aimed to assess and compare ministers' denominational and doctrinal beliefs in the AGUSA by generational groups. The researcher examined the history and current literature concerning generational differences, varied religious beliefs and practices among the generations, the early history of Pentecostalism and the Assemblies of God in America, and specific characteristics of the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials. The aim was to provide insights that would add to the existing knowledge about ministers' doctrinal beliefs by generational group. The findings revealed that the mathematical relationship between generational groups of ministers concerning AG doctrine and beliefs was statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level. Furthermore, the findings offer insights for future research, provide implications for practice, and serve as a call for action by AGUSA leadership to proactively address the challenge of these and future generational differences in doctrinal beliefs.

Keywords: Assemblies of God, beliefs, doctrine, generational differences, ministers

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my Heavenly Father, my Savior, and the Holy Spirit. God has been gracious to me, Jesus has been patient with me, and the Holy Spirit has been faithful to guide and direct my life and this work. This dissertation is also dedicated to my wife, Heather, the gift God gave me to help accomplish more than I ever thought possible. I honestly could not have done any of this without her support. I also dedicate this research to my kids, Megan and Gavin. I am so proud of you, your dedication to God, your pursuit of education to help you fulfill His purposes in your lives, and the difference you are making in the world around you. Finally, I dedicate this work to all my family members, especially my parents, Wayne and Roberta, who prayed for me and supported my education, and my sister, Denise, who keeps me challenged and grounded with her commitment to excellence. Thank you all for showing me Jesus and supporting me throughout my life. I love you all.

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Again, this would not have been possible, except the Lord made a way for me to be saved, and He gave me the desire to make a difference in the worlds of ministry and service to His Church. I acknowledge the encouragement and support of my family, Heather, Megan and Nick, Gavin and Cassidy and Henry and Charlie, and others I mentioned in the dedication (I ended up writing most of this at Bob and Geri's house, my in-laws). I also want to acknowledge and thank the outstanding faculty at Southeastern University, especially my committee, Dr. Carter, Dr. Gollery, and Dr. Henson. As my chair, Dr. Carter patiently encouraged and enabled me to reach the finish line. Dr. Gollery, your methodological help was a huge blessing. Dr. Henson, your attention to detail and inspiration kept me going. Furthermore, I must thank the Alpha Docs. Your prayers, encouragement, friendship, and support throughout this journey made it such a memorable and meaningful experience. I also want to thank the Assemblies of God USA and its leadership for providing the data for analysis. Finally, thank you to all who encouraged me personally and professionally—the Path guys, you know who you are!

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

The disconnect from religiosity grows with each emerging generation (Twenge et al., 2015). Pew Research Center telephone surveys conducted in 2018 and 2019 revealed that 65% of American adults 18 years of age and older described themselves as Christian. This number has decreased 12 percentage points over the past decade, in comparison to 77% in 2008 (Smith et al., 2019). Barna Group research has showed that Americans are less religious than in the past. In 2000, 45% of all people sampled qualified as practicing Christians compared to 2020, when just 25% qualified (Kinnaman, 2020). This research defined a practicing Christian as an individual who strongly agrees that faith is very important in their lives and has attended church within the last month (Kinnaman, 2020). Research organizations and social scientists have concluded that Christianity is experiencing a decline in the number of Americans who consider themselves religious. This decline includes Christians who practice religious disciplines such as reading the Bible, praying, or attending church. These declining statistics have been measured by age group and generation as well.

In the Religious Landscape Study conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2019, 84% of the Silent Generation (born from 1928–1945) self-identified as Christian, 76 percent of the Boomer generation (born from 1946–1964) self-identified as Christian, compared to 67% of Generation X (born from 1965–1980) and only 49% of Millennials (born from 1981–1996). In addition, statistics in many categories of religiosity and religious practice show that successive generations possess a decreasing belief in God and religious behavior such as reading the Bible, praying, and attending religious services (Kinnaman, 2020; Smith et al., 2019; Twenge et al., 2016).

These declining statistics about religiosity and religious practices among American adults prompt a question. It is possible that the declines in religiosity and religious practices with each succeeding generation are affecting Christianity—more specifically, credentialed ministers—in the same manner. In a study of age-related differences in beliefs, attitudes, and practices, De Jong and Donovan (1988) discovered that older priests were more confident of their faith in God than younger

priests. More senior priests based their belief more on logic, and younger priests established their belief more on experience (De Jong & Donovan, 1988). Beyond this Catholic study, a gap exists in the literature concerning Christian ministers of other religious denominations. Adamson (2017) studied Assemblies of God USA (AGUSA) ministers, specifically Millennials. He researched what psychographic variables shape their belief system and its impact on ministry succession. Adamson's research included a surplus of data he did not use in his thesis. Instead, he used the survey data to gain insight into the AGUSA Millennial ministers' thoughts and beliefs. This present study will include relevant data aggregated by all the generations surveyed. This inspires the question of whether there is a difference by generation in the doctrinal beliefs of credentialed ministers within the Assemblies of God.

In this dissertation, the researcher describes the conduct and findings of a quantitative study assessing AGUSA ministers' beliefs on critical doctrinal issues, comparing the beliefs of each generation. Adamson's (2017) survey asked several questions of AGUSA ministers concerning religious beliefs and practices. Assessing the responses by age and generation provides a picture of AGUSA ministers and determine whether their doctrinal beliefs and attitudes differ.

Background to the Study

Generational differences is the theory that individuals born within approximately a 20-year time period share a collective set of characteristics established through historical experiences, economic and social circumstances, technological enhancements, and other societal transformations they have in common (Reeves & Oh, 2007). Theoretically, people conceptualize change over time. Generations and mindsets, beliefs, and personalities are rooted in cultural change (Twenge et al., 2015). Strauss and Howe (1991) proposed a generational theory where historical events are associated with cyclical generational identities in their theory. Each generational persona releases a new era lasting about 20 years, in which a new social, political, and economic climate exists (Strauss & Howe, 1991). When cultures shift, generational differences are shaped. New generations acquire

that cultural shift when they are young (Twenge et al., 2015), carrying a unique perspective on the world into adulthood.

Generational change is a significant source of declining religious inclinations (Hout & Fischer, 2014a). Schwadel (2011a) also posed that the decline in religious perspective suggests religious activity and belief are declining across birth cohorts. As interest in religion and religious activity decline, Christian beliefs and practices have declined (Ammerman, 2013; Dollhopf & Scheitle, 2013; Miller et al., 2013; C. Smith, 2003). This decline has likely affected Christian ministers—more specifically, the membership of the AGUSA and its ministers.

AGUSA was founded in 1914 at a meeting in Hot Springs, Arkansas. AGUSA founders met to promote unity and doctrinal stability, establish legal standing, coordinate missions' efforts, and establish a ministerial school of training (Rodgers, 2010, 2014). Approximately 300 people attended the founding convention (Blumhofer, 1993). Attendees discussed foundational doctrines (Gohr, 2012). Those gathered decided to form a fellowship for the express purposes of spreading the gospel through missions and doing the greatest work of evangelism ever known (Burgess & McGee, 1988). Today, there are more than 13,000 Assemblies of God (AG) churches in the United States, with over 3 million church members (Assemblies of God, n.d.-a). In addition, more than 69 million AG members exist worldwide, making the AG the world's largest Pentecostal denomination (Assemblies of God, n.d.-b). Almost 38,000 AGUSA credentialed ministers serve these churches and congregations.

The AGUSA's Statement of Fundamental Truths (SFT) was established in 1916 at the fourth General Council of the AG amid doctrinal controversy (Gohr, 2012). The SFTs contain the 16 doctrines of the AG. These are nonnegotiable tenets of faith to which AG churches and ministers must adhere. Four of these—salvation, baptism in the Holy Spirit, divine healing, and the second coming of Christ—are considered cardinal doctrines essential to the church's core mission of reaching the world for Christ. The SFTs have been revised four times. In 1927, 1959, 1969, and 2009, AGUSA inserted minor changes to wording and/or included additional scriptures. The SFTs serve to unite and define the AG Fellowship by

providing sound doctrine and Scriptural principles for life and ministry (Gohr, 2012). Each credentialed minister by AGUSA agrees to their belief in and espousal of these fundamental truths before receiving credentials, and each year they apply for renewal. Belief in these fundamental truths helps establish a manner of living for those attending and ministering in Assemblies of God churches.

Specific doctrinal beliefs of Assemblies of God ministers and members may fluctuate; however, the SFTs remain unchanged. The Executive Presbytery proposed a resolution in early 2021 to form a study committee to address the SFTs. The committee was possibly going to suggest some wording changes and make recommendations for future General Councils to consider. Many ministers were excited about bringing clarity to the language used in the SFTs, hoping to smooth out awkward wording and simplify phrases for better understanding. Some ministers, however, saw this recommendation as an attempt to change the foundational doctrinal truths of the SFTs, and a significant number of ministers voiced opposition to the study. AG leadership withdrew the resolution 1 month after its announcement. At the time of this writing, no current plan exists to examine or revise the SFTs.

Statement of the Problem

Younger generations are becoming less religious (Bengtson et al., 2015; Kinnaman, 2020; G. A. Smith et al., 2019; Twenge et al., 2015). A decline in religious practices exists in the younger generations (Twenge et al., 2016). Additionally, a difference exists between the beliefs and practices of more youthful generations and older generations (Cook et al., 1993; Hout & Fischer, 2014a; Kinnaman, 2020; G. A. Smith et al., 2019; Vera-Toscano & Meroni, 2021). This religious decline is not a youngest generation versus the oldest generation argument. Each succeeding generation seems to lose some of the previous generation's faith convictions and practices. This decline in religiosity may equally impact those potential and credentialed Christian ministers as they apply for or renew their credentials with their denomination.

An example of this decline is as follows. As a result of these religious changes, young people who desire to be a credentialed minister may be less apt to

agree as strongly with the AG doctrine, basically disqualifying themselves from being credentialed. The change in religiosity may have led to the decreasing number of younger credentialed ministers in the AG (Assemblies of God, 2021). In 2000, the AG had 8,450 ministers under 40 years of age. In 2000, ministers under 40 years old made up 26.2% of the total ministers. In 2020, the number of AG ministers under 40 was 7,045. In 2020, 18.7% of all AG ministers are under 40.

It is important to realize that the average age of a U.S. citizen is increasing (Statista, 2022). In 1980, the average age of a U.S. resident was 30 years old. In 2020, the average age is 38.6 years. The average age of a U.S. resident has increased 8.6 years over 40 years. The average age of AG ministers is increasing as well (Assemblies of God, 2021). The average age of an ordained AG minister in 1979 was 50 years old. In 2020, the average age was 61. The average age of an ordained AG minister has increased 11 years in 41 years. The average age of a licensed AG minister in 1979 was 37. In 2020, the average age was 50; thus, the average age of a licensed AG minister increased 13 years over the 41-year period. The average age of an AG minister increased faster than the U.S. population average.

Adamson (2017) studied AGUSA ministers and their religious disposition, revealing intergenerational dissonance among credentialed ministers and the strength of their religious and doctrinal beliefs. The younger credentialed AGUSA minister appeared to be loyal to the fellowship. Some of the younger ministers, however, did not firmly believe in certain doctrinal or cultural positions as older generations.

The SFTs are foundational doctrinal positions and are instrumental to the preparation and credentialing of AG ministers. Ministers must prove, through testing, they know what the SFTs are and provide Scripture references for support. Credential holders must agree to their belief in and proclamation of the SFTs annually. Studies have shown decreased levels of religiosity in emerging generations (Kinnaman, 2020; C. Smith & Snell, 2009). Changes in religious beliefs and practices are taking place in Pentecostal denominations such as the AG

(Chan, 2000; C. Smith, 2003). Bible reading, prayer, and worship attendance are declining, and the differences can be seen generationally (Kinnaman, 2020).

These changes in religious beliefs and practices may also impact the ministers in the AGUSA. The increasing age of ministers in the AGUSA may be due to a growing disconnect in doctrine, belief, and practice throughout the generations. Researchers have not fully explored the doctrinal beliefs of AG ministers to determine whether differences exist between the generations of ministers in the AG fellowship.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study was to assess and compare ministers' denominational and doctrinal beliefs in the AGUSA by generational groups. The independent variable in the study was the AG minister's generation. This study includes the Silent Generation (currently aged 76–93), the Baby Boomer Generation (currently aged 57–75), Generation X (currently aged 41–56), and Millennials (currently aged 25–40).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following research questions were developed to address the stated research problem:

1. Is there a statistically significant effect for a generation of study participant upon the belief the AGUSA is theologically sound?
2. Is there a statistically significant effect for a generation of study participant upon the belief that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society?
3. Is there a statistically significant effect for a generation of study participant upon the belief that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and possibly change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society?

4. Is there a statistically significant effect for a generation of study participant upon the belief a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues?

I proposed the following hypotheses to address the stated research problem:

H1: There is not a statistically significant effect between generations of study participants upon the belief that the AGUSA is theologically sound.

H2: There is not a statistically significant effect between generations of study participants upon the belief that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society.

H3: There is a statistically significant effect between generations of study participants upon the belief that it is important that the AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and possibly change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society.

H4: There is a statistically significant effect between generations of study participants upon the belief a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues.

Significance of the Research

Adamson (2017) studied the AGUSA Millennial ministers to ascertain how succession can occur within the AGUSA for future leadership. In this investigation, Adamson compared Millennials and non-Millennials concerning doctrinal beliefs and cultural issues. This research extended the inquiry to study generational differences by the strength of doctrinal beliefs and cultural issues among ministers in the AGUSA. The current study's findings also contributed to the religious and denominational communities. In addition, this study provided valuable information to the AGUSA leadership mandated to grow the fellowship and ensure future leadership to the churches and national structure. Finally, the researcher identified potential differences in doctrinal beliefs of AGUSA ministers by generation.

Conceptual Framework

Generational differences occur in many areas of culture and religion (Fischer & Hout, 2006; Howe & Strauss, 2000; Roof, 1993). When cultures change, it creates generational differences. New generations absorb that change when they are young, often during adolescence (Twenge et al., 2016). Fundamentally, generational differences are cultural differences. Young people become socialized with new and different values as culture changes (Twenge et al., 2012). Some experts have argued that history shapes generations more than chronological age (Reeves, 2006). According to Howe and Strauss (2000), three attributes more clearly identify the nature of a generation than birth years are perceived membership within a generation; shared beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that characterize a generation; and shared location in history with significant events and trends. No matter how they are shaped, generations express differences in adolescence, college years, and beyond (Hout & Fischer, 2014a; Howe & Strauss, 2000; Twenge et al., 2012). Religious beliefs and practices and various cultural issues reveal these differences (Reeves & Oh, 2007).

These generational differences can challenge how a person develops spiritually and religious institutions (Burr et al., 2015; Kinnaman, 2020; G. T. Smith, 2017). For instance, the AGUSA experienced growth in credentialed ministers from 30,538 in 1987 to a high of 38,199 in 2018 (Assemblies of God, 2020); however, 2019 showed a decrease of two ministers total and, in 2020, 484 fewer ministers than the previous year (Assemblies of God, 2020). One challenge for the AGUSA is that the average age of ministers is increasing, from 46 years old in 1987 to 57 years old in 2020 (Assemblies of God, 2021). Thus, generational representation is changing among AGUSA ministers.

Generational differences in religiosity impact the church as a whole (Bengtson et al., 2015; Chaves, 1989; Howe & Strauss, 2000). As declining numbers of people regularly read the Bible, pray, attend a worship service, or serve in some capacity at a church, generations of church members and ministers are being impacted negatively by a growing spiritual void (Hout & Fischer, 2014b; Howe & Strauss, 2000; Kinnaman, 2020; G. A. Smith et al., 2019; Wuthnow,

1976). By studying the variables, empirical evidence may show a statistically significant generational difference between ministers' doctrinal beliefs and how strongly they feel concerning those doctrinal beliefs that align with the beliefs of the AGUSA. In addition, the ministers' generation may provide answers from AG ministers concerning doctrinal beliefs and specific statistical relationships.

Doctrinal beliefs can lead to religious practices (Kinnaman, 2020; G. A. Smith et al., 2019; Twenge et al., 2016). As cultural changes occur concerning moral and ethical norms and practices, a growing number of younger Christians have adjusted their principles and behaviors as their spiritual beliefs wane and spiritual practices get challenged (Cook et al., 1993; Kinnaman, 2020; Manglos, 2013; C. Smith, 2003). The concept that attitudes, values, behaviors, and traits shift over time and generations is rooted in cultural change (Markus & Kitayama, 2010). If individuals' religious attitudes and behaviors change, it says something about the changing cultural values (Twenge et al., 2015). One example is the growing percentage of teenagers who struggle with sexual identity (Yarhouse & Tan, 2005). As culture promotes looser morals and values through music, movies, and social media, students grow numb to the barrage of information and become desensitized to the moral issues and spiritual implications (C. Smith & Snell, 2009). This desensitization results in the ongoing development and increase of the LGBT agenda and messaging. Younger generations are agents of change concerning religious practices and beliefs (Burr et al., 2015).

Methodology

The current investigation was a quantitative causal comparative study of a secondary dataset (Fulks & Adamson, 2017). A survey collected the data concerning doctrinal beliefs and practices as a research instrument, and AGUSA leadership distributed it to AGUSA ministers. A total of 3,625 AGUSA ministers completed all 172 items asking their level of agreement with statements addressing the fellowship, holiness, doctrine, and contemporary issues. A 1 x 4 ANOVA with post hoc was used to assess statistically significant differences in AGUSA ministers' doctrinal beliefs by generation.

Scope and Limitations

The scope of this survey included credentialed ministers with the Assemblies of God. The survey was distributed and available to people for 3 weeks, from April 23 to May 14, 2017, using the Qualtrics web-based platform. The survey link was in an email invitation to participate in the study by George O. Wood, then Superintendent of the AGUSA. The survey contained 172 items asking about levels of agreement with statements addressing the fellowship, holiness, doctrine, and contemporary issues. A total of 5,324 ministers opened the survey. Ministers completing every item on the survey totaled 3,625.

There were certain limitations regarding the survey. Currently, the AGUSA percentage of White, non-Hispanic ministers is 65%. White, non-Hispanic respondents made up 86% of the total to the survey. The current percentage of Hispanic ministers is 14.2%. Yet, Hispanic respondents to the survey were only 6%. As of 2020, women comprised 27% of AGUSA ministers, but only 19% of the current respondents were female. These survey responses do not accurately represent the diversity of AGUSA ministers and, therefore, pose a limitation to the study. Another limitation is that approximately 10% of AGUSA ministers responded to and completed the survey. Thirty-three percent of the AGUSA credential holders are 65 or older; however, only 20% of the respondents are in that age category. Ministers under the age of 44 comprise 26.8% of all AGUSA ministers, yet they comprise 31.7% of the survey respondents.

Definition of Terms

Assemblies of God USA

The Assemblies of God USA is a Christian, conservative, evangelical, Pentecostal denomination in America. The AGUSA is a cooperative fellowship comprised of over 13,000 churches, almost 38,000 ministers, and over three million members and adherents (Assemblies of God, n.d.-a). The Assemblies of God organized in 1914 to give solidarity to broadly based Pentecostal efforts (Burgess & McGee, 1988). More than 69 million AG members exist worldwide, making the AG the world's largest Pentecostal denomination.

Assemblies of God Credentialed Minister

The AGUSA credentials three levels of ministers: certified, licensed, and ordained. The AGUSA grants these credentials to individuals who qualify after making an application, passing an exam over AG polity and doctrine, and completing a personal interview. Annually, the credential holder pays their dues and answers questions regarding their current involvement, beliefs, and practices.

Belief

The definition of belief is the mental acknowledgment or conviction in the authenticity or actuality of some theory (Schwitzgebel & Zalta, 2010). Beliefs are important because they are adhered to by people to be genuine and present the foundation for people to understand the universe and operate within it (Halligan, 2006). This study centered on the beliefs of ministers.

Fellowship

The Assemblies of God organized as a fellowship of Pentecostal ministers who believed that cooperative action would enable them to fulfill their shared objectives expeditiously (Burgess & McGee, 1988). A community of interest, activity, feeling, or experience is called a fellowship (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). The AG describes itself as a cooperative fellowship rather than a denomination to align with the original intention of the founding body (Assemblies of God, n.d.-a).

Generations

Those born and living in the same time period, who share a distinct set of beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors because they are all raised during a particular period of history and culture, comprise a generation (W. K. Campbell et al., 2015; Dimock, 2019; Gillon, 2004; Howe & Strauss, 2000). The average period, generally considered to be 20–30 years, during which children are born and grow up, become adults, and begin to have children, also describes a generation. Although generational terms get used frequently, the definitions and designations are not official. Therefore, this research utilized the following name and generation breakdown: the Silent Generation, born 1928–1945, are currently 77–94 years old; the Baby Boomer generation, born 1946–1964, are currently 58–76 years old; Generation X, born from 1965–1980, are currently 42–57 years old; Millennials

(also known as Generation Y) were born from 1981–1996 and are 26–41 years old; Generation Z was born from 1997–2012 and are currently 10–25 years old; finally, Alpha Generation, born between 2013 and the present, are currently 0–9 years old (Dimock, 2019).

Table 1

Generations by Name, Birth Years, and Current Ages

Name	Birth Years	Current Ages
Silent	1928 – 1945	77 – 94
Baby Boomers	1946 – 1964	58 – 76
Generation X	1965 – 1980	42 – 57
Millennials (Gen Y)	1981 – 1996	26 – 41
Generation Z	1996 – 2012	10 – 25
Generation Alpha	2013 – present	Birth – 9

Generational Differences

Generational differences are the perceived or real differences in how specific generations think, feel, and act on the perspective they adopt during their formative years. Genuine generational differences can only be acknowledged by examining generational clusters over time (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008).

Generations do exist; the culture, economy, technology, and historical events during a specific period in time influences the generation coming of age during that time and creates a perspective and outlook that impacts the generation (W. K. Campbell et al., 2015). Twenge and Campbell (2001) acknowledged the concept that people born at different times grow up in different sociocultural environments.

Pentecostal

Burgess and McGee (1988) described Pentecostals as emphasizing a post-conversion experience known as the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues (glossolalia). Therefore, the AG is a Pentecostal fellowship.

Practice

Practice is concerned with things acted out in the world, about performing things or a pattern of activity (Cox, 2012). For example, religious practices such as prayer, worship, or church attendance act or perform in a pattern of religious activity.

Religion/Religiosity

Religion is a consolidated system of beliefs and practices related to divine things which coalesce into an individual principled community called a church (Durkheim, 1995). Religiosity would be the state of people's actions in such a religious community.

Spirituality

“Spirituality refers to a cluster of acts and sentiments informed by beliefs and values that characterize a specific religious community” (Burgess & McGee, 1988, p. 804).

Statement of Fundamental Truths

Two years after its formation, the AG established 16 doctrines as a standard to reach, preach, and teach its people. These doctrines became the Statement of Fundamental Truths (SFT). The SFTs encompass the core beliefs of the Assemblies of God. The Fundamental truths are nonnegotiable tenets of faith to which all Assemblies of God churches and ministers must hold (Assemblies of God, n.d.-b). These 16 fundamental truths are the Scriptures inspired, the one true God, the deity of Jesus Christ, the fall of man, the salvation of man, the ordinances of the church, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the initial physical evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, sanctification, the church and its mission, the ministry, divine healing, the blessed hope, the millennial reign of Christ, the final judgment, and the new heavens and new earth. In addition, these truths intend to serve as a basis of fellowship among believers.

Summary

Generations provide the opportunity to look at Americans by their place in the life cycle (young adult, middle-aged, retired) and by their membership in a cohort of individuals born at a similar time (Dimock, 2019). Generational cohorts

allow researchers an instrument to study variances in views over time (Burr et al., 2015; Howe & Strauss, 2000; Reeves, 2006). In addition, these cohorts provide an avenue to comprehend how different influential experiences intermingle with the lifecycle and aging progression to structure people's observations of the world. These observations lead to ideals, morals, mindsets, and practices (W. K. Campbell et al., 2015; Cook et al., 1993; Dimock, 2019; Fischer & Hout, 2006; Howe & Strauss, 2000; C. Smith & Snell, 2009).

Cultural, ethical, moral, and spiritual changes have taken place from generation to generation (Fischer & Hout, 2006; C. Smith & Snell, 2009; Twenge et al., 2015, 2016; Vera-Toscano & Meroni, 2021). Spiritual differences exist between the generations, with religiosity and religious practices receding as the generations get younger (Bengtson et al., 2015; Burr et al., 2015; Kinnaman, 2020; Reeves & Oh, 2007). The AGUSA desires to remain relevant to every generation, reaching people for Christ, making disciples, and empowering people to live a full-gospel faith. The AGUSA mission remains the same to every generation: evangelize the lost, worship God, disciple believers, and show compassion (Assemblies of God, n.d.-a). For that mission to remain relevant into the coming generations, the question remains of whether there are generational differences in doctrinal beliefs within AGUSA ministers. AGUSA ministers are the primary proclaimers of these doctrinal beliefs. Through this study, the researcher intended to determine whether these beliefs grow less significant with each generation.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

Society is experiencing differences in how people perceive and do things according to generation (W. K. Campbell et al., 2015; Reeves & Oh, 2007; Strauss & Howe, 1991), from education (W. K. Campbell et al., 2015; Fischer & Hout, 2006; Reeves, 2006; Schwadel, 2011b) and the workplace (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Costanza et al., 2012; Hansen & Leuty, 2012; Parry & Urwin, 2011; Strauss & Howe, 1991; Twenge, 2010; Westerman & Yamamura, 2007; Wey Smola & Sutton, 2002; Wong et al., 2008; Zabel et al., 2017) to attitudes (Cook et al., 1993; Fischer & Hout, 2006; Twenge, 2010; Twenge & Campbell, 2001) and religion (Bengtson et al., 2015; Burr et al., 2015; Hout & Fischer, 2014a; Norris & Inglehart, 2004; Putnam & Campbell, 2010; Roof, 1993; Schwadel, 2011a). Each succeeding generation is experiencing a religious decline beginning with the Silent Generation, through the Baby Boomers and Millennials, and continuing to Generation Z (Kinnaman, 2020; C. Smith & Snell, 2009; G. A. Smith et al., 2019; Twenge et al., 2016). For example, more than eight tenths of the Silent Generation (84%) and more three quarters of the Baby Boomers (76%) describe themselves as Christian (C. Smith & Snell, 2009); however, only a little more than two thirds of Generation X (67%) describe themselves as Christians (C. Smith & Snell, 2009). The Pew Research Center (2010) reported 44% of the Silent Generation attends a church service every week compared to 32% of Baby Boomers, 27% of Generation Xers, and 18% of Millennials. Approximately half of the Millennials (56%) describe themselves as Christians compared to 85% of the Silent Generation (Cooperman et al., 2015). In addition, Twenge et al. (2016) reported that three times as many college students in the 2010s asserted no religious affiliation when compared to college students in the late 1960s. These trends toward a decreasing religiosity concern many church leaders (Kinnaman, 2020; G. A. Smith et al., 2019; G. T. Smith, 2017).

This literature review examines the history of generational differences, current literature about generational differences, and the varied religious beliefs and practices among the generations. The review then looks at the early history of Christianity, Pentecostalism, and the Assemblies of God in America. Finally,

specific characteristics of four generations are researched and reported on for this chapter: Silent, Boomer, Gen X, and Gen Y.

History of Generational Differences

Generational differences is a theory that individuals born within approximately a 20-year time period share a collective set of characteristics established through historical experiences, economic and social circumstances, technological enhancements, and other societal transformations they have in common (Reeves & Oh, 2007). Theoretically, people conceptualize change over time. Generations and mindsets, beliefs, and personalities are rooted in cultural change (Twenge et al., 2015). Strauss and Howe (1991) proposed a generational theory that associates historical events with cyclical generational identities. Each generational identity releases a new era lasting about 20 years, in which a new social, political, and economic climate exists (Strauss & Howe, 1991). When cultures shift, generational differences are shaped (Twenge et al., 2015). New generations acquire that modification when they are young (Twenge et al., 2015), carrying a unique perspective on the world into adulthood when beliefs become behaviors that impact society. It is imperative to investigate each of these generational perspectives and differences to better understand where humanity may be heading.

The examination of generational differences can be traced back to the 1950s and has its origins in sociology. Mannheim (1893–1947) discussed the “problem of generations” in his seminal paper written in 1928 and translated into English in 1952. Mannheim was the first theorist to integrate the generational theme into a theory of social function in which other varieties of conflict relationships, notably class struggle, were viewed as the motivating force of development (Kriegel & Hirsch, 1978). Mannheim stressed the significance of generations as a guide to understanding the structure of social and intellectual movements (Mannheim, 1970). Mannheim defined a *generation* as being like the class position of an individual in society in that a generation is not a concrete group, as generations do not have mental or physical proximity or any knowledge of each other, but rather a “social location.” Mannheim suggested that the existence of generations is made

possible by five characteristics of society: new participants in the cultural process are emerging, former participants are continually disappearing, members of a generation can participate in only a temporally limited section of the historical process, cultural heritage needs to be transmitted, and the transition from generation to generation is continuous. Members of the same generation share an identical birth year, so they have a mutual location in the historical element of the social process. This mutual location limits them to a specific range of possible experiences, predisposing them to a particular characteristic mode of thought and experience. Mannheim expressed that individuals cannot be members of the same generation based solely on a shared birth year. Members must be able to participate in specific everyday experiences creating a concrete bond between members of a generation, and so they share “an identity of responses, a certain affinity in the way in which all move with, forming their common experiences” (Mannheim, 1970, p. 306). According to Mannheim, there are two essential elements to the term “generation.” First, there must be a standard location in historical time, and second, there must be a distinct consciousness of that historical position shaped by the events and experiences of that period. Mannheim’s work suggested that during a specific and significant national or international event, people in young adolescence or early adulthood will form a shared memory of those events, affecting their future attitudes, preferences, and behavior. Examples of a shared event or experience include the Great Depression, World War II, or the Vietnam War. In brief, a generation is a cohort of similarly aged people who share everyday historical events.

Kriegel and Hirsch (1978) continued the discussion of generational differences by stating, “It is only at the turn of this century that the generational rift intrudes into social practice and is transformed from a primitive means of accounting into one of the tools for decoding reality” (p. 23). The succession of age groups became a critical question. Age group succession transformed from replacing same by identical to replacing same by other or same by displacement or innovative addition (Kriegel & Hirsch, 1978). The distance between age groups was no longer a simple passage of time, filled by nothing except the passage of life

itself and the ability to produce new life, but a sum of changes that impose singularity on a generation by its mores and behavior (Kriegel & Hirsch, 1978). No one can escape the reality of being born into an age group. The idea of generational differences provided a lens through which history can separate and study the behavioral and experiential variances. It is no coincidence that the generational dimension appears best adapted to modern history. History now happens globally with technological innovations and internet connectivity among all cultures. Events and experiences that form generations happen in real-time around the globe (McMullin et al., 2007).

Taking into consideration the advancement of technology and globalization, modern-day sociologists have expanded Mannheim's approach from considering the impact world events may have in defining a generation to an examination of cultural elements such as music and other types of popular culture (Edmunds & Turner, 2002, 2005; Holbrook & Schindler, 1994; Turner, 1998). Turner (1998) defined a *generation* as a

cohort of persons passing through time who come to share a common habitus and lifestyle and has a strategic temporal location to a set of resources as a consequence of historical accident and the exclusionary practices of a social closure. (p. 302)

Holbrook and Schindler (1994) suggested that nostalgia and pop culture have a more significant impact on generational differences, with people being most prone to the socialization of music, film stars, and clothes. Generations unite around common cultural symbols such as music or fashion (McMullin et al., 2007).

McMullin et al. also extended this suggestion to include computing technology as a marker for the culture through which generations form. Eyerman and Turner (1998) continued to lengthen the definition, focusing on the idea that a generational cohort has strategic access to collective resources and, by excluding others from access to these cultural material resources, maintains its cultural identity. Furthermore, a generational cohort only survives by maintaining a collective memory of its origins and struggles, historical and political events, and its leading characters and ideologists (Eyerman & Turner, 1998).

Strauss and Howe (1991) added their research to the “generations” discussion in their book *Generations: The History of America’s Future, from 1584 to 2069*. This book takes a broad look at the generations of people over the past 500 years of U.S. history. The authors found recurring themes in the personality of each generation and how generations follow repeating patterns. Strauss and Howe (1991) posited that the themes in the past continue to repeat themselves, so predictions about future generations can be made based on the recurring pattern. They quickly stated, however, that this concept cannot determine the future. The authors determined there are four types of generations, each lasting approximately 20 years, and that the generations always arrive in the same repeating sequence. Strauss and Howe defined a generation as a cohort of people born over the same period of around 20 years. There are three characteristics members of a generation have in common: being born at the same time in history and encountering the same key historical events, adapting similar beliefs and behaviors, and possessing a sense of joint perceived membership in that generation (Strauss & Howe, 1991).

Next, Strauss and Howe (1991) offered the concept of a *turning*, a four-stage cycle of about 20 years for each generation. Each historical *mood* or *season* then lasts around 80 years. The first generational turning is named the *high*. A high cycle encompasses strong families and institutions, an innocent culture, a unified social structure, and a strong community. The second generational turning is called the *awakening* and contains weakened families, a vibrant culture, attacks on institutions, a splintering social structure, and rising individualism. Erosion of institutions, weakened families, diversified social structure, maximum individualism, and a cynical culture are marks of the third generational turning called the *Unraveling*. The fourth generational turning is called the *crisis*. A crisis includes the destruction and rebuilding of institutions in response to some perceived threat to the nation’s survival, strengthened families, a rising community, a practical culture, and a gravitating social structure. There is a symbiotic relationship between generations and turnings. As generations age into their next life phase, societies, moods, and behaviors change, giving rise to a new turning (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Strauss and Howe stressed that historical events shape a

generation, and then when the generation comes of age, they shape historical events.

Strauss and Howe (1991) also posited four generational archetypes that repeat in rhythm approximately every 80 years. Generational archetypes share fundamental beliefs about family, culture, values, and civic engagement. The authors named these archetypes prophets, nomads, heroes, and artists. A prophet is born near the end of a crisis turning, during a time of rejuvenated community life and consensus around a new societal order. They grow up as indulgent children during a crisis era and come of age as a self-involved crusader of an awakening. Nomads are born during an awakening and tend to be under-protected children who grow up fast and engage in risky behavior, coming of age as alienated adults. Nomads are often cynical but possess strong survival skills. Strauss and Howe described heroes as more individualistic and indulgent. Heroes are born after an awakening and grow up as overprotected children, coming of age as an optimist during a crisis. They enter adulthood as energetic and overconfident adults who become politically powerful later in life. The fourth archetype is the artist. The artist is born during a crisis. Children stay out of the way during a crisis while the adults are preoccupied trying to handle the crisis. They are taught from a young age to please adults and become one of the most well-off generations (Strauss & Howe, 1991).

Strauss and Howe (1991) stated that their model is not an exact generational model but is more organic than other models. The turnings can last only 15 to 30 years, depending on the historical and cultural events of the time. There is a sense of the general principles, but precise changes are not predictable. The authors used the metaphor of seasons, where seasons always occur in the same order but vary in timing. A season may come sooner or later and fluctuate in strength and length. Strauss and Howe said their theory can help approximate how each generational archetype will respond and react to critical historical events, thus shaping them. This model provided a new way of looking at how the past shapes the future through historical cyclical patterns.

Adding to the generational studies literature, Twenge began studying generational differences in 1992 as an undergrad. Twenge noticed that women in her sample scored much higher on the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) masculine scale than the original early 1970s sample (Twenge, 2006). The scale quantified traits thought to be stereotypically masculine, like assertiveness, leadership, and outspokenness. Twenge thought the changes in these traits might be a generational difference. Growing up female in the 1950s versus the 1980s was very different. As a budding research psychologist, Twenge wondered if there was any truth to the idea that generations are psychologically different. So Twenge looked for and collected additional samples of college women ($n = 59$) and men ($n = 46$) gathered between 1973 and 1994. For women, the mean score on the BSRI-M scale correlated at 0.74 with year, and men's scores also increased with time. Twenge was surprised to find that very little additional research explored generational differences. Some academics theorized, but not much data existed.

As Twenge (2006) advanced her research, she developed a new method that modified the time-lag method by comparing people of similar ages at varying points in time. Samples are gathered from research literature and analyzed quantitatively, making it a meta-analysis. Twenge called the new method cross-temporal meta-analysis. Twenge also used the term *birth cohort* rather than *generation* in her academic writing. The term generation can be imprecise with some debate about cut-off points. Birth cohort technically means everyone is born each year. In broader terms, a cohort difference varies depending on one's year of birth, allowing for the possibility that changes might be linear and specific birth year cut-offs unnecessary (Twenge, 2008).

Being born in a particular year is not the cause of generational differences according to Twenge (2008). What fluctuates throughout time is culture. For instance, growing up in the 1950s was a profoundly different experience than growing up in the 1980s. As Twenge (2008) continued her birth cohort research, a pattern emerged again and again. College students' self-esteem escalated progressively between the late 1970s and the 1990s (Twenge & Campbell, 2001). Men's and women's extraversion increased steadily between the 1960s and the

1990s. Assertiveness climbed between 1970 and 1990, and narcissism increased between the 1980s and 2000s. The outcomes implied that the American personality had become more individualistic, but not why this was the case. Twenge's model suggested that cultural differences launch at the level of a shared collective reality. In the United States, the shared reality became more dedicated to the individual self, which altered parenting behaviors, media communications, and other socialization methods. This change in the culture affected individual personalities, leading to the rise in self-esteem and narcissism, which may further shape the collective reality (Twenge, 2008).

Researchers have not all agreed on the validity of generational differences. Much academic research on generational differences exists regarding workers in the workplace. Parry and Urwin (2011) posited that the empirical evidence for generational differences in work values is, at best, mixed. These researchers stated, "many studies are unable to find the predicted differences in work values, and those that do often fail to distinguish between *generation* and *age* as possible drivers of such observed differences" (Parry & Urwin, 2011, p. 79). Dencker et al. (2008) suggested that the disagreement in defining generations stems from several critical conceptual and methodological difficulties. First, there are difficulties in separating the effects of age from cohorts using cross-sectional data. Identifying the age-period-cohort problem as age, historical period, and cohort compound is complex. Finally, identities may be more heterogeneous within cohorts than across cohorts (Dencker et al., 2008). The results are mixed for generational differences in work values when taking the empirical evidence at face value (Parry & Urwin, 2011). Some researchers believe there is no value in the concept of generations for practitioners, given the many problems inherent in the evidence on generational differences in work values (Dencker et al., 2008; Parry & Urwin, 2011). Other research showed that a generation does not have defined boundaries, but each generation shifts in adopting common attitudes (S. M. Campbell et al., 2017). Although Campbell et al. (2017) admitted a theoretical basis for the notion that generations exist, they advocated ignoring the generational theory (Parry & Urwin, 2011).

Rudolph et al. (2021) and Standifer and Lester (2020) recognized that a collection of individuals born at a similar time share 26 collective constructs. These academics questioned the proposition within generational theories to justify that influence, age, and historical events might be affected by one another and how to differentiate each influence and the temptation to generalize group behavior established on these environments. For example, Costanza et al. (2012) highlighted that the statistical techniques used in generational studies do not separate age, cohort effect, or time. Padayachee (2018) acknowledged that the generational theory does not account for the influence that marginalized portions of society may experience and the influence on members of a distinct generation. Campbell et al. (2017), Rudolph et al. (2021), and Weeks et al. (2017) acknowledged in their research that culture shapes one's childhood and adolescent years, but this influence does not stop suddenly and progressively continues to be fashioned by geographic location. These scholars also scrutinized the inadequacies of the generation theory accounting for the differences in individual cultural reactions to a specific moment in time (Bukhari et al., 2019; S. M. Campbell et al., 2017; Rudolph et al., 2021).

Although there are challenges to both Mannheim's (1970) and Strauss and Howe's generational theory (Strauss & Howe, 1991), many researchers have concurred that the generational theory provides a basis for associations. These associations are unique inside and outside a group of individuals who share familiar economic, political, and social environments and have common characteristics (S. M. Campbell et al., 2017; Desai & Lele, 2017; Hultman & Consulting, 2020; Padayachee, 2018). Additionally, both Mannheim and Strauss's and Howe's generational theories share a similar principle that the stages of one's life within a specific time shape how a person interacts with others inside and outside the same generation.

Provided the limited amount of research done to try and disprove overall generational differences, the field of generational differences is ready for additional exploration (Twenge, 2008). American culture is changing rapidly (Markus & Kitayama, 2010; Sherkat, 1998). Views about religion are changing with culture

(Putnam & Campbell, 2010; Schwadel, 2011b; C. Smith & Snell, 2009; G. A. Smith et al., 2019). Religious leaders and institutions would benefit from discovering some of the reasons why.

The next section is an investigation of the theory of generational differences and discuss how various generations observe, believe, and act differently based on the generation they belong to. Each generation has a historic and cultural lens through which they view present culture and society. Various researchers have expressed those differing viewpoints.

Generational Differences in Society

Differences emerge from the Silent Generation, through the Baby Boomers and Generation X, to the Millennial generation relating to general attitudes and life experiences that affect those attitudes (Arnett, 2010; W. K. Campbell et al., 2015; Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Cook et al., 1993; Costanza et al., 2012). Twenge (2006) approached generational research with a new idea. Most generational researchers take a cross-sectional approach wherein they simultaneously circulate surveys or oversee interviews with members of different generations. Twenge has taken the time to meticulously survey the results of studies that involve school children, adolescents, and college students completing well-designed, validated questionnaires during the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. This method allowed her to compare, for example, the Baby Boomer generation's attitudes when they were adolescents with the attitudes of Millennials, reported on during their adolescence. Examples of Twenge's findings resulting from data gathered from over 1.3 million young Americans since the 1950s include the following:

- In 2002, 74% of high-school students acknowledged their participation in cheating, whereas, in 1969, only 34% disclosed such a failing (p. 27).
- In 1967, 86% of incoming college students said that “developing a meaningful philosophy of life” was a fundamental life goal, whereas, in 2004, only 42% of Millennial first-year students agreed (p. 48).

- In 2004, 48% of American first-year college students reported receiving an A average in high school, whereas in 1968, only 18% of first-year students reported being an A student in high school (p. 63).
- In the 1950s, only 12% of young teens agreed with the statement “I am an important person,” whereas, by the late 1980s, 80% asserted that they were important (p. 69).
- In the 1960s, 42% of high-school students anticipated working in professional jobs, whereas in the late 1990s, 70% of high schoolers expected to work as professionals (p. 78).
- In a recent poll, 53% of Millennial mothers agreed with the statement that a person’s primary responsibility is to themselves and their children rather than making the world a better place, whereas only 28% of Boomer mothers agreed (p. 78).

These examples show changes in both behavior and attitude among the generations. Twenge and Campbell (2001) provided more insight concerning generational differences in self-esteem.

The overall opinion one has of oneself is called self-esteem (Mayo Clinic Staff, 2020). Self-esteem involves how a person feels about their aptitudes and deficiencies. If a person has healthy self-esteem, they feel good about themselves and see themselves as deserving of others’ respect. Self-esteem may be essential to a happy and healthy life (Twenge & Campbell, 2001). Children in the 1950s experienced a fundamentally different culture than those in the 1990s. A meta-analytic review found that college students’ self-esteem increased significantly between 1968 and 1994 using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE). Children’s scores on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) showed a curvilinear configuration over time, decreasing from 1965 to 1979 and increasing from 1980 to 1993. Children’s SEI scores directly correlated with social statistics (e.g., divorce rate, unemployment) for the corresponding years. Analyses for age differences discover that SEI scores decreased marginally during the evolution from elementary school to junior high and then increased gradually through high school and college. RSE scores increased steadily with age. Results showed substantial

birth cohort effects in each study, varying between .55 and 1.64 *SDs*. Consequently, the birth cohort explains between 7% and 40% of the variance in self-esteem scores (Twenge & Campbell, 2001). Self-esteem is just one personality trait that Twenge researched. Twenge furthered her study of generational differences by investigating how personality traits differ among generations.

Birth cohort, or generational, personality differences incorporate views of the self (escalations in self-esteem, narcissism, assertiveness, and agentic traits, leading to another Millennial label: “Generation Me”) and mental health (outwardness in locus of control, upturns in depressive symptoms; Twenge, 2008). The geneses of these trends lie in culture, including alterations in women’s roles, parenting, media, and social networks. Researchers should deliberate birth cohort as an environmental influence on individual personality traits. Among 97 samples of 18,310 college students and 41 samples of 6,554 children between 1960 and 2002, the locus of control became significantly more external, correlating positively at 0.70 with year and shifting +0.75 standard deviations over the same period of time. Twenge (2008) mentioned that during the original Middletown study in 1926 in Muncie, Indiana, researchers asked mothers what traits they wanted to teach their children. Most said they wanted their children to be obedient and have good manners. By the late 1970s, mothers said they wanted to raise open-minded and independent children, and rarely mentioned obedience or manners (Twenge, 2008).

Changing media messages are another factor that emphasizes the individual and their choices (Twenge, 2006). Likewise, cross temporal meta-analyses, which collect contemporaneous reports, demonstrated similar increases in anxiety, depressive symptoms, and other mental disturbances in college students (Twenge, 2006; Twenge et al., 2008). Furthermore, a study on anxiety showed a one standard deviation increase in anxiety on the Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale, the Eysenck Personality Inventory, the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, and State Trait Anxiety Inventory among college students and the Children’s Manifest Anxiety Scale among children aged 8 to 12 years. In both age groups, anxiety scores correlated highly with social indicators of connectedness (e.g., the divorce rate, the

birth rate, and people living alone) and environmental threats (e.g., the crime rate, AIDS cases, and fear of nuclear war). These findings by Twenge and other researchers showed the emerging generations' declining mental health.

Researchers studied generational differences in the state of mental health, attitudes toward cultural issues, and values. For example, Cook et al. (1993) found confirmation that Whites, but not Blacks who reached adulthood after the 1960s, are less supportive of legal abortion than those who came of age during that decade. These authors stated, "the decline in support for legal abortion was found to be statistically significant after multivariate controls for demographic variables, religious and moral attitudes, attitudes toward gender roles, and general ideology and partisanship" (Cook et al., 1993, p. 31). Moreover, in the United States, their data disclosed that the youngest cohorts were less supportive of legal abortion than those who came of age in the 1960s and 1970s (Cook et al., 1993).

Concerning values, Fischer and Hout (2006) studied differences in the United States over the last 100 years. The authors discovered that differences among groups by education, age, and income expanded, while those by gender, region, national origin, and race narrowed. Fischer and Hout employed 70 years of data to display that Americans did not become more fragmented over values in the late 20th century, but rather united over shared ideals of self-reliance, family, and even religion. They found no evidence of values fragmentation in the United States. By the end of the century, Americans had become visibly more tolerant of ethnic diversity, which had increased rapidly because of a new era of mass immigration. In addition, strengthening the correspondence between education and many other vital matters, such as opinions and living standards, reduced other generational divergences among Americans. Hout and Fischer concluded broadly that the most critical change over a century was the replacement of family origins with education as the primary determinant of adult statuses and outlooks. These findings showed significant age (i.e., generational) differences in value systems among the respondents (Fischer & Hout, 2006).

Furthermore, there is a growing awareness among a collection of authors, consultants, trainers, and management specialists that there are substantive and

significant generational differences between individuals in today's workplaces (Costanza et al., 2012). Some summarized these disparities in terms of descriptors of specific characteristics that describe each generation and differentiate it from others. In terms of the way people describe generations, members of the Silent Generation are called conservative and disciplined (Strauss & Howe, 1991), Baby Boomers are labeled time-stressed and materialistic (Strauss & Howe, 1991), and Generation Xers are recognized as skeptical and individualistic (Kupperschmidt, 2000). Millennials are socially conscious yet highly cynical and narcissistic (Twenge et al., 2008). Popular-press articles have assertions about how these differences influenced outcomes various settings. Among the most mentioned are the effects of generational differences on work-related outcomes such as commitment, satisfaction, motivation, risk-taking, and leadership style. Professional organizations such as the Society for Human Resource Management have conducted surveys of their members about generational differences. Practitioners and consultants have appropriated assumed generational differences by developing seminars and interventions to help organizations deal with them (Costanza et al., 2012).

Today's organizations comprise employees with an extensive range of ages and generational association, and this distinction raises questions concerning the workplace and the dynamics among personnel (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Costanza et al., 2012; Dries et al., 2008; Fischer & Hout, 2006; Hansen & Leuty, 2012; Parry & Urwin, 2011; Rudolph et al., 2021; Standifer & Lester, 2020; Twenge, 2010; Weeks et al., 2017). According to Bialik and Fry (2019), for the active workforce in the United States in 2017, 2% were a member of the Silent Generation, 25% were a member of the Baby Boomers, 33% were a member of Generation X, 35% were a member of the Millennial generation, and 5% were a member of Generation Z. Four generations are represented in the workplace. All these individuals are in the workforce simultaneously, creating the potential for generational differences, difficulties, and disputes (Arnett, 2010; Costanza et al., 2012; Wey Smola & Sutton, 2002).

Cennamo and Gardner (2008) pointed to generational differences in work values, job satisfaction, and affective organizational commitment and intentions to leave. These researchers studied differences between three generational groups: Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials. A total of 504 Auckland employees from various industries completed an online questionnaire. Generation X (57%) was born between 1962–1979, Baby Boomers (23%) were born from 1946–961, and Millennials (17%) were born from 1980–2000. The remaining 3% were born from 1925–1945. The youngest groups placed more importance on status and freedom of work values than the oldest group. Baby Boomers reported better person-organization values fit with extrinsic values and status values than Generation X and Millennials, but there were no other generational differences in fit. Where individual and organizational values showed a poor fit, there was reduced job satisfaction and organizational commitment and increased intents to turnover across all three generational groups. Researchers found no statistically significant differences in extrinsic, intrinsic, altruism, or social values. It is conceivable that higher status and longer tenure mean that these obligations have been met, and these work values are no longer as relevant for older groups, whereas younger respondents are still motivated toward significance and independence at work. Individual work values concerning status and freedom were significantly different, but not for extrinsic, intrinsic, social, and altruism-related values (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008).

Additionally, there were no generational differences in perceived organizational values in the research conducted by Cennamo and Gardner (2008). Younger generations placed more importance on status than the older group. The career stage of the older group may provide power, so they no longer sense the need to receive it, while the younger groups may feel that status is a priority as it provides prominence, which aids advancement and marketability. Millennials valued freedom-related items more than Generation X and Baby Boomers. Baby Boomers tended to focus on traditional work models that involve dedication and hard work. In contrast, Generation Y highly emphasized autonomy and work-life balance (Wey Smola & Sutton, 2002). The younger groups may look for work

opportunities that provide freedom and autonomy and may be willing to leave the organization if these needs are unmet.

By understanding the differences and similarities between generational groups, human resource professionals, psychologists, and managers can develop policies, which enhance communication, increase satisfaction, commitment, and retention, and expand organizational knowledge management and productivity. It is imperative for organizations to openly communicate values and priorities so that employees can make a fit appraisal. Understanding differences between generations at work is a practical first step in meeting diverse employee needs. It is crucial to continue the examination of generations in the workplace, but it is also vital to acknowledge commonalities between employees of different ages and experiences. This knowledge can be applied to managerial practices to enhance communication and understanding (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008).

Costanza et al. (2012) conducted the first known quantitative review of research on generational differences in the workplace. The goal of this study was to quantitatively assess the research on generational differences in work-related attitudes and provide guidance for future research and practice. The researchers directed a meta-analysis of generational differences on three work-related criteria: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intent. The review of published and unpublished research found 20 studies allowing for 18 generational comparisons across four generations (Silent, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials) on these outcomes using 19,961 total subjects. Corrected mean differences for job satisfaction ranged from .02 to .25; for organizational commitment, they ranged from -.22 to .46; for turnover the range was -.62 to .05. The pattern of results indicated that the relationships between generational membership and work-related outcomes are moderate to minor. The findings suggested that meaningful differences among generations probably do not exist in the work-related variables they examined and that the differences that appear to exist are likely attributable to factors other than generational membership (Costanza et al., 2012).

Dries et al. (2008) examined whether four generations (Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials) held different beliefs about careers. They investigated each generation by career type, career success evaluation, and importance attached to organizational security. Most participants had “traditional” careers, while younger generations displayed more significant discrepancies between career preferences and actual career situations. Generally, satisfaction seemed to be the overriding benchmark to appraise other people’s career success. The authors found no significant differences between generations. Regarding the importance of organizational security, however, the Silent Generation and Generation Y scored significantly higher than the other generations (Dries et al., 2008).

Hansen and Leuty (2012) assessed work values across generations as well. Conventional publication considerations of generational differences in the workplace suggested that individuals of more recent generations, such as Generation X and Y, have different work values than individuals of the Silent and Baby Boom generations. Although researchers have suggested that age may influence work values, little empirical research supports the assertions about generation differences. The study investigated work values measured by the Minnesota Importance Questionnaire, across three generations (Silent Generation, $N = 371$; Baby Boom, $N = 1179$; and Generation X, $N = 139$) while accounting for age. Outcomes suggested that employees from the Silent Generation placed more importance on status and autonomy than did Baby Boom or Generation X workers. Recent generations (Baby Boom and Generation X) placed more importance on working conditions, security, coworkers, and compensation than other generations. Additional analyses suggested that while the measured differences among the three generations are minor, generation influenced work values more than age (Hansen & Leuty, 2012).

Beyond the popular press, the notion that generational differences exist has also emerged within contemporary leadership theory (Balda & Mora, 2011; Bennis & Thomas, 2002; Graen & Schiemann, 2013) and empirical research (Arsenault, 2004; Gentry et al., 2011; Sessa et al., 2007). For example, in a recent article

published in *The Leadership Quarterly*, Anderson et al. (2017) stated, “Millennials are most assuredly different than their predecessors with respect to ideas, behaviors, and viewpoints, and ... organizational leaders will have to lead these employees, by necessity, differently” (p. 245).

Instead of exclusively researching individual leaders, Collins et al. (2009) studied age-reversed supervisor-subordinate dyads (i.e., older workers with younger supervisors) and their corresponding leadership expectations and evaluations of leadership effectiveness. These authors applied a cross-sectional sample for their survey-based study. They discovered that older workers (i.e., ages 50 and above) with younger supervisors (i.e., ages 39 or below) expected less effective leadership behaviors as compared to all other supervisor-subordinate dyads (i.e., older-older, younger-younger, older-younger). Collins et al. found an equal effect in older employees' ratings of their younger supervisors' effectiveness. The researchers suggested that these results endorse the reverse Pygmalion effect, with subordinates' (lower) expectations having a detrimental influence on their supervisors' performance. Furthermore, they ascribed these exchange relationship outcomes to generational differences (Collins et al., 2009).

Although the following studies are not overtly associated with generational differences, some authors provided additional insight through their research. For example, Yu and Miller (2005) used two generational groups for their cross-sectional survey study: Baby Boomers (1945–1964) and Xers (1965–1980). The sample did not find generational group differences in work expectations, work characteristics, or preferred leadership styles. They did, however, find differences between education and manufacturing in their sample. Specifically, they found generational differences within the manufacturing (but not the education) group, such that Baby Boomers preferred a task-oriented leadership approach, while Xers preferred a relationship-oriented leadership approach. In addition, the authors found generational differences in work values, attitudes, and expectations detected in the manufacturing group within the sample, but the clear indicators of these differences were not delineated.

In contrast, Gentry et al. (2011) studied generational differences from a managerial perspective. They used a cross-sectional survey approach to assess generational differences in perceptions of leadership skill importance and actual leadership skill. They included Baby Boomer (1946–1963), Gen X (1964–1976), and Millennial (1976 and later) cohorts in public and private sector organizations, concluding that managers from different generations exhibited more similarities than differences in desired practices and skills, with no generational skill or preference effect sizes of practical significance.

Yi et al. (2010) researched generational differences in desired manager attributes. These authors used cohorts specified following political and societal shifts in China, including the Cultural Revolution (1960s), Social Reform (1970s), and Millennial (1980s) generations. All three generations varied in their preferences of manager “ambitiousness,” with the Social Reform respondents articulating the strongest desired manager identification with this attribute, followed by Millennials and then Cultural Reform respondents. Moreover, mentorship, “team player,” and loyalty traits were most highly desired by Millennials, followed by Social Reform and then by Cultural Revolution Participants. The results showed that Millennials expect more from their leaders than other generational cohorts. Researchers have found results of cross-sectional survey studies on leadership and generations mixed regarding the actuality of generational differences in leadership preferences (Yi et al., 2010).

A few of these studies point out the danger of thinking generationally. Some researchers believe that generational theory creates false dichotomies, focusing on groups and group differences rather than the people and individual differences. Another objecting point of view believes that generational theory oversimplifies specific issues. Lastly, some scholars have posited that a generational theory is deterministic, assuming category membership determines individual attributes. One must not undervalue the influence of mass publications, as generational literature exists in reasonably reputable journals, is approvingly cited in both published and unpublished works, and is used as a foundation for numerous popular press articles and books referred to by students, researchers, and practitioners alike (Rudolph et

al., 2018). There is a need for research and practice, an improved understanding of the specific role that generational membership has on any such work related generational differences relative to the contribution of related variables such as age, maturity, work experience, and individual characteristics in predicting work-related and other outcomes (Costanza et al., 2012).

So far, this literature review has examined generational differences concerning work and culture. An important aspect of American culture is religion. A review of generational differences regarding religion and religiosity is contained in the next section.

Generational Differences in Religion

Fewer Americans pray, believe in God, believe in the Bible, attend religious services, associate with a religion, or have confidence in religious organizations (Cooperman et al., 2015; Twenge et al., 2016). In addition, most studies agreed that religious affiliation has declined since the 1970s. An example would be that more Americans chose *none* in recent years when asked to identify their religion (Hout & Fischer, 2014a; Kinnaman, 2020; G. A. Smith et al., 2019). A few recent studies have determined that religious service attendance, belief in God, and prayer have not changed or even increased in recent years (Dougherty et al., 2007; C. Smith & Snell, 2009; Wachholtz & Sambamoorthi, 2011). These samples illustrate a growing diversity in Americans' religious beliefs and attitudes.

Twenge et al. (2016) studied trends in religious orientation. The research pulled data from the General Social Survey (GSS) from 1972 to 2014. Their results showed that American adults in the 2010s were less religious than those in preceding decades, based on religious service attendance and an increase in personal religious expressions such as belief in God, prayer, identifying as a religious person, and believing the Bible is the word of God (Twenge et al., 2016). Millennials proved less religious than previous generations were at the same age. Religious affiliation and church attendance have been declining since the 1990s. The decrease in more personal expressions of religion became prominent only after 2006. The increase in 18- to 29-year-olds who never pray showed a substantial effect ($d = .80$; Twenge et al., 2016).

Additionally, there was a distinct time-period effect when controlling for generation and age variables (Twenge et al., 2016). Religious orientation declined $d = -.38$ from 1973 to 2014, and $d = -.15$ between 2006 and 2014. The generational effect was not as strong, as religious orientation declined the most between persons born in the 1930s and the Millennials born in the 1980s – 1990s ($d = -.06$). The decline in public religious practice was more significant between 1972 and 2014 ($d = -.50$, and $d = -.42$) than 1984 and 2014. The decline also began sooner, with a constant decline beginning around 1991–1993. The decline in private religious practice and belief was less significant between 1984 and 2014 ($d = -.18$) and began later with a consistent decline beginning around 2006–2008 ($d = -.12$ of the change took place between 2006 and 2014; Twenge et al., 2016).

Twenge et al. (2016) added that nearly one third of Millennials are religiously unaffiliated. They are becoming increasingly secular in other dimensions (doubting God's existence, believing the Bible is a book of fables, not attending church services, never praying, and describing themselves as *not religious at all*). One in five Millennials adds that they are *not spiritual at all*. Twenge's mixed-effects analysis revealed that the trends were predominantly due to the time. Millennials were less religious than the Boomers, and Generation X forerunners were at the identical age. This fact demonstrated that their declining religious commitment was not exclusively due to their developmental stage of early adulthood; however, this appeared to be due to a time effect in which all generations are growing less religious. Howe and Strauss (2000) proposed that Millennials would be more religious than Generation X, but this data strongly suggests the opposite is true (Twenge et al., 2016).

In a similar study, Twenge et al. (2015) researched generational and time differences in American adolescents' religious orientation from 1966 to 2014. In four significant, nationally representative surveys ($N = 11.2$ million), American adolescents and emerging adults in the 2010s (Millennials) were significantly less religious than previous generations (Boomers, Generation X) at the same age. The data are from the Monitoring the Future studies of twelfth graders (1976–2013), eighth and tenth graders (1991–2013), and the American Freshman survey of

entering college students (1966–2014). As of 2014, although most adolescents and emerging adults are still religiously involved, twice as many twelfth graders and college students, and 20%–40% more eighth and tenth graders, never attend religious services. In addition, twice as many twelfth graders and entering college students in the 2010s (versus the 1960s–70s) give their religious affiliation as *none*. Furthermore, 40%–50% more eighth and tenth graders chose *none*. Recent birth cohorts reveal declining approval of religious organizations and are less apt to say that religion is important in their lives. Younger generations also report being less spiritual and spending less time praying or meditating than older generations (Twenge et al., 2015).

Furthermore, Twenge et al. (2015) reported that three times as many college students in the 2010s (versus the late 1960s) related no religious affiliation, although most are still affiliated. 87% more college students chose no religious affiliation (15% versus 28%) between 2000 and 2013. Compared to the early 1970s, four times as many stated that their mother had no religious affiliation, and more than twice as many reported that their father had no religious affiliation. A space between students' affiliation and parents' affiliation developed. This space suggested that more students grew up without religion and rejected their parents' religion by college entry (Twenge et al., 2015).

Consequently, decreases in religious orientation extend beyond affiliation to religious participation and religiosity, submitting a drive toward secularism among an increasing minority (Twenge et al., 2015). The declines are more significant among women, Whites, and individuals of lower-socioeconomic status; in the Northeastern United States, they are minimal among Blacks and non-existent among political conservatives. Religious affiliation is lower in years with increased income inequality, higher median family income, higher materialism, more positive self-views, and lower social support. Generally, the results suggested that the lower religious orientation of Millennials is due to time period or generation and not to age. On average, Millennials are significantly less religiously oriented than their Boomer, and Generation X predecessors were at the same age. The large majority, however, still have at least some religious involvement. The generation differences

are notable, with certain variables doubling or quadrupling, and are the most pronounced since 2000. The authors noted that "generational differences are created when cultures change, and a new generation absorbs that change when they are young, often in adolescence" (p. 222). Overall, this research suggested that individualism has increased, and social support has decreased. The results also indicated that religious organizations are losing Millennials rapidly. While most continue to have some religious involvement, significantly more do not involve themselves in religion (Twenge et al., 2015).

These conclusions differ from Smith and Snell (2009), who determined that young adults were not significantly less religious. Smith and Snell discovered only minor changes in religious affiliation and service attendance and no changes in the frequency of prayer and belief in God. The authors deduced that emerging adults have not become dramatically less religious or more secular. Twenge et al. (2015) addressed possible reasons for the difference. Twenge et al. use more recent data (approximately 6 years newer), and the decrease in religious orientation has been greater over the previous 10 years. Twenge et al. also drew from a much larger sample. The last possibility Twenge et al. mentioned is the possible difference in interpretation and analysis. For example, Smith and Snell stated that the number of young adults claiming no religion rose from 14% in 1972 to 26% in 2004–2006. They described this as an increase of 12%, but a change from 14% to 26% could also be described as an 86% increase ($26 - 14 = 12$; $12/14 = 86\%$ more choosing *none*).

Hout and Fischer (2002) found that the succession of generations played a vital role in the doubling of Americans reporting no religious preference in the 1990s. They discovered that the percentage of adults raised with no religion in the home increased from 2% to 6%. The most religious cohorts in American history passed away, while cohorts born after 1970 entered adulthood with a significantly weaker attachment to organized religion than the passing generations (Fischer & Hout, 2006). Almost all the people born between 1900 and 1925 professed a religion, expressed strong beliefs about God, accepted matters of faith, and attended religious services as adults at least once a month (Fischer & Hout, 2006). The

passing of this generation contributed to the overall trend away from organized religion (Hout & Fischer, 2014a). The authors estimated that generational succession accounted for approximately three points of the seven-point increase of those choosing no religious preference (Hout & Fischer, 2002).

Hout and Fischer (2014a) studied 25 years of religious change simultaneously and calculated that the percentage of Americans answering *none* on religious preference increased an average of 4.1% from 1987 to 2012. This result was statistically significant; however, it accounted for less than one third of the 12.8% increase in the total adult population during that time. They proposed that much of what appeared to be a period trend resulted in differences among cohorts, made more intense by the passing of the most religious generation. Hout and Fischer (2014a) reported that generational succession accounted for two thirds of the increased tendency to claim *no religion*.

According to Hout and Fischer (2014b), generational succession has two parts. First, people born into a family without religion since the 1960s were increasingly likely to prefer no religion in adulthood than people raised with no religion before the 1960s. Among people born in the 1980s and raised without religion, over 80% preferred *none* as adults. Hout and Fischer declared this intergenerational persistence to be new. Among people born in the 1960s and raised without religion, 60% favored no religion in adulthood. Among people born in the 1930s and raised without religion, 24% had no religious preference when surveyed as adults. For the entire U.S. population, the emergent intergenerational persistence in being unchurched is still a trivial factor in religious change because most Americans grow up in some religion. Unless there is an “awakening,” managing the unchurched will likely become progressively essential in the future (Hout & Fischer, 2014b).

The second part of generational succession affected more people, making it noticeable for the population trends (Hout & Fischer, 2014a). Individuals from current cohorts with an upbringing in a religious tradition were also progressively less likely to state a religious preference in adulthood than early cohorts. For example, among people born in the 1980s and raised with religion, 22% preferred

no religion in 2012. That is 50% more than among people born 20 years earlier and raised with religion and five times what it was 50 years earlier. Recently, among people born in the 1930s and raised with religion, only 4% had no religious preference (Hout & Fischer, 2014a).

In 2010, Schwadel used the intrinsic estimator, a recently developed method of simultaneously estimating age, period, and cohort effects, to research changes in religious service attendance, prayer, belief in the afterlife, and biblical literalism. This scholar's results showed that regular service attendance declined across generations along with biblical literalism and prayer. Schwadel's results provided varied support for theories of religious decline. Baby Boomers showed a particular disengagement from religion. Americans born in the late 1940s and into the 1950s are unlikely to hold literal views of the Bible. A decline in church attendance began among baby boomers. Furthermore, the Baby Boomers' likelihood of weekly prayer was the lowest among the generations (Schwadel, 2011a).

Since 2009 Pew Research has conducted a religious poll with 168,890 respondents from the United States. They found declines in persons who say they are Christian among the generations. Between 2009 and 2019, the number of professing Christians fell 2% among the Silent Generation (born 1928–45), 6% among the Baby Boomers (1946–64), 8% among Generation X (1965–80), and 16% among Millennials (1981–96). Their data revealed a wide gap between older Americans (Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation) and Millennials in their levels of religious affiliation and church attendance. More than eight tenths of members of the Silent Generation (84%), more than three quarters of the Baby Boomers (76%), and more than two thirds of Generation X (67%) describe themselves as Christians. On the other hand, less than half of the Millennials (49%) describe themselves as Christians, and 40% are religious *nones* (unaffiliated). Concerning religious service attendance, 22% of Millennials, 32% of Generation X, 35% of Baby Boomers, and 50% of the Silent Generation attend weekly or more. The Silent Generation has 61% that say they attend a religious service at least once a month, whereas the Millennials have 64% who say they attend a few times a year or less (G. A. Smith et al., 2019).

Vera-Toscano and Meroni (2021) studied whether generational differences in family values and religious beliefs are at the core of changes in the family structure among Australians. They employed the Household, Income, and Labor Dynamics in Australia survey and applied the Age-Period-Cohort Detrended methodology to consider generational differences in family values and religious beliefs. Results showed that changes in religious beliefs are overwhelmingly generational. Their data confirmed that being born into a given cohort influence certain attitudes toward family values. The Baby Boomer cohort significantly contributed to the revolutionary shift in family behaviors and attitudes. Baby Boomers supported progressive views on religious beliefs compared to younger generations and experienced the most significant change in family behaviors and attitudes. The authors posed that the unique events during the Baby Boomers' formative years may have influenced their behaviors and attitudes, ultimately contributing to a qualitative shift in the understanding of family. Compared to other generations studied, the Baby Boomers lived through significant social and economic changes (Vera-Toscano & Meroni, 2021).

Religion in the United States

This section explores early Christianity in America, the birth and rise of Pentecostalism in the United States, and the history of the formation of the AGUSA. These early histories, the revivals and movements, the people, and philosophies, are vital to the formation of the foundational doctrinal beliefs of the AGUSA. Accordingly, the AGUSA adopted its Statement of Fundamental Truths in 1916. Ministers and churches in the AGUSA profess an agreement with these Truths to remain credentialed and in good standing with the AGUSA.

Early Christianity in America

Perhaps the oldest document in American history is the Icelandic account of Erik the Red (Ahlstrom, 2004). Leif Thorsteinn traveled from Norway to his home in Greenland. The King of Norway told Leif to proclaim Christianity wherever his voyages took him. During his voyage, the ocean became violent and tossed him onto a new land. He did not know this new land, but Leif found shipwrecked men. He took them to his home and gave them food and shelter during the winter. Leif

showed them kindness and introduced Christianity to these men and, ultimately, a new land. American historians have continued to associate God and Jesus Christ as active participants in the story of the United States (Ahlstrom, 2004).

When Christopher Columbus set sail from Spain, America became the great frontier of Western Christendom in 1492. Spain established a substantial Catholic presence before any Protestants arrived in America (Noll, 1992). Six centuries after Columbus landed, the people of the United States still recognize Europe as their source of language and religion. Religious turmoil was taking place in Europe during the 16th and 17th century, and during the formative years of America, England carried out their imperial intentions on the Eastern seaboard. As a result, Protestantism in its Puritan form became the primary factor in the spiritual shaping of this great nation. Every European ship seemed to bring soldiers, settlers, and priests (Bancroft, 1875).

More specifically, religious turmoil and renewal took place in England throughout the 16th and into the 17th century (Noll, 1992). Henry VIII instigated the reformation of the English church in the 1530s mainly for political and personal reasons. Henry's successor, Edward VI, quickened the pace of religious transformation in England as a fusion of Lutheran and Reformed doctrines was accompanied by the wisdom of the early church. Instigators such as Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, encouraged the removal of Roman Catholic practices and customs. The Protestant reform ended, however, when Edward VI died young and Mary Tudor—a devoted Catholic—succeeded him. Under her rule, 288 Protestants were burned at the stake for their convictions, some escaped to Europe, and many emerged in America (Noll, 1992).

Puritans significantly impacted religion in America (Breen & Foster, 1973). They believed mankind must depend entirely on God for salvation. Puritans emphasized the authority of the Bible. Furthermore, Puritans believed that God created society as an integrated totality. Church and state, the person, and the public are corresponding and aligned by God's creation and providence. Furthermore, Puritans believed that God always works with people through covenants or solemn agreements (Breen & Foster, 1973).

Puritans affected the Virginia colony and England's first English settlement at Jamestown (Noll, 1992). Puritans impacted England's second colony, Plymouth, in a more significant way. Puritans established covenants and used the Bible as their guide in establishing societal norms and practices. Puritan morality and philosophy provided the foundation for the significant accomplishment of the United States (Noll, 1992).

Quakers, or Friends, first appeared in Massachusetts within a generation of the colony's founding (Pomfret, 1956). They also had a pronounced impact on the establishment of the U.S. character. William Penn, the leading Quaker in England, was instrumental in founding four colonies that eventually became the three states of Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Penn acquired a large section of U.S. land from King Charles II. In 1682, the city of Philadelphia was established. The publishing of Penn's Frame of Government was of equal importance, a constitution that explained his experiment in America and set forth the idea of freedom of religion (Pomfret, 1956).

During the revivals of the 1730s and 1740s, recognized as the Great Awakening, gave colonial Christianity a unique American classification (O'Brien, 1986). The revivals affected the way that churches associated with their encompassing societies. Christian churches also applied the cultural meaning of the American Revolution—what freedom would look like in daily living—defining what it meant to be American. The great awakening and subsequent religious revivals, preachers and evangelists, and the establishment of Christian morals and philosophies throughout government and its leaders facilitated the development of America and its ideals (O'Brien, 1986).

George Bancroft (1875), in his *History of the United States from the Discovery of the American Continent*, sought to explain how America expanded. He noted that a nation and land are not under the control of blind destiny. Bancroft asserts that the United States followed specific steps that a particular Providence laid out. God planned and directed the people of the United States to its present happiness and glory. There appeared to be a divinely appointed destiny. Crucial to this transformational influence was the understanding that God directs the world He

made. The earth is the Lord's, and all of man's directives and positions are good. Furthermore, that man's most extraordinary mission is to glorify God (Bancroft, 1875).

The religious history of the American people is one of the supreme extravaganzas in the history of all humanity (Ahlstrom, 2004). Christianity and its influences from the earliest colonization impacted this new world's education, politics, and culture. For instance, an explorer in 1700 going from Boston to the Carolinas would meet Congregationalists of unpredictable intensities; Baptists of several assortments; Presbyterians, Quakers, and a few other forms of Puritan radicalism; Dutch, German, and French reformed; Swedish, Finnish, and German Lutherans, Mennonites and fundamental pietists; Anglicans; Roman Catholics; and even a Jewish congregation occasionally (Ahlstrom, 2004).

There has been considerable diversity in Christian practice throughout North American history (Noll, 1992). New England Puritans left substantial records from the 17th century. The Christian story of that century also includes the Catholics in New France, Quakers in Pennsylvania, and Episcopalians in Virginia. Also included in Christian diversity were Black Protestants, German and Scandinavian Lutherans, Roman Catholics, and Orthodox from Eastern Europe (Noll, 1992).

Christians in America sought to apply ideal Christian norms to their lives (Noll, 1992). While possessing many forms of practice, Christianity's belief in God and the Bible profoundly impacted the establishment of religion in the United States. As a result, the United States is an amalgamation of religious people and ideas. This combination of spirituality facilitated a Pentecostal movement in the 1800s (Blumhofer, 1993).

The Rise of Pentecostalism in the United States

During the late 1800s, Pentecostalism began to increase in the United States among a growing group of people who believed they lived in the last days before Jesus would return (Blumhofer, 1993). These groups believed there would be an extraordinary outpouring of God's Spirit before Christ's return. Things experienced by the New Testament church would become normal again on the earth. People

would experience healing, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and great works of evangelism would take place. Some Christians proclaimed the doctrines of the fourfold gospel (salvation, healing, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and the second coming of Jesus) long before the identification of a Pentecostal movement. Nevertheless, the themes and thoughts of radical evangelists shaped early Pentecostal views and doctrine. Albert Simpson was one of those voices.

Albert Simpson made the gospel of healing a significant theme of his ministry and a fundamental principle of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (Simpson, 1915). God healed Simpson of a heart condition and based on that experience, proclaimed that all who believe Jesus and receive His word would receive healing. Simpson pastored a wealthy Presbyterian congregation in New York City when he experienced his healing. The church's people would not accept his changed preaching and belief in healing, so Simpson resigned and began an independent gospel tabernacle in Manhattan. He dedicated a nearby residence as the Home for Faith and Physical healing. Simpson conducted daily morning and evening services in a chapel. Over 700 guests stayed briefly at the home in the first few years, and more attended the services. A few of Simpson's colleagues expressed concern that if he believed and preached on the healing of the sick—a spiritual gift—he would have to include the gift of tongues. They said if the gift of tongues had ceased, so must the gift of healing. Simpson wholeheartedly agreed with his friends, and since he believed in healing, he started believing the gift of tongues would be returned to believers again (Simpson, 1915).

A growing interest in the Holy Spirit followed Simpson's teaching and others who made the same type of declarations about healing and the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues and spiritual gifts restored to the church (Blumhofer, 1993). John Wesley taught about holiness and Christian perfection by the work of the Holy Spirit. Dwight L. Moody used the phrase *baptism in the Holy Spirit* to describe a profound experience that he claimed altered his spiritual perception (Blumhofer, 1993). Moody started attending annual summer conferences in Northfield, Massachusetts, in 1881. He used these occasions to explore the practical implications of a relationship between the Holy Spirit and

followers of Christ. In 1881 around 300 attended the 10-day conference to pray for revival and an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Over the next 2 decades, thousands of people attended the conference. Moody urged people to attend the conference:

Let us pray that we may be baptized with power from on high. Get full of the Holy Ghost. Just make up your minds you will not leave these gatherings until God fills you. Don't be afraid. Lots of people are afraid of being called fanatics. You are not good for anything until the world considers you a fanatic. (Moody, as cited in Blumhofer, 1993, p. 31)

The Northfield conferences incorporated other themes as well. For example, a student conference in 1886 encouraged the formation of the student volunteer movement. This emphasis resulted in thousands of young people expressing interest in and going to the global mission fields (Blumhofer, 1993). In addition, the evangelization of the world in the last days was an important theme developed at the end of the 19th century. The notion that a person would be filled with the Holy Spirit and speak other languages to travel to foreign lands and preach the gospel was not a stretch of the imagination for these young people.

With influential Bible-believing evangelists proclaiming the fourfold gospel message and a fragment of the Christian church experiencing and expecting an end-time revival, the birth of Pentecostalism in the United States was not far off. Charles Fox Parham was influenced by these evangelists and his experience with the Holy Spirit.

Charles Parham was born June 4, 1873, in Muscatine, IL. At the age of 12, his mother died. William's father married again, this time to a lifelong Methodist who loved the power of old-time religion (Sentinel, n.d.). The Parhams were financially successful and opened their home for religious meetings (Blumhofer, 1993). Charles remembers leading his first religious meeting at the age of 15. Instead of becoming a minister, however, he had in mind to become a physician. Then, a health condition changed Charles's religion. He believed God was punishing him for not becoming a preacher and, on his sick bed, made a vow to preach and was convinced that he would receive healing at that moment. There was a partial improvement, but the complete healing took a while.

Parham was assigned a small Methodist church in Eudora, KS. He also preached in nearby Linwood. Parham became disillusioned and upset with denominational affiliation and began an independent evangelistic ministry (Parham, n.d.). When Parham's health failed again, he claimed he had "found the power of God to sanctify the body from inbred disease as well as from inbred sin" (Parham, 1900, p. 2). He regained strength and began incorporating healing into his evangelistic messages. Parham moved to Topeka, KS, and opened a mission and office. In 1889 he opened Bethel Healing Home. Time was set aside for morning and evening prayers and messages and teaching.

In the spring of 1900, he traveled to various places to discover what was happening in other churches, denominations, and movements (Blumhofer, 1993). One of his visits took him to Frank Sandford's The Holy Ghost and Us Bible School near Lewiston, ME. After being gone for several months, he returned to find that most of his congregation was gone. He decided his next step would be to open a Bible School. In October of 1900, he opened Bethel Bible School with 40 students. Parham modeled his Bible school after the one he visited in Maine. While visiting the School in Maine, he observed that the extended worship services were vibrant and emotionally exuberant. Attendees shouted, clapped, sang loud, fasted, prayed, spoke ecstatically, preached, and testified extemporaneously (Blumhofer, 1993).

Like Sandford's, Parham's school had one textbook, the Bible, and one teacher, the Holy Spirit. Of course, Parham was the mouthpiece of the Holy Spirit. For around 8 years, Parham preached on the baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire (Parham, n.d.). Parham believed the baptism of the Holy Ghost was a separate experience from salvation, and it sealed the bride of Christ (the believer) and bestowed the gifts of the Spirit (Parham, 1900). During a meeting on January 1, 1900, a student, Agnes Ozman, asked Parham to lay his hands on her and pray that she would be baptized with the Holy Spirit with further evidence of speaking in tongues. She reported that she spoke in tongues that night. Before this, Parham claimed that he and the students decided that speaking in tongues would prove that someone was baptized in the Holy Ghost (Blumhofer, 1993). Within days, more

than a dozen students reported they spoke in tongues and were Baptized with the Spirit. In January of 1901, Parham said,

We have for long believed that the power of the Lord would be manifested in our midst, and that the power would be given us to speak other languages, and that the time will come when we will all be sent to go into all the nations and preach the gospel, and that the Lord will give us the power of speech to talk to the people of various nations without having to study them in schools.

Accompanied by the belief that Jesus would return soon, this outpouring of the Spirit and speaking in tongues made sense to many believers.

The idea of tongues did not sit well with Parham's supporters, and within several months, the Bible School was closed (Blumhofer, 1993). Parham continued to preach healing, however, and in the Summer of 1903, conducted open-air services in El Dorado Springs, Missouri. Mary Arthur, the wife of a prominent citizen of Galena, Kansas, was visiting the springs. She heard one of Parham's messages and was supernaturally healed. Upon returning home, Mary Arthur and her husband invited Parham to preach his message in their home. They held services twice a day. Hundreds claimed salvation, healing, and baptism in the Spirit. Parham began apostolic faith assemblies (he did not like the church designation) in towns surrounding Galena and spread into eastern Texas. Experiencing success in the Houston area, Parham and others opened a Bible School that ran from the Fall of 1905 to the Spring of 1906.

Parham's message impacted several African Americans in Houston who had an intense interest in holiness. William Seymour was one of those impacted. Both Parham and Seymour preached in the holiness missions around Houston. Neely Terry, a Los Angeles, California resident, heard Seymour preach and invited him to be the associate pastor of the mission church she attended at home (Espinoza, 2014). In January 1906, Seymour left Houston for Los Angeles (Lawrence, 1916). Supernatural events in Seymour's mission soon began to overshadow Parham's ministry. Parham came to resent Seymour and began degrading him and his ministry in California. Ultimately, financial irregularities

and allegations of sexual misconduct on the part of Parham caused the apostolic movement to move on without him (Lawrence, 1916).

The new center of apostolic faith activities resided in the heart of Los Angeles, with William Seymour leading from the church at 312 Azusa Street (Espinoza, 2014). Seymour and several of his followers had spoken in tongues. The services at Azusa Street included singing, preaching, spontaneous testimonies, and speaking in tongues. Word of this happening spread throughout the area and raised interest and controversy. Seymour was the prominent voice at Azusa Street (Rodgers, 2014).

The revival at Azusa Street attracted the outcasts from the Holiness and Evangelical backgrounds who were uncomfortable with the space between what they read in the Bible and what they witnessed in their own lives (Rodgers, 2010). Azusa Street accentuated what was happening in different fragments of the American religious panorama (Rodgers, 2014). Attendees of the revival acknowledged a supernatural personal religious experience aside from their salvation (Blumhofer, 1989b). This experience became the doctrinal belief known as baptism in the Holy Spirit (McGee, 1986). Seymour taught that tongues speech was the biblical evidence for this experience (Chan, 2000). Furthermore, Seymour saw speaking in tongues as a religious symbol conveying the spiritual reality of unity and inclusivity between genders and ethnicities (Chan, 2000).

A similar revival of the Spirit had recently swept through Wales. Pentecostalism emerged from the Welsh revival. Pentecostalism encouraged believers to obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit, which led to opportunities for all to participate in the services, offering spontaneous worship and testimony. The Welsh revival also believed they were a part of an end-times revival in fulfillment of Joel 2:28: "And it will come to pass in the last days, I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh." Reports of what was happening at Azusa Street attracted Americans hungry for revival. A fervor, intensity, and a sense of divine proximity stimulated the atmosphere at Azusa Street. The mission gained a reputation as a place to come for healing. What happened at Azusa Street helped mobilize a powerful religious movement.

Moreover, there was a connection between the baptism in the Holy Spirit to a divine call for the last day's service on the mission field (Blumhofer, 1989a). God wanted to use those He filled with power for service—an extraordinary call. Pentecostals believed that speaking in tongues would allow the missionary to speak in the language of the unreached people group to whom God called them to minister (Blumhofer, 1989a).

In addition to enhanced missions service, “Pentecostalism offered what many ordinary people craved—a glorious future and the ability to cope and even to triumph over adversity here and now” (Blumhofer, 1993, p. 62). “The progressivity of the socially radical religious community emerging from Azusa Street began to calcify and polarize” (Adamson, 2017, p. 35). The new Pentecostal worldview rising from Azusa Street developed particular religious symbols, traditions, and beliefs and stood out from mainline denominations in worship style, doctrine, structure, and emphasis (Blumhofer, 1989a; Poloma, 1989). Unfortunately, the community at Azusa Street began to diminish as racial segregation became apparent in the movement, and controversies erupted concerning the nature of tongues, sanctification, water baptism, and the Trinity (Molenaar, 2014).

Rodgers (2014) posited that the Pentecostals who eventually started the AGUSA were ahead of their time as the bearing of their religious dedication and obligation to the religious experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit resulted in

1. a unifying purpose for genders and races,
2. the priesthood of all believers regardless of race, gender, education, age, ability, or socio-economic status,
3. spiritual disciplines to contribute to an emergent religious community while the organization was established,
4. an expectation of the supernatural and sensible to synergize,
5. racial reconciliation, and
6. a personal religious conviction to prioritize the spiritual over the material.

The synergizing religious experiences at Azusa and the lack of religious tradition and belief systems galvanized factors for what would become the AGUSA (Blumhofer, 1989b; McGee, 2010; Poloma, 1989).

The Formation of the Assemblies of God in the United States

The AGUSA began as a revival of Apostolic teaching and power spread around the globe early in the 20th century (Assemblies of God, 1957). Reports of a Pentecostal outpouring came from around the globe (Nourse, 1956). After this outpouring, many churches and missions found a common interest in their Pentecostal emphasis (Assemblies of God, 1957). Pentecostals talked about their faith, convincing them to act. They believed the end was near, and time was short for evangelizing the lost so that some may receive salvation; however, Pentecostals tended to be wary of an organization (Molenaar, 2014). One reason was the marginalization they experienced within their denominations during the days of Azusa Street when they were excommunicated for their acceptance of speaking in tongues.

It became evident that some form of organization was necessary to establish doctrinal and moral standards and provide more effective methods to promote the missions' efforts (Assemblies of God, 1957). With the urgency of the time and troubled by the overwhelming task of reaching the world with the gospel message, Pentecostals decided to explore the advantages of cooperating in the task by forming a loosely structured network (Blumhofer, 1993). On December 20, 1913, a few men announced a meeting to be held in Hot Springs, Arkansas, in April of the following year for those with the desire to cooperate "in love and peace to push the interest of the kingdom of God" (Word and Witness, 1913). This meeting was named a General Council, taken from the New Testament designation in Acts chapter 15. The General Council published the announcement in many Pentecostal publications. The announcement was rebuked by some professing that any attempting to organize the Pentecostal movement would lose their power and influence (Durham, 1913). Twenty-nine more well-known Pentecostals representing 14 additional states had supported the Council within 3 months. The core of attendees came from the Apostolic Faith movement, of which Charles F. Parham had been their leader (Assemblies of God, 1957).

According to Gohr (1994a), the agenda for the General Council included five goals:

1. To clarify what God would want them to teach; to unite in doctrine and develop a common name for their churches to incorporate.
2. To strategize better concerning the work done in the United States and on the mission field.
3. To understand the needs of different foreign fields better so that one mission would not suffer while another prospers in luxury.
4. To charter the organization for legal reasons.
5. To explore starting a Bible training school.

Unity was the primary goal of the Pentecostal leaders who met in Hot Springs (Gohr, 1994a). The April meetings consisted of business in the afternoons and evangelistic sessions at night with the public invited (Gohr, 1994b). The attendees quickly and unanimously adopted a Preamble as the constitution of the General Council of the Assemblies of God. The secret committee met to form the Preamble and established the term Assemblies of God as a name for the Fellowship (Gohr, 1994a). T. K. Leonard was a committee member and pastored a church in Findlay, Ohio, that he named Assembly of God (Gohr, 1994a). Several local churches were already using the name before the Hot Springs meeting. The meeting opposed extreme positions on divisive questions concerning food while they encouraged local churches to dedicate Thursdays as a regular day for prayer. The Council recommended two existing schools for students to attend for Bible training. One school was in Findlay, Ohio, under the direction of Thomas K. Leonard.

Along with the school, Leonard had a church called the Assembly of God and a small printing plant he called Gospel Publishing House. The Assemblies of God began to conduct their business out of Leonard's business in Findlay. A unified body of believers and leaders with an agreed Preamble and a mission to teach, preach and publish the gospel until all the world knows came out of this first General Council. Ministers and missionaries began associating with the Assemblies of God. By the Fall of 1914, there were 512 credentialed workers, of which 142 were female missionaries and evangelists (Blumhofer, 1993).

When the Pentecostals left the meeting in Hot Springs, it is unlikely that they understood the significance of their history-making meeting (Burnett, 1954).

Nevertheless, the attendees discovered commonalities leading to cooperation. They experienced the blessing of God. Furthermore, they established a small, inexperienced group of leaders to whom they had entrusted the future. Few participants, however, knew how fast or how far their new fellowship would grow (Burnett, 1954).

The sudden growth called for a second General Council in November of 1914 at Stone Church in Chicago, IL. The Council met for 2 weeks and voted to move the Assemblies of God headquarters to St. Louis, Missouri. In addition, they voted to accept a gift of printing machinery that would become the hub of Gospel Publishing House. Attendees believed that the printed page would be the life of the movement worldwide and authorized funds for expanded staff and facilities. At the end of 1914, Assemblies of God churches raised over \$10,000 for missions. The money was twice the amount as independent churches raised the year before (Blumhofer, 1993). Adding to the Preamble of the Assemblies of God constitution, a resolutions committee introduced the Statement of Fundamental Truths to the Council in 1916.

When the Hot Springs meeting commenced, a doctrinal agreement already existed among the members, developed on historical truths of the faith and enhanced by Wesleyan Holiness and Keswickian themes (McGee, 1994). Five presumed principles characterized Assemblies of God members: personal experience, oral communications, freedom, spirituality, and scriptural authority. These characteristics were recognizable in ideas of leadership, lifestyle, worship, and church literature. “These values define much of the uniqueness of Pentecostalism and explain why little emphasis has been placed on the academic treatment of theology” (McGee, 1994, p. 24). Assemblies of God writers, editors, and historians have produced periodicals, books, booklets, tracts, and Sunday School curricula to aid spiritual growth. Historical AG literature recorded thousands of testimonies about answered prayers, healings, and other supernatural events (Rodgers, 2014). When a doctrinal issue on Oneness arose at the General Council in 1916, threatening to split the membership, “church leaders willingly set aside the anticreedal sentiments of the Hot Springs meeting by drawing doctrinal

boundaries to protect the integrity of the church and welfare of the saints” (McGee, 1994, p. 25). The Statement of Fundamental Truths is the product of this effort to assist and guard AG churches and membership.

History of the Statement of Fundamental Truths

The Statement of Fundamental Truths (SFT) specifies the foundation for the Assemblies of God Fellowship (Gohr, 2012). The SFT brought clarity and harmony to the Fellowship when adopted at the fourth General Council, although doctrinal controversies existed during and after its debate. Oneness activists (those adhering to theology that baptized people only in the name of Jesus) accused the committee who proposed the SFT of creating a creed to replace the Bible as the authoritative rule of faith and practice. Many opposed the adoption of the words from Matthew 29:19 as the formula for baptism. The Council, however, ultimately approved the document on October 6, 1916. This approval of the SFT led to the resignation of more than 25% of the credentialed ministers, several of whom were founders and executives (Blumhofer, 1993). By the fifth General Council in 1917, the number of ministers was back to 620 with 73 missionaries (Flower, 1950).

The first goal for the initial meeting in Hot Springs was to “get a better understanding of what He would have us teach, and thus do away with many divisions over doctrines and various names under which the Pentecostal people are working and incorporating” (General Convention of Pentecostal Saints and Churches of God in Christ, 1913, p. 1). There were few doctrinal resolutions passed before the SFT in 1916. The Preamble and Resolution of the Constitution stated that the AG should

recognize scriptural methods and order for worship, unity, fellowship, work and business for God, and to disapprove of all unscriptural methods, doctrines and conduct, and approve of all scriptural truth and conduct endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace until we all come into unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, and to walk accordingly, as recorded in Ephesians 4:17-32. (Assemblies of God, 1914)

The initial meeting in 1914 laid out a basic framework of the organization. Additionally, the council established specific guidelines for doctrine. A few doctrinal resolutions passed in the next Council in 1915; however, an aggressive Oneness coalition was forming, and the need to address particular doctrinal issues was imminent (Gohr, 2012).

D.W. Kerr chaired a five-member committee solicited to formulate a statement of faith at the 1916 General Council for deliberation (Gohr, 2012). Chairman J. W. Welch called the General Council in 1916 an “Open Bible Council.” Welch said, “This will be the most vital and important council which has ever been held since the first council at Hot Springs, Arkansas” (Welch, 1916). Some challenged the right of the General Council to propose such a statement, asserting that the Preamble adopted in 1914 already stated: “the holy inspired Scriptures are the all-sufficient rule for faith and doctrine.” Supporters of the SFT responded with a biblical precedent found in Acts 15, in which the first general council of the New Testament church wrote the apostles’ doctrine, explaining what they believed (Brumback, 1961). Discussion on the SFT lasted from Wednesday until Saturday. The Council presented and debated each section of the SFT separately. While there was much debate on the floor of the Council, the SFT was ultimately adopted.

The core beliefs provided in the statement are essentially the same as in 1916. There have been several revisions of the SFT made throughout the years. The SFT originally contained 17 sections, but in 1920 the statement was rearranged and renumbered to include 16 sections (Gohr, 2012). For many years the statement was informally called the Sixteen Fundamental Truths. The document clarified where the AG stood on many historical issues in Protestant theology (Kendrick, 1961). At the 1927 General Council, the AG adopted a constitution and a revised SFT. Revisions in 1927 included title changes, additional scriptures, and word changes for clarity. In 1959, the AG appointed a committee to prepare a revised and inclusive SFT. This revision would include truths believed by most but not included in the current SFT. The committee endorsed several slight changes. They intended to clarify and strengthen the current sections and not change doctrine

(Cunningham, 1960). Those modifications were adopted and incorporated into the SFT. In 2005, Holy Spirit replaced each occurrence of Holy Ghost. A significant change took place in 2009, when the AG added a fourth point to the church's reason for being in Section 10, "to be a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:1; James 1:27)." The AG made no further changes or additions to the SFT since 2009 (Gohr, 2012).

The SFT is the official explanation of the Assemblies of God's 16 doctrines (see Appendix A). These truths are non-negotiable beliefs that all AG churches and ministers must adhere to (Assemblies of God, n.d.-b). Therefore, the SFT is foundational to ministerial preparation and credentialing (Gohr, 2012). Undergraduate and graduate-level courses on the history and polity of the AG spend a significant amount of time covering the SFT. To obtain credentials with the AG, a potential minister must agree that they believe in, will abide by, and fully support the SFT (Constitution and Bylaws of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, 2021). Upon the annual credential renewal, each minister must answer if they still believe in and support the SFT. The assumption is that the AG will not renew the credentials of a minister who disagrees.

The AG produces a curriculum for children and adolescents, in the form of specific boys' and girls' ministries exist to help teach the SFT early. In addition, the AG creates similar studies for use in church membership and new believers' classes covering the SFT. The SFT has been, and will remain, a foundational set of doctrines essential to the AGUSA.

Characteristics of the Generations

The United States has experienced significant cultural and societal shifts over the past 50 years—from the Silent Generation's young adulthood to today's Millennials (Bialik & Fry, 2019). As mentioned, these cultural shifts and historical events, imprint on each generation and how and when they experience them. Generational differences exist in the form of characteristics unique to each generation (Williams & Page, 2011). People living in the same period, sharing the same conditions and experiences, are influenced by each other (Berkup, 2014). This review section reflects the characteristics of the four generations for the proposed

research: Silent, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials. While previous information aligned with specific research across generations, this section will briefly report on each generation individually. The review discusses characteristics concerning history, family, education, politics, and the workplace.

The Silent Generation

The Silent Generation was born between 1928 and 1945. Members of this generation are now 77 to 94 years old. They may have memories of the Depression, FDR, and the New Deal, possibly served in World War II, and are likely to believe the United States has declined from its glory days (Wiedmer, 2015). A November 1951 TIME cover story described members of this generation as hardworking but docile and detached from the political protest. Crowley (2011) described the Silent Generation as “whiter, less plugged in, and feeling much grumpier than other generations” (p. 37). Furthermore, conservative, conforming, and embracing traditional family values characterize the Silent Generation (Beutell & Wittig-Berman, 2008).

Concerning marriage, 83% of the Silent Generation aged 25–37 was married (Bialik & Fry, 2019). In 1968 the typical American man first married at 23, and the woman married at 21. Only 33% of this generation approve of same-sex marriage (Pew Research Center, 2012). The Silent Generation esteems authority and holds family values that keep their work and family lives independent (Wiedmer, 2015).

Although 64% of the Silent Generation say that the United States is the greatest country in the world (Pew Research Center, 2012), the state of the government is a growing concern among the Silent Generation. Approximately 70% of all eligible voters from this generation turned out for the 2018 election (Bialik & Fry, 2019). Republicans make up 57% of this generation’s registered voters (Bialik & Fry). In addition, the Silent Generation acknowledges that change comes slowly (Wiedmer, 2015).

In education, only 15% of the Silent Generation received a bachelor’s degree, while 30% did not finish high school (Bialik & Fry, 2019). Of those obtaining a bachelor’s degree, only 19% of the men and 11% of the women reached

this level of education (Bialik & Fry, 2019). According to Kane (2019), the Silent Generation described themselves with two words—*loyal* and *disciplined*—and viewed education as a dream.

Regarding the workforce, 92% of the men and only 40% of the women ages 22–37 were employed (Bialik & Fry, 2019). The median annual earnings among full-time workers ages 25–37 in the Silent Generation was \$37,100 (Bialik & Fry, 2019). A small percentage of today’s workforce includes the Silent Generation, who generally likes to work in conservative, hierarchical companies with a transparent chain of command (Wiedmer, 2015). According to Wiedmer, the Silent Generation prefers receiving something tangible as a reward or recognition, such as a certificate, plaque, or trophy. They seek to be valued and supported by their employers and supervisors (Wiedmer, 2015).

Baby Boomers

Baby Boomers were born between 1946 and 1964 and are currently 58–76 years old. Baby boomers received their name because they were born during a baby boom after World War II. As a result, individuals in this generation experienced history differently (Giancola, 2006). Boomers grew up in a time of affluence and an absence of conflict (Loretto, n.d.; R. Smith, 2020); however, they did experience the Cold War era of living in fear of Russian nuclear attack, building bomb shelters, and hiding under desks at school as a drill practice (Wiedmer, 2015). In addition, the turbulence of the 1960s defined the world for Boomers from various perspectives, including music, the Vietnam War, and the assassinations of President Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. (Wiedmer, 2015). As a result of these historical, cultural, and other factors, some general characteristics of Baby Boomers are that they value relationships and are goal-centric, self-assured, and resourceful (Smith, 2020).

More than 64% of the Baby Boomers ages 25–37 were married (Bialik & Fry, 2019). In 1984, 58% of Boomer women were already mothers (Bialik & Fry, 2019). Boomers have good health, constitute the wealthiest generation, and optimistically view the world as improving over time (Ordun, 2015; Wiedmer, 2015). Furthermore, despite a longer life expectancy than previous generations,

Baby Boomers have higher rates of chronic disease, more disability, and lower self-rated health than the Silent Generation at the same age (King et al., 2013).

Concerning the government and voting, Baby Boomers were close to the Silent Generation regarding the percentage of eligible voters turning out at 69% (Bialik & Fry, 2019). The Republicans have 52% of the Boomers registered with their party. In education, 24% of the Baby Boomers received a bachelor's degree, while less than 14% did not finish high school. Furthermore, 27% of the men and 21% of the women in this generation obtained at least a bachelor's degree (Bialik & Fry, 2019).

Significant changes in the workforce took place under the Baby Boomers (Kane, 2019). Baby Boomers experienced a shift from the traditional family amidst changing work and family roles with new social roles for men and women (Beutell & Wittig-Berman, 2008). Baby Boomer women surged into the workforce as young adults, leaving a path for future generations to follow (Bialik & Fry, 2019). Between the ages of 22–37 years old, 86% of the men and 66% of the women were in the workforce (Bialik & Fry, 2019). Kane (2019) posited that Boomers are well-established in their careers and hold positions of power and authority. For example, Kane (2019) stated that nearly 70% of law firm partners are Boomers. Loretto (n.d.) and Kane (2019) characterized Boomers as hard workers and very committed to their personal and professional goals. Loretto (n.d.) also noted that leading Boomers could be challenging because they are competitive and angered by threats to their position or prestige.

Generation X

Generation X is also known as Gen X, Post-Boomers, and Baby Busters because their birthrate dropped significantly from the Boomers (Schroer, 2008). Schroer also noted that Generation X is sometimes referred to as the lost generation since they were the first generation of latchkey kids exposed to considerable amounts of daycare and divorce. In addition, Generation X often experienced broken families, single-parent families, and absentee parents (Beutell & Wittig-Berman, 2008). The greatest ambition of Generation X was to keep pace with the transformations taking place in the world (Berkup, 2014).

The historical events shaping Generation X include the first U.S. gas shortages, the fall of the Berlin wall and separation of the Soviet Union, and the tragedy of the Challenger Space Shuttle blowing up. Furthermore, Apple and Tandy started marketing personal computers, the medical community identified, and the nation feared the AIDs virus, and MTV started broadcasting music videos. Generation X also linked predigital and digital cultures, liberal and neo-conservative political fluctuations, material wealth and economic adversity, social engagement and pessimistic abandonment, and class-based and non-class-based extremism (e.g., environmental issues, LGTB rights; Katz, 2017).

Generation X is one of the most highly educated generations in history (Lissitsa & Kol, 2016). The women of Generation X were the first to outpace the men in obtaining a bachelor's degree, 31% to 28% (Bialik & Fry, 2019). Annual surveys in 2012 found that Generation X was highly educated, active, balanced, happy, and family-oriented (Swanbrow, 2012). Schroer (2008) confirmed that 29% of Generation X obtained a bachelor's degree or higher.

Increased education led Generation X to a particular way of approaching politics (Phillips-Fein, 2019). Generation X political leaders remain skeptical of social movements and reject ideology. The idea of Generation X stood for antagonism toward the political establishment and deflation of pretension of all kinds. Their attitude of submission and indecision seemed to result from right-wing dominance (Phillips-Fein, 2019). Katz (2017) believes Generation X plays an integral role in connecting the Silent Generation and the Millennials through its proficiency in promoting cultural tolerance and social justice.

In the workforce, a catalyst study of Generation X workers revealed that 85% care a great deal about their organization, and 83% are willing to go beyond expectations to ensure the success of their company (Catalyst, 2001). Wiedmer (2015) reported, however, that Generation X is generally less loyal to their organizations and more comfortable demanding adaptable work arrangements. Generation X is pragmatic and direct at work, expects change, and requires flexible rules and regulations (Wiedmer, 2015). In addition, Generation X are geeks, free thinkers, and artists who desire to be fast-paced, occupied in stimulating work, and

efficient because they value personal time and enjoy working on self-directed or autonomous assignments (Grimes, n.d.).

Millennials

Millennials are also known as Generation Y, Echo Boomers, Generation We, and Internet Generation (Schroer, 2008). Millennials were born from 1981–1996 and came of age during the Clinton, Bush, and Obama presidencies. By 2019, Millennials were projected to number 73 million, becoming the largest living adult generation (Bialik & Fry, 2019). Millennials are three times more than Generation X (Ordun, 2015). Historical events impacting this generation are the prison release of Nelson Mandela, the death of Princess Diana, the World Trade Center attacks, and the Columbine High School shootings. They have lived through a time of intense social and demographic change (Crowley, 2011). This generation grew up during a time of constant information about world events as they connected with technology, including computers, the Internet, and smartphones.

Compared to other generations, Millennials are more social and confident as they seek a work-life balance (Wiedmer, 2015). They are less independent, more inclusive, and community-centered and pursue a sense of meaning in broader perspectives. In addition, the parents of Millennials made themselves more available to their kids (Wiedmer, 2015).

Regarding education in general, Millennials are better educated and more diverse, with approximately 40% non-White (Bialik & Fry, 2019). Millennials received a better education than their grandparents, with 39% of those ages 25–37 having a bachelor's degree or higher (Bialik & Fry, 2019). Millennial women are 43% more likely than the Silent Generation women to obtain a bachelor's degree (Bialik & Fry, 2019). Furthermore, 43% of Millennial women have a bachelor's degree, compared to only 36% of Millennial men (Bialik & Fry, 2019).

As a unit, they lean left on social issues, vehemently supporting interracial and same-sex marriage. Concerning marriage, Millennials are delaying or forgoing marriage altogether (Bialik & Fry, 2019). The average age for a Millennial man to marry is 30 and 28 for women (Bialik & Fry, 2019). They are also more likely to live at home with their parents for extended periods (Bialik & Fry, 2019).

Regarding the government, Millennials are the second largest voting block behind the baby Boomers (Bialik & Fry, 2019). Only 51% of eligible Millennial voters voted (Bialik & Fry, 2019). The growing numbers will impact the country's politics because 59% of Millennials registered to vote Democrat (Bialik & Fry, 2019). The Millennial generation has developed unique political preferences significantly to the left of older generations (Fisher, 2020). Therefore, the Millennial generation has the potential to alter the direction of American Politics (Fisher, 2020). In addition, this generation believes the government has a progressive role to play in their lives (Crowley, 2011). Millennials are economically frustrated, yet they believe life in the United States has improved since the 1960s, partially due to the technological transformation (Crowley, 2011).

Millennials contribute the second largest number of workers to the workforce. Only the Boomers provide more (Bialik & Fry, 2019). The employment of men was at a rate of 83% and women at of 72%. Millennials expect more supervision, feedback, clear goals, structure, and mentoring (Wiedmer, 2015). They also expect to multi-task and approach projects from various creative perspectives (Wiedmer, 2015). Despite a reputation for changing jobs frequently, Millennial workers are just as likely to remain with their employers as Generation X workers were when they were the same age (Bialik & Fry, 2019).

Summary

This literature review reported on research from the areas of generational differences, Pentecostalism, and generational characteristics. After relating the history of generational differences, the review covered distinct generational differences regarding society and religion. Next, the review included research on the origins of early Christianity and Pentecostalism, the formation of AGUSA, and their Statement of Fundamental Truths. Finally, the researcher presented unique characteristics of each generation in the study: Silent, Baby Boomer, X, and Millennial. There is a gap in the literature concerning specific religious beliefs of ministers as a whole or from specific denominations. One assumption for this gap in the literature is that once a minister agrees to a set of beliefs, doctrines, or practices, they will continue in those beliefs and practices or give up their

ministerial status. Therefore, there would be no apparent need for a study. Thus, the current research project significantly contributed to the academic field.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

Spiritual and theological panorama in the Assemblies of God USA (AGUSA) was the focus of the current study. The study was specifically designed to evaluate and reinforce essential experiences and responses to the potential reality that AGUSA has a widening gap between generations concerning fundamental beliefs. Doctrines that have been ascribed to for over 100 years are possibly experiencing an increasing dissimilarity between internal language of AGUSA and the shifting actuality of minister's ideals and beliefs. The evaluation of how various generations think, believe, and act is instrumental to the discovery and mitigation of potential issues within AGUSA regarding future strategic planning and engagement with the credentialed ministers.

Research Design and Methodology

The study's research design was quantitative and nonexperimental (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2016). The study's primary research methodology was a survey research approach. Data were subsequently accessed in archived format. An ordained minister employed within the AGUSA developed the study's research instrument specifically purposed to conduct a quantitative data. Emerging themes from an exhaustive literature review and professional experience informed the questions and items represented on the survey (Adamson, 2017). The choice of survey research provided the benefits and advantages of statistical power, flexibility, scalability, and the ability to produce a considerable amount of data on a study's topic (T. L. Jones et al., 2013). Moreover, Creswell and Guetterman (2019) noted that using a cross-sectional survey design, scholars can evaluate current attitudes, beliefs, opinions, or practices about specific issues.

Research Questions & Hypotheses

Four research questions and hypotheses were posed to address the study's topic and research problem. The following represents the research questions and research hypotheses stated in the study:

1. Is there a statistically significant effect for a generation of study participant upon the belief the AGUSA is theologically sound?
2. Is there a statistically significant effect for a generation of study participant upon the belief that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society?
3. Is there a statistically significant effect for a generation of study participant upon the belief that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and possibly change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society?
4. Is there a statistically significant effect for a generation of study participant upon the belief a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues?

Four hypotheses are posed to address the study's topic and research problem.

H1: There is not a statistically significant effect between generations of study participants upon the belief that the AGUSA is theologically sound.

H2: There is not a statistically significant effect between generations of study participants upon the belief that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society.

H3: There is a statistically significant effect between generations of study participants upon the belief that it is important that the AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and possibly change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society.

H4: There is a statistically significant effect between generations of study participants upon the belief a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues.

Population and Sample

A secondary dataset commissioned by the AGUSA was used in this study. Data were collected from the AGUSA population pool of ministers at all levels of credentialing from April 28 to May 14, 2017. Ministers were invited to participate

via an email from the AGUSA national office, which contained a link to the research instrument using the Qualtrics Survey Management System. The email contained the necessary information for survey completion and was both voluntary and confidential in nature. A total of 5,324 ministers initially engaged the survey, with a total of 3,625 completing the survey. The survey contained 176 Likert-type questions and items organized into 14 specific groupings. The number of questions and items per grouping ranged from four to 22.

Statistical Power Analysis

Statistical power analysis using G*Power software (3.1.9.2, Universität Düsseldorf, Germany) was conducted for sample size estimates for statistical significance testing purposes in advance of the study (Faul et al., 2009). The study's statistical power analysis was delimited to large and medium anticipated effects, a power ($1 - \beta$) index of .80, and a probability level of .05. A 1 x 4 ANOVA statistical technique was used for used for statistical significance testing purposes in research questions one through four. As a result, a medium effect ($f = .25$) required 176 participants and 76 for a large effect ($f = .40$) to detect a statistically significant finding. As such, the study's sample of study participants was well-beyond the necessary parameters to detect a statistically significant finding for the respective statistical techniques foreseen to be used in the study.

Research Instrumentation & Procedures

An archived, secondary dataset achieved through a survey research methodological approach represented the study's research instrumentation. Data were collected and archived through the auspices of the AGUSA national office. AGUSA systematically collected data from ministers from April 28 through May 14, 2017. The data collection process represented the first instance that the AGUSA engaged in collecting a large quantity of data on their ministers. Collecting data on a wide variety of subjects from attitudes about the fellowship to holiness, doctrine, and contemporary issues was designed to provide AGUSA with a significant amount of feedback that it would otherwise normally ignore or not consider worthwhile to measure.

The initial pilot study survey questions and items were administered by email from AGUSA on December 8, 2016, for an external audit. The email contained a link to the survey distributed by Qualtrics Survey Management System. This pilot study administration of the research instrument was randomly delivered to 50 credentialed AGUSA ministers from diverse classifications of age, credential level, and assignment. The research instrument was considered anonymous in nature, rather than confidential, due to the perceived controversial nature of some of the questions and items represented on the instrument. Only eight responses were received by January 9, 2017, for a response rate of only 16%.

A second pilot administration of the research instrument was administered via email from AGUSA on March 15, 2017, to a random sampling. This was implemented as a guard against negative or positive appreciable bias with respect to age, credential level, gender, ethnicity, or ministerial assignment (Creswell, 2016). A response rate of 24% was achieved this time, with a median time of 30 minutes per survey noted; this was seen as a positive increase.

The final survey questions and items were grouped into 14 separate topics. Approximately 13,000 ministers received the email offering participation in the study's survey. The survey was initially engaged by 5,324 ministers and completed by 3,625 ministers for a response rate of 68.1% (Adamson, 2017). Table 2 contains a summary of the study's survey questions and items by specific grouping identifier.

Table 2

Listing of Survey Groups with Number of Items

Grouping Topic	Number of Items
Satisfaction with AGUSA	4
Personal Engagement with AGUSA	11
Descriptors of AGUSA	10
Spirit-Empowerment	15
Empowerment Impact in the Individual	4
Speaking in Tongues	6

Impact of Contemporary Issues	22
Lifestyle	16
Beliefs about Millennials	7
Civic and Cultural Engagement	14
Future of AGUSA	20
AG World Missions	11
Church Practices	20
Holiness	11
History of the AG	5
Total	176

Study Variables

Dependent Variables

The research questions have distinctive variables associated with them. For the study's four research questions, the dependent variables were AGUSA credentialed ministers' response to perceptions of those who strongly believes the 16 fundamental truths of AGUSA should not change, AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and possibly change, the AGUSA is theologically sound, and a person who is Spirit-baptized must initially speak in tongues.

Independent Variables

The minister's generation represented the primary independent variables for the study's four research questions. Ministers were identified by generation from Millennials through the Silent Generation. Demographic variables such as minister's gender, geographic region of residence, and ministry represented additional independent variables.

Preliminary Descriptive Statistical Analysis

The study's data set consisted of archived survey data collected over a 17-day period. Respondents who initially engaged the survey but did not complete it were removed through an initial screening of the dataset, constituting a total 32% of the respondents removed from participation from the study. The study's

demographic information was evaluated using descriptive statistical techniques, using the descriptive statistical techniques of frequencies (n) and percentages (%). Descriptive statistical techniques were also used to assess the study's data by essential response sets. The study's essential response data were analyzed using the descriptive statistical techniques of frequencies (n), measures of typicality (mean scores), variability (minimum/maximum; standard deviations), standard errors of the mean (SE_M), and data normality (skewness, kurtosis).

Data Analysis by Research Question & Hypothesis

The study's research four research questions and hypotheses were addressed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The probability level of $p \leq .05$ represented the threshold value for findings within the research questions and hypotheses in the analyses to be considered statistically significant. Numeric effect sizes achieved in the analyses of the study's four research questions and hypotheses were interpreted using the conventions proposed by Sawilowsky (2009).

The study's four research questions and hypotheses were addressed for statistical significance testing purposes using the one-way analysis of variance (1 x 4 ANOVA). The assumption of homogeneity of variances associated with the between-subjects ANOVA was address through the interpretation of respective Levene F values. The assumptions of data normality for the dependent variables in analyses associated with each of the four research questions was addressed through the interpretation of respective skew and kurtosis values (George & Mallery, 2019). The eta square (η^2) was used to interpret omnibus effect sizes for each of the four analyses.

The researcher conducted follow-up post hoc analyses using Tukey's HSD statistical technique for omnibus ANOVA findings that were statistically significant. Tukey's HSD p -value adjustments were conducted to correct for the effect of multiple comparisons on the family-wise error rate (Field, 2018). The analysis of study data was conducted using the 28th version of IBM's SPSS software.

Summary

A description of the essential elements of the study's research design and methodology were presented in Chapter 3 of the study. Study data were initially collected through a structured, Likert-type research instrument. The study's sample of participants far exceeded *a priori* statistical power analysis projections thereby providing sufficient statistical power for statistical significance testing purposes. Four research questions and hypotheses were formally stated to address the study's topic and research problem. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyze the study's data. Chapter 4 is a formal reporting of the findings of the study.

Chapter 4 – Results

Chapter 4 is the formal reporting of the findings of this study. Data were collected through a survey research methodological approach and subsequently retrieved as archived data. Four research questions and hypotheses were developed based on the study's topic and the identified research problem. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyze study data at the preliminary, foundational level and by research question stated. The researcher conducted data analysis using the 28th version of IBM's Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The following sections contain the formal reporting of findings achieved at the preliminary, foundational level, and then by research question.

Preliminary Descriptive Statistical Findings

Demographic Identifying Information

The sample's demographic information was evaluated using descriptive statistical techniques. Specifically, the researcher described the sample using the statistical techniques of frequencies (n) and percentages (%). Table 3 contains a summary of finding for the descriptive statistical analysis of the study's demographic identifying information for the respective generation of study participants.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics Summary Table: Study Sample of Participants by Generation

Variable	n	%	Cumulative %
Generation			
Millennial	483	10.52	10.52
Gen X	1362	29.65	40.17
Baby Boomer	1432	31.18	71.35
Silent	216	4.70	76.05
Missing	1100	23.95	100.00

Table 4 contains a summary of finding for the descriptive statistical analysis of the participants' respective region of the United States, gender, and ethnicity.

Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics Summary Table: Demographic Identifying Information
(Region, Gender, & Ethnicity)*

Variable	<i>n</i>	%	Cumulative %
US Region			
Great Lakes Area	448	9.75	9.75
Gulf Area	166	3.61	13.37
Language Area East Spanish	28	0.61	13.98
Language Area West Spanish	34	0.74	14.72
Language Area-Other	14	0.30	15.02
Northcentral Area	378	8.23	23.25
Northeast Area	440	9.58	32.83
Northwest Area	371	8.08	40.91
Southcentral Area	576	12.54	53.45
Southeast Area	490	10.67	64.12
Southwest Area	418	9.10	73.22
Unknown	122	2.66	75.88
Missing	1108	24.12	100.00
Gender			
Male	2804	61.05	61.05
Female	677	14.74	75.79
Missing	1112	24.21	100.00
Ethnicity			
White, Non-Hispanic	3009	65.51	65.51
Black or African American	63	1.37	66.88
American Indian or Alaska Native	45	0.98	67.86
Asian	46	1.00	68.87
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	14	0.30	69.17
Other	79	1.72	70.89
Hispanic	230	5.01	75.90
Missing	1107	24.10	100.00

Table 5 presents the results of the descriptive statistical analysis of the information for respective community size, education level, and ministry status of study participants.

Table 5

*Descriptive Statistics Summary Table: Demographic Identifying Information
(Community Size, Education Level, Ministry Status)*

Variable	<i>n</i>	%	Cumulative %
Community Size			
0 – 2,499	354	7.71	7.71
2,500 – 9,999	501	10.91	18.62
10,000 – 24,999	475	10.34	28.96
25,000 – 49,999	416	9.06	38.01
50,000 – 99,999	435	9.47	47.49
100,000 – 299,999	586	12.76	60.24
300,000 +	709	15.44	75.68
Missing	1117	24.32	100.00
Education Level			
Less than High School	14	0.30	0.30
High School Graduate	148	3.22	3.53
Some College	670	14.59	18.11
2-Year Degree	251	5.46	23.58
4-Year Degree	1269	27.63	51.21
Professional Degree	845	18.40	69.61
Doctorate	294	6.40	76.01
Missing	1102	23.99	100.00
Ministry Status			
Certified Minister	403	8.77	8.77
Licensed Minister	853	18.57	27.35
Ordained Minister	2235	48.66	76.01
None of the Above	3	0.07	76.07
Missing	1099	23.93	100.00

Descriptive Statistics: Essential Response Set Items (Satisfaction)

The researcher employed descriptive statistical techniques to assess the study's data by response sets. Specifically, the researcher calculated frequencies (*n*), measures of typicality (mean scores), variability (minimum/maximum; standard deviations), standard errors of the mean (SE_M), and data normality (skewness, kurtosis). Table 6 contains a summary of finding for the descriptive statistical analysis of the study's response set data associated with perceptions of

satisfaction with the AG as a fellowship, AG impact on American society, and the direction of the AG in the United States.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics Summary Table: Perceptions of Satisfaction by Survey Item

Satisfaction	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>SE_M</i>	Min	Max	Skew	Kurtosis
AG as a Fellowship	3.24	0.74	4425	0.01	1.00	4.00	-0.76	0.29
AG Impact on Society	2.76	0.73	4366	0.01	1.00	4.00	-0.07	-0.37
AG Direction in the US	2.88	0.78	4244	0.01	1.00	4.00	-0.34	-0.26

Table 7 contains a summary of findings reflecting the participants' perceptions of satisfaction with the AG as a fellowship, AG impact on American society, and the direction of the AG in the United States by generation.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics Summary Table: Perceptions of Satisfaction by Survey Item

by Generation of Study Participant

Satisfaction/Generation	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>SE_M</i>	Min	Max	Skew	Kurtosis
Millennial								
AG as a Fellowship	3.30	0.67	476	0.03	1.00	4.00	-0.69	0.44
AG Impact on Society	2.74	0.70	469	0.03	1.00	4.00	0.01	-0.38
AG Direction in the US	2.98	0.74	458	0.03	1.00	4.00	-0.33	-0.20
Gen X								
AG as a Fellowship	3.22	0.73	1346	0.02	1.00	4.00	-0.71	0.25
AG Impact on Society	2.73	0.73	1336	0.02	1.00	4.00	-0.10	-0.29
AG Direction in the US	2.86	0.78	1303	0.02	1.00	4.00	-0.38	-0.14
Baby Boomer								
AG as a Fellowship	3.26	0.74	1405	0.02	1.00	4.00	-0.78	0.30
AG Impact on Society	2.76	0.72	1392	0.02	1.00	4.00	-0.00	-0.46
AG Direction in the US	2.86	0.81	1362	0.02	1.00	4.00	-0.28	-0.46
Silent								
AG as a Fellowship	3.20	0.84	207	0.06	1.00	4.00	-0.84	0.02
AG Impact on Society	2.76	0.77	203	0.05	1.00	4.00	-0.15	-0.38
AG Direction in the US	2.74	0.81	197	0.06	1.00	4.00	-0.43	-0.17

Findings by Research Question and Hypothesis

The study's research four research questions were answered using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The probability level of $p \leq .05$ was selected to represent the threshold value for statistical significance. Numeric magnitudes of effect achieved in the analyses were interpreted using the conventions of effect size interpretations offered by Sawilowsky (2009). The following represents the findings achieved in the study by research question stated:

Research Question 1

The first research question asked: Is there a statistically significant effect for generation of study participant upon the belief the AGUSA is theologically sound? An analysis of variance (1 x 4 ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the effect exerted by study participant generation upon perceptions that the AG is theologically sound. As a result, the researcher determined that the overall effect for study participant generation upon perceptions that the AG is theologically sound was statistically significant ($F(3, 3,469) = 18.05, p < .001$), indicating significant differences in study participant perceptions that the AG is theologically sound among the levels of generation (Table 9). The eta squared value was 0.02, indicating that study participant generation explains approximately 2% of the variance in perceptions that the AG is theologically sound. The means and standard deviations of the ANOVA analysis are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Analysis of Variance Summary Table: Perceptions that the AG is Theologically Sound by Generation of Study Participant

Model	SS	df	F	p	η^2
Generation	129.05	3	18.05	< .001	0.02
Residuals	8,268.75	3469			

Table 9

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Sample Size for Perceptions that the AG is Theologically Sound by Study Participant Generation

Generation	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Millennial	8.50	1.67	482
Gen X	8.79	1.51	1354
Baby Boomer	9.01	1.56	1424
Silent	9.24	1.38	213

Follow-Up Post-Hoc Analysis. The researcher conducted follow-up post hoc analyses using *t*-tests between each pair of measurements to further evaluate the differences among the variables. Tukey’s HSD *p*-value adjustments were used to correct for the effect of multiple comparisons on the family-wise error rate (Field, 2018). For the main effect of the variable “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that the AG is theologically sound for the category of “Millennial” ($M = 8.50$, $SD = 1.67$) was significantly lesser than for the category of “Gen X” ($M = 8.79$, $SD = 1.51$; $p = .002$). For the main effect of the variable “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that the AG is theologically sound for the category of “Millennial” ($M = 8.50$, $SD = 1.67$) was significantly lesser than for the category of “Baby Boomer” ($M = 9.01$, $SD = 1.56$; $p < .001$). For the main effect of the variable “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that the AG is theologically sound for the category of “Millennial” ($M = 8.50$, $SD = 1.67$) was significantly lesser than for the category of “Silent” ($M = 9.24$, $SD = 1.38$; $p < .001$). For the main effect of the variable “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that the AG is theologically sound for the category of “Gen X” ($M = 8.79$, $SD = 1.51$) was significantly lesser than for the category of “Baby Boomer” ($M = 9.01$, $SD = 1.56$; $p = .002$). Finally, for the main effect of the variable “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that the AG is theologically sound for the category of “Gen X” ($M = 8.79$, $SD = 1.51$) was significantly lesser than for the category of Silent ($M = 9.24$, $SD = 1.38$; $p < .001$).

The null hypothesis associated with this research question was: There is not a statistically significant effect between generations of study participants upon the belief that the AGUSA is theologically sound. Considering the statistically

significant effect exerted by study participant generation upon perceptions that the AG is theologically sound, the null hypothesis for Research Question 1 was rejected.

Research Question 2

RQ2 was: Is there a statistically significant effect for generation of study participant upon the belief that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society? An analysis of variance (1 x 4 ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the effect exerted by study participant “Generation” upon perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society. As a result, the finding for study participant “Generation” upon perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society was statistically significant ($F(3, 3,396) = 65.98, p < .001$), indicating that there were significant differences in perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society among the levels of study participant “Generation” (Table 11). The eta squared value was 0.06, indicating study participant “Generation” explains approximately 6% of the variance in perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society. The means and standard deviations of the ANOVA analysis are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Analysis of Variance Summary Table: Perceptions that it is Important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to Proactively Shape its Future and have a Positive Impact on Society by Study Participant Generation

Model	SS	df	F	p	η^2
Generation	1,274.49	3	65.98	< .001	0.06
Residuals	21,865.01	3396			

Table 11

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Sample Size for Perceptions that it is Important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to Proactively Shape its Future and have a Positive Impact on Society by Study Participant Generation

Generation	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Millennial	7.32	3.12	470
Gen X	8.15	2.78	1323
Baby Boomer	9.00	2.14	1396
Silent	9.25	1.84	211

Follow-Up Post-Hoc Analysis. Follow-up post hoc analyses using *t*-tests were conducted between each pair of measurements to further evaluate the differences among the variables. Tukey's HSD *p*-value adjustments were used to correct for the effect of multiple comparisons on the family-wise error rate (Field, 2018). For the main effect of "Generation," the mean of perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society for the category of "Millennial" ($M = 7.32$, $SD = 3.12$) was significantly lesser than for the category of "Gen X" ($M = 8.15$, $SD = 2.78$; $p < .001$). For the main effect of "Generation," the mean of perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society for the category of "Millennial" ($M = 7.32$, $SD = 3.12$) was significantly lesser than for the category of "Baby Boomer" ($M = 9.00$, $SD = 2.14$; $p < .001$). For the main effect of "Generation," the mean of perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society for the category of "Millennial" ($M = 7.32$, $SD = 3.12$) was significantly lesser than for the category of "Silent" ($M = 9.25$, $SD = 1.84$; $p < .001$). For the main effect of "Generation," the mean of perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society for the category of "Gen X" ($M = 8.15$, $SD =$

2.78) was significantly lesser than for the category of “Baby Boomer” ($M = 9.00$, $SD = 2.14$; $p < .001$). Finally, for the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society for the category of “Gen X” ($M = 8.15$, $SD = 2.78$) was significantly lesser than for the category of “Silent” ($M = 9.25$, $SD = 1.84$; $p < .001$).

The second null hypothesis was: There is not a statistically significant effect between generations of study participants upon the belief that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society. Considering the statistically significant effect for study participant perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society, the researcher rejected this null hypothesis.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 asked: Is there a statistically significant effect for generation of study participant upon the belief that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society? The researcher conducted an analysis of variance (1 x 4 ANOVA) to evaluate the effect exerted by study participant generation upon perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and change for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society. As a result, the overall effect for study participant generation upon perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and change for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society was statistically significant ($F(3, 3,364) = 13.85$, $p < .001$), indicating significant differences in perceptions it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and change for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society among the levels of study participant “Generation” (Table 13). The eta squared value was 0.01, indicating that the variable of “Generation” explains approximately 1% of the variance in perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should

be revisited and change for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society. The means and standard deviations of the ANOVA analysis are presented in Table 12.

Table 12

Analysis of Variance Summary Table: Perceptions that it is Important that AGUSA Doctrine Should be Revisited and Change for the AG to Proactively Shape its Future and Positively Impact Society by Generation

Model	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Generation	388.99	3	13.85	< .001	0.01
Residuals	31,491.63	3364			

Table 13

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Sample Size for Perceptions it is Important that AGUSA Doctrine should be Revisited and Change for the AG to Proactively Shape its Future and Positively Impact Society by Generation

Generation	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Millennial	4.23	3.02	473
Gen X	3.61	3.05	1312
Baby Boomer	3.20	3.07	1372
Silent	3.46	3.14	211

Follow-Up Post-Hoc Analysis. Follow-up analyses using *t*-tests were conducted between each pair of measurements to further evaluate the differences among the variables. The researcher used Tukey's HSD *p*-value adjustments to correct for the effect of multiple comparisons on the family-wise error rate (Field, 2018). For the main effect of "Generation," the mean of perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and change for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society the category of "Millennial" ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 3.02$) was significantly greater than for the category of "Gen X" ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 3.05$; $p = .001$). For the main effect of "Generation," the mean of perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be

revisited and change for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society for the category of “Millennial” ($M = 4.23, SD = 3.02$) was significantly greater than for the category of “Baby Boomer” ($M = 3.20, SD = 3.07; p < .001$). For the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and change for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society for the category of “Millennial” ($M = 4.23, SD = 3.02$) was significantly greater than for the category of “Silent” ($M = 3.46, SD = 3.14; p = .01$). Finally, for the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and change for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society for the category of “Gen X” ($M = 3.61, SD = 3.05$) was significantly greater than for the category of “Baby Boomer” ($M = 3.20, SD = 3.07; p = .003$).

The third null hypothesis was: There is a statistically significant effect between generations of study participants upon the belief that it is important that the AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and possibly change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society. Considering the statistically significant effect for study participant generation upon perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and change for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society, the alternative hypothesis for Research Question 3 was retained.

Research Question 4

The fourth research question was: Is there a statistically significant effect for generation of study participant upon the belief a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues? An analysis of variance (1 x 4 ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the effect exerted by study participant generation upon perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues. As a result, the overall effect for study participant generation upon perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues was statistically significant ($F(3, 3,415) = 53.59, p < .001$), indicating there were significant differences in perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak

in tongues among the levels of “Generation” (Table 15). The eta squared value was 0.04 indicating “Generation” explains approximately 4% of the variance in perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues. The means and standard deviations of the ANOVA analysis are presented in Table 14.

Table 14

Analysis of Variance Summary Table: Perceptions that a Person Who is Spirit Baptized must Initially Speak in Tongues by Generation

Model	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Generation	1,089.28	3	53.59	< .001	0.04
Residuals	23,136.64	3415			

Table 15

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Sample Size for Perceptions that a Person Who is Spirit Baptized must Initially Speak in Tongues by Generation

Generation	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Millennial	6.90	3.02	471
Gen X	7.83	2.71	1326
Baby Boomer	8.48	2.38	1408
Silent	8.87	2.29	214

Follow-Up Post-Hoc Analysis. The researcher conducted follow-up analyses using *t*-tests between each pair of measurements to further evaluate the differences among the variables Tukey’s HSD *p*-value adjustments were used to correct for the effect of multiple comparisons on the family-wise error rate (Field, 2018). For the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues for the category of “Millennial” ($M = 6.90$, $SD = 3.02$) was significantly lesser than for the category of “Gen X” ($M = 7.83$, $SD = 2.71$; $p < .001$). For the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues for the category of “Millennial” ($M = 6.90$, $SD = 3.02$) was significantly lesser than for the category of “Baby Boomer” ($M = 8.48$, $SD = 2.38$; $p < .001$). For

the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues for the category of “Millennial” ($M = 6.90$, $SD = 3.02$) was significantly lesser than for the category of “Silent” ($M = 8.87$, $SD = 2.29$; $p < .001$). For the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues for the category of “Gen X” ($M = 7.83$, $SD = 2.71$) was significantly lesser than for the category of “Baby Boomer” ($M = 8.48$, $SD = 2.38$; $p < .001$). Finally, for the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues for the category of “Gen X” ($M = 7.83$, $SD = 2.71$) was significantly lesser than for the category of “Silent” ($M = 8.87$, $SD = 2.29$; $p < .001$).

H_a 4 was: There is a statistically significant effect for study participant generation upon perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues. Considering the statistically significant effect for study participant generation upon perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues, the researcher determined that the alternative hypothesis for this research question should be retained.

Summary

Chapter 4 was a report of the findings and results attained in the study. In this quantitative study, the researcher explored the beliefs of AG ministers. The study was designed to assess and compare AG ministers’ denominational and doctrinal beliefs in the AGUSA by generational groups. The mathematical relationship between generational groups of ministers concerning AG doctrine and beliefs was statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were rejected, as the analysis proved a statistical significance between generational groups concerning the perception that the AGUSA is theologically sound and upon the belief that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society. Hypotheses 3 and 4 were retained, as the analysis proved a statistical significance between generational groups concerning perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and possibly change for the

AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society, and upon the perception that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues.

Chapter 5 – Discussion

Chapter 5 begins with summary of the study's problem, purpose, and design. This chapter includes a review of the findings and results by research question. This chapter also contains a discussion of the findings. The researcher then reflects on the limitations discovered during the study, implications for practice, and contributions to research. Finally, the researcher presents recommendations for further research.

The theory of generational differences posits that individuals born within approximately a 20-year time period share a collective set of characteristics established through historical experiences, economic and social circumstances, technological enhancements, and other societal transformations they have in common (Reeves & Oh, 2007). Generations, mindsets, beliefs, and personalities are rooted in cultural change (Twenge et al., 2015). Therefore, when cultures shift, generational differences are formed. Hout and Fischer (2014a) noted that generational change is a significant source of declining religious inclinations. Schwadel (2011a) also posited that the decline in religious perspective suggests religious activity and belief are declining across birth cohorts. Furthermore, as interest in religion and religious activity declines, Christian beliefs and practices have declined (Ammerman, 2013; Miller et al., 2013).

This generational decline in Christian beliefs and practices concerns leaders of the Christian faith. The AGUSA is a Pentecostal fellowship with over 13,000 churches, 69 million members, and 38,000 credentialed ministers. The AGUSA has developed a Statement of Fundamental Truths, which are 16 core doctrines that AG churches and ministers hold to and observe. The total number of ministers in the AGUSA increased from 32,310 in 2000 to 37,713 in 2020. The percentage of total credentialed ministers under 40 years of age in the AGUSA has dropped, however, from 26.2% in 2000 to 18.7% in 2020. The number of AGUSA ministers under 40 went from 8,450 in 2000 to 7,045 in 2020. Is the AGUSA experiencing similar generational declines in its credentialed ministers due to the decrease in Christian beliefs and practices in U.S. society? Are the doctrinal beliefs of AGUSA ministers declining with each succeeding generation? The current researcher posited that

there would be generational differences in AGUSA credentialed ministers' doctrinal beliefs. The results of this study demonstrated generational differences in doctrinal beliefs to be statistically significant among AGUSA credentialed ministers.

Discussion of Preliminary Findings

Descriptive statistical techniques were used to evaluate the study's demographic-identifying information. Various regions of the United States were similarly represented, with between 8.08% and 12.54 percent of the total respondents. The exception was the Gulf region, with only 3.61 of the total respondents. The language districts accounted for only 1.65% of the total ministers who responded. Males accounted for 61.05% of the total respondents, while females accounted for 14.74% of the total, with 24.21% of the data missing. In 2017, females accounted for 25% of the total number of credentialed ministers. White, non-Hispanic ministers made up 65.51% of the survey respondents. Hispanic ministers accounted for 5.01% of the total. Black or African American ministers represented 1.37% of the respondents, while Asian ministers comprised 1% of the total. In 2017, AGUSA ministers included 65% White, 13.8% Hispanic, 2.4% Black, and 3.1% Asian/Pacific Islander.

Each of the AGUSA minister's community sizes was fairly represented. The least represented community size was 0–2,499, with 7.71% of the ministers. The most represented community size was over 300,000, with 15.44%. The educational levels of the AGUSA ministers varied. Ministers with less than high school to some college made up 18.11% of the total respondents. Ministers with either a 2- or 4-year degree comprised 33.09% of the total. Those with a professional degree or doctorate totaled 24.8%. Of the three levels of AGUSA credentials, 8.77% of the survey respondents held the lowest credential of certified minister, while 48.66% held the highest credential of an ordained minister.

Of particular interest were the findings for the descriptive statistical analysis of the study's response set data associated with the perceptions of satisfaction with the AG as a fellowship, its impact on society, and the direction of the AG in the United States. The analysis reported a mean of 3.24 when 4 represented the highest

satisfaction possible regarding satisfaction with the AG as a fellowship. Regarding the AG impact on society, the analysis produced a mean score of 2.76 when 4 represented the highest satisfaction possible. Finally, the analysis produced a mean score of 2.88 when 4 represented the highest satisfaction possible regarding the direction of the AG in the United States.

When the perceptions analysis is disaggregated by generation, the analysis shows that the youngest generation maintains the most favorable results toward the AG. Millennial ministers possessed the highest satisfaction for the AG as a fellowship and AG direction in the United States, with a mean of 3.30 and 2.98, respectively. Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation tied with a mean of 2.76 on the satisfaction of the AG impact on society. Perceptions of satisfaction with the AG as a fellowship and direction in the United States, the mean satisfaction scores decrease from one generation to the next, starting with Millennials, down to Gen X, down to Baby Boomer, and down to Silent. On the perception of satisfaction with the AG impact on society, the Baby Boomers and Silent Generation tie at 2.76, followed by Millennials at 2.74, and Gen X at 2.73. The perception of satisfaction with the AG impact on society was unusually close between all generations, with a mean difference of only .03.

This analysis should be extremely encouraging to the AGUSA. Although altogether, the generation's perceptions are supportive, the younger generations either led the way in positivity toward AGUSA or were extremely close. The Millennials were most favorable to AGUSA in the two categories of satisfaction with the AG as a fellowship and the direction of the AG in the United States. While there is a decrease in the number of ministers under 40 years of age, these ministers have a positive perception of the Fellowship and its future.

Research Question 1 Results and Discussion

The researcher conducted an analysis of variance (1 x 4 ANOVA) to evaluate the effect exerted by study participant generation upon perceptions that the AG is theologically sound. As a result, the overall effect for study participant generation upon perceptions that the AG is theologically sound was statistically significant, indicating there were significant differences in study participant

perceptions that the AG is theologically sound among the levels of generation (Table 12). The eta squared value was 0.02, indicating that study participant generation explains approximately 2% of the variance in perceptions that the AG is theologically sound.

The researcher then conducted follow-up post hoc analyses using *t*-tests between each pair of measurements to further evaluate the differences among the variables. Tukey's HSD *p*-value adjustments were used to correct for the effect of multiple comparisons on the family-wise error rate (Field, 2018). For the main effect of the variable "Generation," the mean of perceptions that the AG is theologically sound for the category of "Millennial" was significantly lesser than for the category of "Gen X." For the main effect of the variable "Generation," the mean of perceptions that the AG is theologically sound for the category of "Millennial" was significantly lesser than for the category of "Baby Boomer." For the main effect of the variable "Generation," the mean of perceptions that the AG is theologically sound for the category of "Millennial" was significantly lesser than for the category of "Silent." For the main effect of the variable "Generation," the mean of perceptions that the AG is theologically sound for the category of "Gen X" was significantly lesser than for the category of "Baby Boomer." Furthermore, for the main effect of the variable "Generation," the mean of perceptions that the AG is theologically sound for the category of "Gen X" was significantly lesser than for the category of "Silent."

This question asked AGUSA credentialed ministers whether they perceived the AG as theologically sound using a 10-point Likert scale. A lower score represented a minister who perceived the AG was not theologically sound, while a higher score signified a minister believed the AG was theologically sound. The Silent Generation scored the highest average at 9.24, followed by Baby Boomers at 9.01, Gen X at 8.79, and Millennials at 8.50. The oldest generation perceived the AG as the soundest, and the youngest perceived the AG as the least sound of the generations. The Millennial score of 8.5, however, seems to signify a positive belief that the AG is theologically sound. Millennials did not perceive as strongly as the others. The *SD* is relatively small, with each generation with a range from

1.38 to 1.67, increasing from Silent (1.38) to Gen X (1.51) to Baby Boomer (1.56) to Millennial (1.67).

Understandably, theology is an essentially important element in any religious organization. Theology is the foundation upon which denominations or ministries are built. Choosing to be credentialed with or belong to a denomination signifies an individual's agreement with its doctrinal statements and practices. The study of the doctrinal beliefs of ministers is unique to this project. A gap in the literature concerning ministers' beliefs made this study's findings contributory to professional literature. There was a statistically significant effect exerted by study participant generation upon perceptions that the AG is theologically sound.

Existing literature provided insight concerning differences between generations. Beutell and Wittig-Berman (2008) characterized the Silent Generation as conservative and conforming. Ministers from the Silent Generation had the strongest perceptions that the AG is theologically sound. The Silent Generation conformed more than any other generation to AG doctrine. These credentialed ministers averaged 9.24 out of a possible 10 on this answer. The next highest score was 9.01 by the Baby Boomers, followed by Generation X with a score of 8.79, and the Millennial score of 8.50. Each succeeding generation scored lower than the older generation. These results match the results of spiritual research that show a decline in each generation's spirituality (Hout & Fischer, 2014a; Kinnaman, 2020; Twenge et al., 2016). For instance, in 2019, the Pew Research Center showed that 84% of the Silent Generation, 76% of the Baby Boomers, and 67% of Generation X describe themselves as Christian, whereas only 49% of Millennials describe themselves as Christian.

The first agenda item for the original meeting in Hot Springs, Arkansas of those who eventually become a part of the Assemblies of God was to clarify what God wanted them to teach and to unite in doctrine (Gohr, 1994a, 1994b).

Maintaining Pentecostal theology is important and essential to the health of AGUSA, its ministers and churches. This study shows the AGUSA credentialed ministers are fairly united in the perception that the Fellowship is theologically

sound; however, it is important to consider the statistically significant and declining disparity between the generations.

The youngest generations have the lowest belief that the AGUSA is theologically sound. This is concerning for the future of AGUSA. The Millennials expressed the lowest perception that the AGUSA is theologically sound. This generation of minister is the one most recently choosing to join the AGUSA. These younger ministers just participated in the credentialing process that asks them to declare their affirmation of beliefs in AGUSA doctrine and theology. It is surprising to discover they are the least convinced AGUSA theology is sound. Did they change their minds this quickly after applying for credentials? Were the AGUSA official theological positions not fully explained or explored in the credentialing process? If this perception continues to decline with younger generations, at what point will younger people considering full-time, vocational ministry choose not to affiliate with AGUSA because they do not believe that the Fellowship is theologically sound?

The youngest generations are the most educated of the generations (Lissitsa & Kol, 2016). Perhaps young people are choosing not to study Pentecostal theology? McGee (1994) posits that little importance has been assigned to the academic treatment of theology due to the five presumed principles that characterized Assemblies of God members: personal experience, oral communications, freedom, spirituality, and scriptural authority. Most recently, however, the AGUSA aggressively promotes academic pursuits, especially in theology. The Assemblies of God Theological Seminary provides highly academic theological studies, including Master's, MDiv, and doctoral programs. While the AGUSA promotes higher education through their regional colleges and universities, the number of young people choosing to become credentialed declines. This decline will be addressed further in the implications section.

Research Question 2 Results and Discussion

An analysis of variance (1 x 4 ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the effect exerted by study participant "Generation" upon perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to

proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society. As a result, the finding for study participant “Generation” upon perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society was statistically significant, indicating there were significant differences in perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society among the levels of study participant “Generation” (Table 14). The eta squared value was 0.06, indicating study participant “Generation” explains approximately 6% of the variance in perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society.

Follow-up post hoc analyses using *t*-tests were conducted between each pair of measurements to further evaluate the differences among the variables. Tukey’s HSD *p*-value adjustments were used to correct the effect of multiple comparisons on the family-wise error rate (Field, 2018). For the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society for the category of “Millennial” was significantly lesser than for the category of “Gen X.” For the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society for the category of “Millennial” was significantly lesser than for the category of “Baby Boomer.” For the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society for the category of “Millennial” was significantly lesser than for the category of “Silent.” For the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society for the category of “Gen X” was significantly lesser than for the category of “Baby

Boomer.” Finally, for the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society for the category of “Gen X” was significantly lesser than for the category of “Silent.”

This question was about the perception that it is important that the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths should not change for the AG to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society. A Likert scale was used with a 1 (or lower score), signifying the credentialed minister was open to a change in the 16 Fundamental truths to proactively shape its future and make a positive impact on society. A score of 10 (or a higher score) would signify that the credentialed minister believed the 16 Fundamental Truths should not change. Again, the Silent Generation had the highest average score at 9.25, followed by Baby Boomers at 9.00, Gen X at 8.15, and Millennials at 7.32. These scores have a significantly greater spread than Research Question 1; however, they continue to decrease in order of generation. It is also interesting to note that the difference in the average scores between Baby Boomer and Silent is .25. The difference between Gen X and Baby Boomer is .85, and the difference between Gen X and the Millennials is .83. The older generations scored 9.00, and 9.25 signifying a satisfaction with the 16 Fundamental truths moving into the future. Generation X was still positive with an 8.15. In comparison, the Millennial average was down to 7.32, which is positive—but noticeably below the older generations.

This more significant decrease accompanies an increase in the standard deviation in each generation. The *SD* is 1.84 in the Silent Generation, 2.14 in the Baby Boomer Generation, 2.78 in Generation X, and 3.12 in the Millennials. There is a greater variety of scores the younger the credentialed minister gets. Some Millennial ministers scored as low as 4, demonstrating a need to change the 16 Fundamental Truths for the AGUSA to proactively shape its future and positively impact society.

The SFT brought clarity and harmony to the AGUSA when adopted in 1916 (Gohr, 2012). Doctrinal controversies existed before, during, and after its adoption (Blumhofer, 1993). After being adopted, more than 25% of the credentialed

ministers at the time resigned. The core doctrines specified in the SFT are primarily the same as in 1916. Minor wording changes and additional scriptures have been added to increase clarity. Because the SFT provides a foundation for the Assemblies of God Fellowship (Gohr, 2012), it is important to recognize what credentialed ministers believe about them.

If changing culture is impacting the level of belief in these doctrinal statements, the AGUSA must proactively address the issue and take action to reverse the decline. There does not appear to be a substantial disagreement with the SFT in any of the generations. Younger ministers, however, seem to be more open to studying and possibly changing the SFT in order for AGUSA to proactively shape its future and have a positive impact on society. AGUSA may need to assess its ministerial credentialing process concerning the doctrinal beliefs of its candidates. Do these young people making application for a ministry credential understand the core Pentecostal doctrines and believe as they should to ultimately obtain a credential? The credentialing process will be further explored in the implications section.

Research Question 3 Results and Discussion

An analysis of variance (1 x 4 ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the effect exerted by study participant generation upon perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and changed for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society. As a result, the overall effect for study participant generation upon perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and changed for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society was statistically significant, indicating there were significant differences in perceptions it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and change for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society among the levels of study participant “Generation” (Table 16). The eta squared value was 0.01, indicating that the variable of “Generation” explains approximately 1% of the variance in perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and changed for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society.

The researcher conducted follow-up analyses using *t*-tests between each pair of measurements to further evaluate the differences among the variables. Tukey's HSD *p*-value adjustments were used to correct the effect of multiple comparisons on the family-wise error rate (Field, 2018). For the main effect of "Generation," the mean of perception that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and changed for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society, the category of "Millennial" was significantly greater than for the category of "Gen X." For the main effect of "Generation," the mean of perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and changed for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society for the category of "Millennial" was significantly greater than for the category of "Baby Boomer." For the main effect of "Generation," the mean of perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and changed for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society for the category of "Millennial" was significantly greater than for the category of "Silent." Finally, for the main effect of "Generation," the mean of perceptions that it is important that AGUSA doctrine should be revisited and changed for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society for the category of "Gen X" was significantly greater than for the category of "Baby Boomer."

This question was again in light of AGUSA proactively shaping its future and positively impacting society. Does the AG credentialed minister perceive that it is important that the AGUSA doctrine be revisited and change? A Likert scale from 1–10 was used. A score closer to 1 would represent that the minister did not think it was important to revisit doctrine and change. A higher score, up to 10, would characterize a minister who believed AG doctrine be revisited and changed for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society.

For this question, the Silent Generation did not represent the lowest average score, with a 3.46. Baby Boomers provided the lowest score at 3.20. This score would represent the belief that the AGUSA doctrine is acceptable just the way it is. Gen X scored an average of 3.61. The Millennials had the highest average, with a score of 4.23. This score would suggest that the Millennials are more open to the

idea of revisiting the AG doctrines and changing them to proactively shape the future and make a positive impact on society. Interestingly, the Silent Generation and Baby Boomers switched order on this question. With Gen X, Baby Boomer, and Silent Generation scoring an average between 3.20 and 3.61 (a difference of .41), it is not a considerable variation. On the other hand, there is a .62 difference between the Millennial and Gen X—more significant than the difference between the other three generations.

Baby Boomers were the largest group of participants in the study and constitute the largest generation of AGUSA ministers (Assemblies of God, 2021). Baby Boomers value relationships (Smith, 2020). They are also optimistic and view the world as improving over time (Wiedmer, 2015). It is not a surprise, therefore, for Baby Boomers to perceive the AGUSA Fellowship and doctrines the most favorably. They value the time invested in the AGUSA and are optimistic about the Fellowship's future.

The future of AGUSA is completely dependent upon its minister's high level of belief in Pentecostal doctrine. Declining strengths of belief in these doctrines should be concerning to AGUSA leadership. Possible means of addressing this issue will be explored in the Implications section.

Research Question 4 Results and Discussion

An analysis of variance (1 x 4 ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the effect exerted by study participant generation upon perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues. As a result, the overall effect for study participant generation upon perceptions that a person who is Spirit-baptized must initially speak in tongues was statistically significant, indicating there were significant differences in perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues among the levels of "Generation" (Table 18). The eta squared value was 0.04, indicating that "Generation" explains approximately 4% of the variance in perceptions that a person who is Spirit-baptized must initially speak in tongues.

Follow-up analyses using *t*-tests were conducted between each pair of measurements to further evaluate the differences among the variables. Tukey's

HSD *p*-value adjustments were used to correct for the effect of multiple comparisons on the family-wise error rate (Field, 2018). For the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues for the category of “Millennial” was significantly lesser than for the category of “Gen X.” For the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues for the category of “Millennial” was significantly lesser than for the category of “Baby Boomer.” For the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues for the category of “Millennial” was significantly lesser than for the category of “Silent.” For the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues for the category of “Gen X” was significantly lesser than for the category of “Baby Boomer.” Finally, for the main effect of “Generation,” the mean of perceptions that a person who is Spirit baptized must initially speak in tongues for the category of “Gen X” was significantly lesser than for the category of “Silent.”

This question dealt with the perception of an AG credentialed minister that a Spirit-baptized person must initially speak in tongues. A Likert scale was used to determine the strength of perception. A low score would signify that a minister does not believe a Spirit-baptized person must initially speak in tongues. A higher score would represent that the minister strongly believes a Spirit-baptized person must initially speak in tongues.

The generational difference in the average scores aligned with the first two research questions. The Silent Generation had the highest average score at 8.87, followed by the Baby Boomers at 8.48, Gen X at 7.83, and Millennials at 6.90. The Silent and Baby Boomer Generations scored relatively high, with only a .39 difference in the average. The difference between the Baby Boomer and Gen X average score was .65. The highest difference among generations was .93 between the Millennials and Gen X.

The *SD* increases in the same order between generations. The Silent Generation had an *SD* of 2.29, followed by the Baby Boomers at 2.38, Gen X at

2.71, and Millennials at 3.02. The greater range of scores appears among the Millennial Generation. The narrower range of scores is within the oldest generation. Increasing levels of deviation signifies a greater diversity of belief in the younger generations.

Beutell and Wittig-Berman (2008) described the Silent Generation as conservative and conforming, so their stronger agreement on tongues being the initial, physical evidence of Spirit-baptism is not surprising. This generation has been associated with AGUSA longer than the others. Conformity to AGUSA doctrines and beliefs is not inconceivable. The Silent Generation also esteems authority and recognizes change comes slowly (Wiedmer, 2015). Most of the credentialed ministers of this generation have an established relationship with the AGUSA and value the fact that they put themselves under the Fellowship's authority. The Silent Generation described themselves as loyal as well (Kane, 2019). AGUSA ministers who are a part of the Silent Generation maintained loyalty to the Fellowship and its doctrine of tongues as the initial physical evidence of Spirit-baptism, as evidenced by this study.

Millennials represented the lowest level of agreement that tongues is the initial physical evidence of Spirit-baptism. Only 10.52% of the survey respondents were Millennials. Presently, Millennials are the largest of all the living adult generations (Bialik & Fry, 2019). With advances in technology, this generation grew up with access to more information than any other generation previously (Crowley, 2011). Perhaps information regarding tongues as the initial physical evidence of Spirit-baptism is lacking—or, quite possibly, Spirit-baptism is not being taught or preached as often as it once was, making the understanding of tongues as the initial physical evidence less clear. Bolton (1995) studied Pentecostal churches in Canada, concluding that pastors and church leaders need to provide more teaching on Spirit-baptism and speaking in tongues as the initial physical evidence. Only 70% of the surveyed congregants had spoken in tongues (Bolton, 1995). Possible concepts to address this issue will be discussed in the implications section.

Limitations

This study had a defined focus with fundamental limitations. In this section, the researcher discusses the general limitations of the study. While there are advantages to using archival data, such as large sample size, lack of experimenter bias, and time saved in collecting new data, this section shows the particular limitations associated with measuring and analyzing data from archival records using a survey method.

Archival records can be defined as “documents made or received and accumulated by a person or organization in the course of the conduct of affairs and preserved because of their continuing value” (Ellis, 1993, p. 3). Researchers in many disciplines in the social sciences almost exclusively perform secondary analysis of existing data in their research programs (Cherlin, 1991). The notion of exploring data gathered by someone else has a long history in social science. Typically, archival data may be perceived as any source of information previously amassed by others, amenable to methodical scholarship (C. Jones, 2010). The successful use of archival data is an imaginative and challenging undertaking with its hazards and rewards.

The first limitation is that the archival data used in this study is from 2017. By definition, archival data are old data (Jones, 2010). Several years have passed since the data were collected. Culture and religion have experienced changes in the past 5 years (Kinnaman, 2020; G. A. Smith et al., 2019). Ministers’ beliefs about the AG and its doctrine could have changed since the survey was taken. New information about AG doctrines or experiences with AGUSA may have caused credentialed ministers to believe differently. Their strength of response to questions may have increased or waned because of passing years, new information, and experience.

The second limitation of using archival data is the appropriateness of the data. The researcher was not personally involved in developing or conducting the survey. Instead, the researcher worked with the questions authored by Adamson and Fulks in 1997. In researching the beliefs of AG ministers specifically, how the questions were worded would have changed. For example, two of the questions

asked about ministers' perceptions are based on proactively shaping the future of AGUSA and having a positive impact on society. More straightforward questions on the SFT and AG doctrine may have clarified the ministers' beliefs. Additional questions about individual doctrines could have been asked instead of linking them all together.

The third limitation involved the coding of the ages of credentialed ministers. The original survey asked for an age range of the respondent instead of a specific age. The age ranges did not fit precisely into the generations as specified for this study. Ages were recoded to fit into the generational model. An additional year or 2 was added or subtracted to a generation based on the age range (Table 19). For instance, in 2017 the Millennials would have included ages 21–36. The AGUSA survey specified an age range of 18–34. For the quantitative analysis, AGUSA survey participants ages 18, 19, and 20 were added to the Millennial Generation and ages 35 and 36 were moved up into the Generation X grouping.

Table 16

Age Adjustment for Generations Analysis

Generation	Ages in 2017	AGUSA survey age range	Age adjustment to generation for analysis
Silent	72 – 89	75+	+ 72, 73, 74
Boomer	53 – 71	55 – 74	+ 53, 54 / - 72, 73, 74
Generation X	37 – 52	35 – 54	+ 35, 36 / - 53, 54
Millennial	21 - 36	18 – 34	+ 18, 19, 20 / - 35, 36

The fourth limitation was using Likert scales in the data collection method. Perceptions and beliefs were designated to a numeric value between 1 and 10. Rich details about doctrinal beliefs were unattainable through this method. Special attention was given to the research because of the Likert scale use (Jamieson, 2004). The sample size was large, $n = 3,493$, and the distribution was fairly symmetrical. The Kurtosis values are close to 0, as expected for a normal distribution.

Implications for Professional Practice

This study provided information that AGUSA can utilize in several areas. Initially, the AGUSA needs to be aware that the continually transitioning culture makes less room for younger generations who are strong, practicing, committed followers of Christ. Therefore, this section includes a brief commentary on Millennials and Generation X and the implications of the younger generations' responses to this study. Next, the AGUSA must seek to understand and continue to assess the doctrinal beliefs of its credentialed ministers and their perceptions of the AG in its initial credentialing process and following. Third, a significant amount of information concerning assessment can be gathered in proposed additions to the credentialing and renewal process. Finally, this section will recommend forming a study committee to examine the SFT and AG doctrine.

Millennials were significantly different from every other generation in all the statistical analyses. Millennials felt significantly less intense about the AGUSA being theologically sound. They felt significantly less strong about the AGUSA 16 Fundamental Truths not changing for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society. In other words, Millennials were more open to the SFT changing. Furthermore, Millennials felt significantly stronger that the AGUSA doctrine be revisited and changed for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society. Finally, Millennials believed significantly less that a person who is Spirit-baptized must initially speak in tongues.

Generation X was significantly different from Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation in all the statistical analyses except one. Generation X was not significantly different from the Silent Generation on Question 3 concerning AGUSA doctrine being revisited and changed for the AG to proactively shape its future and positively impact society. Generation X scored just behind or just ahead of the Millennials in every statistical category, placing themselves closer in belief to the Millennials than the Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation.

These younger generations, specifically Millennials, are seeing rapid changes in the religious landscape of the United States (Kinnaman, 2020; C. Smith et al., 2003, 2004; Twenge et al., 2016). Religiously unaffiliated people are more

concentrated among young adults than other age groups (Lipka, 2015). According to the 2014 Religious Landscape Study conducted by Pew Research, 35% of Millennials are *nones*. Religious *nones* refer to people who self-identify as atheists or agnostics, as well as those who say their religion is “nothing in particular.” In contrast, the next highest generation is Generation X, which has 23% claiming to be *nones* (Lipka, 2015).

The discipleship process for young people is instrumental in the production of ministers and missionaries for the AGUSA. A tremendous amount of time is being invested by AGUSA in producing and promoting a discipleship process that facilitates spiritual growth cross-generationally. The AGUSA has declared that a Spirit-empowered disciple embodies seven dimensions: Bible, Spirit, mission, prayer, worship, service, and generosity (Assemblies of God, 2022). Resources are being produced to assist all generations in hearing, understanding, and defending the core doctrines of the AG. As these resources are produced and intentionally being taught at the local church level, it is this researcher’s belief that future generations of Pentecostal young people will be better equipped to defend their faith and doctrine and pursue a path that leads to vocational ministry. This is an exciting step toward intentionally addressing the issues of discipleship, doctrines, and pursuit of vocational ministry.

Equipped with the results of this study and combined with research done by Pew Research Center, the Barna Group, and One Hope ministries, AGUSA should seek to understand, examine, and make recommendations regarding Millennials and the upcoming Generation Z, as well as the Alpha Generation concerning their culture and doctrinal beliefs. This could be done a few different ways. The first way would be to conduct a listening tour. The second way would be to form a committee. The general idea that would be communicated is that the AGUSA wants to provide and abide by the purest form of Pentecostal doctrine possible. AGUSA doctrine needs to be clearly communicated and easily defensible. Younger generations should know, understand, and be able to communicate their doctrinal beliefs. Perhaps, at the present, this is not the case.

A listening tour would be preferred. This would involve AGUSA leaders traveling to a variety of districts to listen specifically to what ministers under 40 years of age have to say about the fellowship and its doctrinal beliefs. Most of the AGUSA leaders already travel to district events throughout the year. They could ask for an additional platform to meet with and listen to the younger generations discuss the AGUSA and its doctrine. It is likely that most districts would make time for this listening forum to take place before or after an evening service, or perhaps during a special lunch. The meeting could begin with the AGUSA leader communicating the heart of the Fellowship to reach, disciple, and raise up the next generations of ministers to carry out the mission of the church. The AGUSA leader would need to communicate that the meeting is a safe space. The understanding would be that ministers who express certain points of view may not even be expressing their own, rather concerns they have heard from others about the Fellowship or its doctrinal beliefs. The AGUSA leader would need to appear and maintain an open posture to receive possibly critical commentary, as well as positive affirmation of the Fellowship. These listening sessions should be recorded and analyzed to determine whether certain themes develop across the country that need to be addressed.

The second possible way to address this and gain valuable information would be to form a committee. The committee would contain at least one member from the Executive Leadership Team, one member from the Executive Presbytery, one member each from the National Children's and Youth Departments, a member from Chi Alpha (AG college ministry), and members from the general AG ministry worlds of kids, youth, and young adults (full-time pastors in these areas or perhaps professors in these areas from AG colleges and universities). This committee would be tasked to do several things. The members should begin by breaking down and looking at the statistics provided from the Annual Church Ministries Reports as far back as 30–40 years. Comparing the adherents, by age group, through the years would be enlightening in determining whether certain generations growing or declining as they age, as well as whether there are trends that appear between age groups or within age groups. Next, the group would be tasked to study the current

literature on Generations Y, Z, and Alpha, and the cultural, educational, and religious differences, and how will that affect them spiritually. Finally, the committee would recommend strategic, intentional, evangelism and discipleship approaches for Generations Y, Z, and Alpha. It is this researcher's hope that AGUSA leadership would receive these recommendations and be ready to implement possible changes in resources, personnel, and ministerial credentialing.

The AGUSA has an opportunity to strategically invest in its future. As each generation approaches an age when they consider full-time ministry as a possible calling and vocation, young people need to understand completely the doctrines and foundational beliefs of the Assemblies of God. For this to happen, intentional, relevant, resources must be created and utilized to inform and instruct young people. Without the proper understanding of these beliefs, young people are unable to commit to a credentialing process that requires adherence to these doctrines. Or, perhaps they do make application for an AG credential without proper understanding—only to realize later, after further theological study, that they do not agree fully with the AGUSA doctrine. This may necessitate a critical assessment of the credentialing process.

The present AGUSA credentialing process involves making application, having met certain requirements for education. The applicant provides information regarding personal and spiritual history as well as affirmation of AGUSA doctrinal beliefs. The initial credential application form includes questions concerning salvation, water baptism, and Spirit-baptism, with the evidence of speaking in other tongues. Included in the original application for credential as well as the annual renewal are statements about doctrine and the SFT. Questions include “Do you fully agree with the Statement of Fundamental Truths?” and “Do you publicly proclaim the doctrines set forth in the Statement of Fundamental Truths?” Next, an exam must be passed on various aspects of AGUSA polity, doctrine, and ministerial practices. Once the applicant passes the exam, they are interviewed by district leadership.

The interview can consist of several elements. Leadership can ask about the test of there were concerns how items were answered. Leadership can ask personal

questions about calling, spiritual and ministerial experience, and future plans. This would be an ideal time to require the applicant explain, clearly and in detail, their understanding and acceptance of AG doctrines and beliefs. Specific questions about salvation experience and their Spirit-baptism experience can be addressed. If the applicant waivers or is unsure of the clear AGUSA doctrines and beliefs, the applicant should be rejected, or placed on hold, until they can return to the interview process with assuredness and a commitment to believe in and abide by AGUSA doctrine. Perhaps this is a minor adjustment, but it may keep the Fellowship of AGUSA credentialed ministers more purely Pentecostal, as it should.

Adding a survey as a part of the renewal process is another action that the researcher recommends that the AGUSA consider. After providing the essential information, the minister could be asked whether they are willing to take a survey concerning the AG and doctrine. If the minister chooses to participate, they would be directed to a separate survey outside the renewal process for anonymity. If the AGUSA only wanted to ask one question in the process, that question could be, “How strongly do you believe the SFT and doctrine of the AGUSA?” A Likert scale from 1–5 could be used where 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *neither agree or disagree*, 4 = *agree*, and 5 = *strongly agree*. Of course, a plethora of questions could be asked in this survey. If the AGUSA wanted to gather more in-depth information, they could add specific questions on certain doctrines each year. A few different doctrines could be assessed on the renewal each year, instead of all 16 each year. Over the period of a few years, each of the doctrines could be examined. This survey would give AGUSA an annual assessment tool on the strength of the doctrinal beliefs of their credentialed ministers. The ministers’ beliefs could be assessed demographically as well to include age, gender, and geographic region, as well as level of credential. Such a longitudinal study would prove beneficial immediately and provide great information for years to come.

Additionally, the AGUSA would gain valuable insight by asking their credentialed ministers about their perceptions of the AG as a part of the annual renewal process. The survey used for this study asked three questions using a 4-point Likert scale with higher scores indicating greater levels of satisfaction. The

first question was, “How satisfied are you with the Assemblies of God as a fellowship?” The second question was, “How satisfied are you with the Assemblies of God’s impact on American society?” The third question was, “How satisfied are you with the direction the Assemblies of God is headed in the USA?” One or all of these questions could be asked in the additional survey attached to the renewal process each year to help determine the credentialed ministers’ perception of the AGUSA. These annual insights would help AGUSA leadership determine what activities or communications might need to be addressed or assessed.

The AGUSA has an office of statistics that would be able to assess this data on an annual basis and provide the results to the Executive Leadership team and Executive Presbytery. Over several years, the data would provide valuable insight to AGUSA leadership. Approximately 13,000 ministers renew their credential annually. Feedback from thousands would provide for a robust examination of strengths of beliefs and perceptions of the AGUSA.

Based on the data in this study, the current researcher recommends the formation of a study committee to examine the SFT and AG doctrine. The purpose of this committee would be to affirm the theology of the present SFT and doctrine and modernize the language used in the Statement. The committee would consist of at least one member of the Executive Leadership Team, at least one member of the Executive Presbytery, two to three theologians from the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, two to three of the top theology professors from AG universities, and a few missionaries and pastors who have their doctorate in theology.

The committee should study the history of the formation of the SFT and its revisions throughout the years. The committee should ensure the strong support of appropriate scriptures for each of the truths. Finally, the committee should make each of the truths easily understood and that the language used to state and explain the doctrine can be clearly comprehended. The estimated average reading level in the United States is estimated to be eighth grade (Cotugna et al., 2005). It would seem beneficial to use language easily understood by average members of AGUSA churches, as well as ministers who would likely have a higher level of

comprehension. An esteemed professor or two of English/Reading may be of assistance in this endeavor.

The Assemblies of God is not alone in the absence of assessing their ministers' doctrinal beliefs. The gap in literature showed that other denominations did not participate in this type of assessment either. The closest study found was a comparison of older and younger Catholic priests and differences in their beliefs, attitudes, and practices. The researcher believes that the assumption on the part of AGUSA and other denominations is that if a person goes through a credentialing process stating their agreement with the SFT and other doctrine, and the minister continues to renew their credential, that the minister is still exclusively sold out to the theological beliefs of the AG Fellowship. With the changing religious landscape regarding younger generations presented earlier in this study, however, the AGUSA would be wise to do what is necessary to understand and evaluate its ministers' doctrinal beliefs on a more consistent basis.

Recommendations for Future Research

The first recommendation for future research would be to perform a longitudinal study. A longitudinal study would provide data from multiple points in time to compare instead of using archival data from one point in time. Especially when dealing with a generational study, asking people for opinions or beliefs that may change over time, a longitudinal study would be a preferred method. Investigators could ask the same questions every 10 years and compare the age/generation data to past samples. Long-term studies benefit researchers interested in observing a change in personality or belief (Jones, 2010).

Future research should include the exact ages of the respondents. The research could be designed to use an age range already determined by generation. These practices would ensure that the correct generational designations are applied.

Future studies may be designed in a more protracted nature. For example, a longitudinal study would allow generational comparisons of people of similar ages at varying points of time. Twenge (2006) developed this method of cross-temporal meta-analysis. Asking the same questions every 10 years would allow this type of research.

Questions in future research should be more specific to obtain the desired data. Archival questions may be redesigned to achieve optimal results. For example, if doctrinal beliefs are studied, then the questions can be focused on individual beliefs or doctrines rather than combining them into one category.

Future research may benefit from a qualitative study of AG credentialed ministers. Interviews would allow for a more in-depth analysis of their beliefs and reasons for those beliefs. The interviewer could ask specific doctrinal questions and then follow up with why the minister has those beliefs. Questions about their support of or concerns for the AGUSA would not be limited to a numeric score and can be expounded upon.

A qualitative study regarding the Holy Spirit, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit would be beneficial as well. All generations should be equally represented. Questions about the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer should be asked. A minister's beliefs about the initial infilling of the Holy Spirit and the evidence thereof should be questioned. Asking about the gifts of the Spirit and their use/usefulness in today's culture would be beneficial commentary as well. All this evidence would provide AGUSA leadership a greater understanding and insight to their credentialed ministers' beliefs.

This researcher also recommends a qualitative study with AGUSA ministers who have been newly credentialed, perhaps within the last 5 years. Such a study could explore what education they have received, particularly concerning AG doctrine, and whether they perceive that it was sufficient to make an informed decision about their personal doctrinal beliefs. In addition, whether they fully understand the AGUSA position on all doctrinal issues should be evaluated, as well as what more they wish was provided for them theologically. This information would provide insight whether the initial credentialing process is sufficiently preparing AGUSA ministers theologically.

This study dealt with generational differences concerning doctrinal issues. A study about generational differences in ministers' beliefs regarding cultural issues would be beneficial as well. Questions about alcohol, movies, music, sexuality, and politics would provide the AGUSA insight regarding the morality of

its ministers. Standards of conduct may need to be evaluated and addressed by AGUSA leadership based on the results.

Concerns about the decreasing number of ministers under 40 years of age may lead to additional research among younger ministers. A qualitative study of ministers under 40 years of age may provide insight about their call, the reason they entered ministry originally, and their preparation for ministry with the AGUSA. A quantitative study of this same group of ministers could collect information regarding the strength of their call, their experience with AGUSA educational requirements, and their current satisfaction with the AGUSA.

It is this researcher's belief that not only the AGUSA, but other denominations, would benefit from studies such as these listed to make more knowledgeable decisions regarding the future of ministry and ministers throughout the United States and around the world. Generational differences will not cease to exist. The question is how new generations will be different—more or less religious, more or less moral? Researching these questions will provide the answers. Denominational leadership will provide the direction based on the results.

Conclusion

This chapter included a summary of the study's problem, purpose, and design. Next, the researcher reviewed the study's findings and results by research question. This chapter also contained a discussion of the findings. A section on limitations discovered during the research followed. Furthermore, the chapter included implications for practice and contributions to research from the findings and results of this study. Finally, the chapter contained recommendations for further research.

Generational differences in attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs exist. Generational differences can be found in religion. There is inadequate empirical research on generational differences in minister's doctrinal beliefs. This quantitative dissertation investigated generational differences in the doctrinal beliefs of AGUSA credentialed ministers. Through this study, the researcher sought to provide insights that would add to the current body of knowledge on spiritual generational differences. The data from this study were analyzed to reveal

statistically significant differences among generations of AGUSA ministers' doctrinal beliefs. The researcher found that younger generations of ministers do not agree as strongly as older generations of ministers regarding the theological soundness of the AG, that the SFT should not change, that AG doctrine should not be revisited and changed, or that tongues is the initial physical evidence of a person who is Spirit-baptized. Given the increased age of AG ministers and the declining number of AG ministers under 40, researchers and practitioners should continue to seek opportunities for study. The findings enhance the understanding of this topic and inform appeal for additional action in addressing an extensive spiritual challenge.

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Appendix A

The General Council of the Assemblies of God Statement of Fundamental Truths

1. The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This SFT is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full-gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.
2. The Scriptures inspired. The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).
3. The one true God. The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally existent “I AM,” the Creator of heaven and earth and the redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10, 11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).
4. The deity of the Lord, Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:
 - a. His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31, 35).
 - b. His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).
 - c. His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
 - d. His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
 - e. His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4).
 - f. His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9, 11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).
5. The fall of man. Man was created good and upright; for God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also

- spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26,27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).
6. The salvation of man. Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.
 - a. Conditions to salvation. Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).
 - b. The evidences of salvation. The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).
 7. The ordinances of the church.
 - a. Baptism in water. The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus, they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47,48; Romans 6:4).
 - b. Holy communion. The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements—bread and the fruit of the vine—is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers "till He come!"
 8. The baptism in the Holy Spirit. All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it

comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9).

With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

- a. The initial physical evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4-10,28), but different in purpose and use.
9. Sanctification. Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1,2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: “Be ye holy, for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:15,16). Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13; 1 Peter 1:5).
 10. The church and its mission. The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her Great Commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22,23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23). Since God’s purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by

man, to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, and to demonstrate His love and compassion for all the world, the priority reason-for-being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

- a. To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16).
- b. To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- c. To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:12).
- d. To be a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world (Psalms 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

- a. Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3,4).
 - b. Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12-14).
 - c. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ and care for the poor and needy of the world (Galatians 5:22-26; Matthew 25:37-40; Galatians 6:10; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29; Galatians 5:22-26).
11. The ministry. A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the fourfold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20), (2) worship of God (John 4:23,24), (3) building a Body of saints being perfected in the image of His

- Son (Ephesians 4:11,16), and (4) Meeting human need with ministries of love and compassion (Psalms 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).
12. Divine healing. Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the Atonement and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:16, 17; James 5:14-16).
 13. The blessed hope. The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52).
 14. The millennial reign of Christ. The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21,22; Zephaniah 3:19,20; Romans 11:26,27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).
 15. The final judgement. There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11- 15; 21:8).
 16. The new heavens and the new earth. “We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21,22).

The SFT is the official delineation of the Assemblies of God’s 16 doctrines. These truths are non-negotiable beliefs that all Assemblies of God churches adhere to (Assemblies of God Beliefs: Statement of Fundamental Truths, n.d.).