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September 16, 2003 Mini Report #3 I have chosen the section titled The Preamble at Chimbote from chapter one of the book, Theology From the Underside of History to write my mini report on. In this section the author describes a talk that the famous liberation theologian Gustavo Gutierrez gave at Chimbote, Peru, to a group of priests and laity in July of 1968.

The talk was entitled Toward a Theology of Liberation. Gutierrez is one of the most important innovators of the concept of liberation theology in Latin America. He gives this talk to teach and inform the clergy and other churchgoers that this is a crucial concept for all Christians to integrate into their lives.

In the beginning of his talk he states if faith is a commitment to God and to human beings, it is not possible to believe in today's world without a commitment to the process of liberation. I interpret this as Gutierrez stating that the world in which they are living in is not committed to all human beings when there are those that are less fortunate and are stricken by poverty. His answer to this is for all Christians to be committed to the process of freeing these individuals from the restraints they have on them. To me this is the most important part of liberation theology. Knowing that the actions that one is taking is creating a better humanity and better world to live in, will motivate that individual and others to continue this act.

In another part of his talk he discusses three important characteristics of his liberation theology. The first aspect that he mentions is that liberation theology should be a progressive and continuous understanding. I believe that Gutierrez is saying that if the Christians that are carrying out liberation

theology are continually liberating those in need then Christians will be a major influence and stepping stone in the process of a greater humanity. The second key point in Gutierrez's liberation theology is the method in which liberation theology should be carried out.

Gutierrez states theology is a reflection or a second act. He argues that theology should not come first and that it should follow the commitment. He goes on to say that the main action of theology's commitment is charity.

I understand this as; theology cannot improve something through charity or any other means unless it has already happened and learning from this experience cannot occur until after action has taken place. I think that Gutierrez is referring to theology as the knowledge that Christians receive after the action of the commitment and charity. Finally, the third key point that Gutierrez stresses is the importance of pastoral action and he goes on to say that every action that Christians make must be tied in with a reflection to orient it. To me this means that one must practice what one preaches and refrain from being a hypocrite. If Christians do not do this then the whole concept of liberation theology is superficial.