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Contents

The Influence of Isaiah on the Gospel of John 139
JAMES HAMILTON

What Did Christ Accomplish at the Cross? With Reference to Recent Controversies namely "The Lost Message of Jesus" and the "New Perspective on Paul" 163
MOSTYN ROBERTS

Facing Opposition from Inside and Outside the Church 187
GARETH CROSSLEY

Martin Luther's Animal Farm in Germany 207
EGIL GRISLIS

Religious and Secular Paradigms of Addressing Pluralism 225
SALOMEA POPOVICIU

Christen im römischen Reich: Statusinkonsistenz in der Alten Kirche und der Versuch, sie zu beseitigen 245
WOLFGANG WISCHMEYER

Essentials of Justification by Faith. A Greek-Catholic Perspective 261
MAREK PRIBULA

Reinterpreting Traditional Theology. An Interview with Edward Schillebeeckx 275
RAMONA SIMUȚ

The Influence of Isaiah on the Gospel of John

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ABSTRACT. This article seeks to catalogue the connections between the prophecy of Isaiah and the Gospel of John. The study is organized according to whom the Gospel presents as making the connection: the evangelist, the Baptist, and Jesus. Further, the connections between John and Isaiah are classified as either "direct fulfillments," where citation formulas are used, or as "thematic connections," where the correspondence between Isaiah and John is broader. The article seeks to establish a foundation for further study of John's use of Isaiah by establishing the extent to which Isaianic influence may be discerned in the Fourth Gospel.

Introduction

A professor of English Literature once related an anecdote about an undergraduate student who expressed delight in reading Shakespeare, because, the student said, "Shakespeare uses so many cliches." The student, of course, had it backwards. Shakespeare gave countless turns of phrase to the common stock of English idiom. It might be suggested that the prophecy of Isaiah had a similar impact upon the theological and religious vocabulary of early Judaism.[1] If Isaiah is the Shakespeare of early Juda-

[1] H. S. Songer writes, "Isaiah possesses crucial significance for the New Testament. The book is referred to more than four hundred times, making it along with Psalms the most popular Old Testament book. Every gospel writer quotes Isaiah in the very first chapter of his work, and nearly every writer of the New Testament refers to it". See "Isaiah and the New Testament," *RevExp* 65 (1968), 459. Further, 22 manuscripts of Isaiah were found at Qumran, surpassed only by Psalms (39) and Deuteronomy (31).

ism, however, it seems likely that his words were used more intentionally than Shakespeare is cited in our culture. The extent of Isaiah's influence upon the Fourth Gospel appears to be a question worth pursuing.

While several studies of the use of the Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel are available,[2] and though a number of examinations of the use of Isaiah in John exist,[3] no study seeks to set

[2] See e.g., C. K. Barrett, "The Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel," *JTS* 48 (1947) 155-69; D. A. Carson, "John and the Johannine Epistles," in *Scripture Citing Scripture*, ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 245-64; C. A. Evans, "On the Quotation Formulas in the Fourth Gospel," *BZ* 26 (1982), 79-83; E. D. Freed, *Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John*, NovTSup 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1965); A. T. Hanson, *The Prophetic Gospel: A Study of John and the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991); M. J. J. Menken, "Observations on the Significance of the Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel," *Neot* 33 (1999), 125-43; G. Reim, *Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund des Johannesevangeliums*, SNTSMS 22 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974); M. C. Tenney, "The Old Testament and the Fourth Gospel," *BSac* 120 (1963) 300-8.

[3] The broadest of these include: F. W. Young, "A Study of the Relation of Isaiah to the Fourth Gospel," *ZNW* 46 (1955), 215-33; and D. R. Griffiths, "Deutero-Isaiah and the Fourth Gospel: Some Points of Comparison," *ExpTim* 65 (1954), 355-60. Studies of particular passages include (in order of the Johannine passages discussed): G. D. Kirchhevel, "The Children of God and the Glory that John 1:14 Saw," *BBR* 6 (1996), 87-93; M. J. J. Menken, "The Quotation from Isa. 40:3 in John 1:23," *Bib* 66 (1985), 190-205; F. Gryglewicz, "Das Lamm Gottes," *NTS* 13 (1967), 133-46; R. R. Marrs, "John 3:14-15: The Raised Serpent in the Wilderness: The Johannine Use of an Old Testament Account," in *Johannine Studies*, ed. J. E. Priest (Malibu, CA: Pepperdine University Press, 1989), 132-47; C. A. Evans, "The Function of Isaiah 6:9-10 in Mark and John," *NovT* 24 (1982), 124-38; M. J. J. Menken, "Die Form des Zitates aus Jes 6,10 in Joh 12:40," *BZ* 32 (1988), 189-209; B. Hollenbach, "Lest they Should Turn and Be Forgiven," *BT* 34.2 (1983), 312-21; R. L. Tyler, "The Source and Function of Isaiah 6:9-10 in John 12:40," in *Johannine Studies*, ed. J. E. Priest (Malibu, CA: Pepperdine University Press, 1989), 205-20; C. A. Evans, "Obduracy and the Lord's Servant," in *Early Jewish and Christian Exegesis*, ed. C. A. Evans and W. F. Stinespring (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 221-36; J. D. M. Derrett, "*τί ἐργάζῃ* (Jn. 6:30): an Unrecognized Allusion to Is 45:9," *ZNW* 84 (1993), 142-44; M. J. J. Menken, "The Old Testament Quotation in John 6:45," *ETL* 64 (1988), 164-72; J. D. M. Derrett, "John 9:6 Read with

forth in one place all of the connections between Isaiah and the Fourth Gospel.[4] The present effort is an attempt to catalogue the resonations of the prophecy of Isaiah in the Gospel according to John.[5] The aim of this study is to lay the foundation for an ex-

Isaiah 6:10; 20:9," *EvQ* 66 (1994), 251-54; B. McNeil, "The Quotation at John XII 34," *NovT* 19 (1977), 22-33; B. Chilton, "John XII 34 and Targum Isaiah LII 13," *NovT* 22 (1980), 176-78; J. V. Dahms, "Isaiah 55:11 and the Gospel of John," *EvQ* 53 (1981), 78-88. Cf. also G. Reim, "Targum und Johannesevangelium," *BZ* 27 (1983), 1-13; and E. E. Ellis, "Isaiah in the New Testament," *SWJT* 34 (1991), 31-35.

[4] The direct quotations are, of course, provided by several studies. See e.g., Carson, "John and the Johannine Epistles," 246; A. T. Hanson, *The Living Utterances of God* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1983), 113-32. Moreover, Young's examination draws attention to several correspondences between Isaiah and John, but he focuses on a set of examples and makes no attempt to be exhaustive (cf. "The Relation of Isaiah to the Fourth Gospel," 222-30). D. M. Ball has shown that the background of the "I am" sayings in John is Isaianic. Cf. *"I Am" in John's Gospel*, JSNTSup 124 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996). He states the need for further studies of the connections between Isaiah in John (*ibid*., 269 n. 2). The uniqueness of the present attempt is its aim to set forth *all* (or at least most) of the allusions to Isaiah in John. There are more connections between Isaiah and John than the ones presented here. Nonetheless, this essay makes a beginning. For all the connections between John and Isaiah that I have located, see the chart at the end of this study, "Connections to Isaiah in John."

[5] In some ways this is a preliminary study because there is enough to be said about "John's Use of Isaiah" for a monograph. This initial effort intends to set forth the various texts in John which seem to be influenced in one way or another by Isaiah to show the extent of Isaiah's influence in John's Gospel. There are indications that Isaiah's influence on John might not be limited to particular texts, but also to the broader structure of the Gospel. As A. T. Lincoln has argued, "The narrative of the Fourth Gospel portrays both Jesus and his opponents against the background of legal patterns found in the Jewish Scriptures… his opponents interpret Jesus and his followers in the light of Moses or Torah and judge him to be a false prophet who has led his followers astray. The implied author wishes to move away from this limited perspective on the law and set it in a broader context. In order to do this, he brings to bear another legal model from Scripture, the covenant lawsuit, and it is Isaiah 40-55 that provides the resources". See "Trials, Plots and the Narrative of the Fourth Gospel," *JSNT* 56 (1994), 20. Lincoln's conclusions are si-

ploration of John's[6] presentation of Jesus based on his claims that Jesus fulfills the prophecies of Isaiah. One of the working assumptions of this project, therefore, is that "the Evangelist had a wide knowledge of the Old Testament".[7] But before we take up the question of what John accomplishes through his use of Isaiah, we must establish the extent to which Isaianic thought influenced the Gospel. F. W. Young has shown that John "consciously utilized Isaiah as a source of language and ideology in his own effort to interpret the meaning of Jesus Christ in the Gospel which he produced."[8] The goal of this study is to establish where in John's Gospel Isaianic influence can be discerned.

In this study, the Isaianic material in John's Gospel will be broadly grouped into two categories. The places where fulfillment or quotation formulas are employed will be referred to as *Direct Fulfillments*. The places where actions or words in John correspond to statements found in Isaiah will be referred to as *Thematic Connections*. These thematic connections may also be

milar to the four points of broad similarity discussed by Griffiths, "Deutero-Isaiah and the Fourth Gospel."

[6] In this essay I will use the terms *narrator* and *evangelist* interchangeably with *John* for stylistic variation. Similarly, following the practice of the Gospel of John, no reference will be made to first, second, or third Isaiah. The book of Isaiah will be treated here as a canonical whole, which is how John treats it (e.g., John 12:38-41 cites Isa. 6:1, 10 and 53:1 as coming from Isaiah, not from first and second Isaiah).

[7] Barrett, "The Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel," 168.

[8] Young, "A Study of The Relation of Isaiah to the Fourth Gospel," 222. See the similar assessment in Ball, *"I Am" in John's Gospel*, 266, 268-69. A. T. Hanson calls Isaiah John's "favorite prophet". See "John's Use of Scripture," in *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. C. A. Evans and W. R. Stegner, JSNTSup 104 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 368. Later in the same essay Hanson writes, "John was an avid student of Isaiah" (*ibid.*, 376). Cf. also M. C. Tenney, "The Old Testament and the Fourth Gospel," *BSac* 120 (1963), 303-04: "Isaiah seems to have been more familiar to the writer of the Gospel than any other book."

referred to as *Allusions*,[9] but the phrase *Thematic Connections* refers to points of contact that are slightly broader than *Allusions*.[10]

Commenting on the direct citations of the Old Testament in John, Craig Evans notes, "Some of these quotations are given as editorial comments of the evangelist…, while others are spoken by Jesus…, or by other characters in the gospel."[11] When we consider the quotations of and allusions to Isaiah in the Fourth Gospel, we find connections to Isaiah made by the evangelist, the Baptist, and Jesus. In a sense, all of these owe their presence in the Gospel to the evangelist, for he selected the material included in the Gospel. Nevertheless, for clarity of presentation this discussion will be organized according to whom the Gospel presents making the connection with Isaiah.[12] We will first con-

[9] S. E. Porter provides a helpful working definition of an allusion. He writes, "Allusions (or 'echoes'…) could refer to the nonformal invocation by an author of a text (or person, event, etc.) that the author could reasonably have been expected to know." Cf. "The Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament: A Brief Comment on Method and Terminology," in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. C. A. Evans and J. A. Sanders, JSNTSupp 148 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 95. The five criteria for a likely allusion set forth by R. E. Watts are also helpful here. Cf. *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*, Biblical Studies Library (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 8.

[10] Examples will clarify the difference between my use of the terms *allusion* and *thematic connection*. When we read the Baptist's proclamation that Jesus is the "lamb of God" in John 1:29, 36, an *allusion* to Isa. 53:7 is likely since the term "lamb" is employed in both texts (though this is, of course, debated). An example of a *thematic connection* is the use of the motif of the coming "light" in Isaiah (cf. Isa. 9:1; 42:6; 49:6; 60:1, 3) and the announcement in John that the "true light" has come into the world (cf. John 1:4-5, 7-9; 3:19-21; 8:12; 9:5; 11:9-10; 12:35-36, 46). For the most part, as is reflected on the chart ("Connections to Isaiah in John"), the present study will not distinguish between an allusion and a thematic connection.

[11] Evans, "Obduracy and the Lord's Servant," 225.

[12] Here I am limiting myself to the evangelist, the Baptist, and Jesus. Connections made by others in John include the following (aside from their mention here, these will not be discussed in this study, nor are they represented on the chart): *the Pharisees'* claim that God is their "Father" (John 8:41, cf. Isa. 63:16). In John 6:30 *the crowd* says to Jesus, "What work do you

sider the evangelist's narratorial comments. That done we will treat John's presentation of the Baptist and Jesus citing or otherwise fulfilling something found in Isaiah.

The Evangelist's Use of Isaiah

As we consider the connections to Isaiah in the Gospel of John made by the evangelist, the Baptist, and Jesus, the discussions will first take up the *Direct Fulfillments* and then consider the *Thematic Connections*. We begin with the places where the evangelist employs fulfillment formulas and directly cites Isaiah. Here we are not primarily concerned with interpreting these passages. Our aim is to show where Isaiah is used in John and how the evangelist establishes the connection to Isaiah.[13] The contribution this study seeks to make is in the area of the *extent* of Isaianic influence upon the Fourth Gospel, so I will footnote or otherwise draw attention to connections between Isaiah and John that are not noted in the margin of NA[27]. At points I will note that NA[27] does make a certain connection. This is done when the connection between Isaiah and John made by the editors of NA[27] seems weaker than some they do not note.

Direct Fulfillments

In John 12:14 a scriptural citation is introduced with the words "just as it has been written." Then in 12:15 we read, "Do not fe-

do?" J. D. M. Derrett may well be correct that this alludes to Isa. 45:9, "Will the clay say to the one who forms it, 'What are you doing?'" Derrett, "*τί ἐργάζῃ* (Jn 6:30): an Unrecognized Allusion to Is 45:9". B. McNeil suggests that in John 12:34 *the crowd* alludes to "a version close to the Targum" of Isa. 9:5 ("The Quotation at John XII 34," 23), but see the cautions offered to this suggestion by Chilton ("John XII 34 and Targum Isaiah LII 13").

[13] Several studies take up the question of what text or text form John might be citing. See, e.g., McNeil, "The Quotation at John XII 34;" Chilton, "John XII 34 and Targum Isaiah LII 13;" Menken, "The Quotation from Isa. 40:3 in John 1:23;" Reim, "Targum und Johannesevangelium;" and Tyler, "The Source and Function of Isaiah 6:9-10 in John 12:40." Such questions are far beyond the scope of the present inquiry. Here we are merely seeking to show Isaianic influence, not which text of Isaiah was used.

ar, Daughter Zion; behold, your King comes! Seated on the foal of a donkey."[14] The bulk of this citation comes from Zech. 9:9, but the words "Do not fear" are not found in Zechariah 9:9, so it is likely that they come from Isa. 35:4, "Be strong; do not fear. Behold, your God comes with vengeance!" It is probable that Isa. 40:9 also contributes to this citation, "Do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah, 'Behold your God!'"[15] Here two Isaianic passages that command the people not to fear and announce the coming of God seem to be conflated with Zech. 9:9 as John adds the command, "Do not fear," to the announcement that the King is coming.

The only other place in the Gospel where the narrator uses a fulfillment formula to cite Isaiah is found in John 12:38-41. Having stated that Jesus had done many signs that had been met with unbelief (12:37), John explains the reason for Jesus' rejection: "That the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled,[16] which says, 'Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?'" (12:38 [Isa. 53:1]). John goes on to explain, "On account of this, they were not able to believe, because again Isaiah said, 'He has blinded their eyes

[14] Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

[15] Freed seems to doubt that the words, "Do not fear," allude to Isa. 40:9 and 35:4 because, "the four words, 'Fear not, daughter of Zion,' occur nowhere in the same context in the LXX" (*Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John*, 78). It seems, however, that "daughter of Zion" could come from Zech. 9:9 (the only difference is that whereas in the LXX the vocative *θύγατερ* is used, in John the nominative *θυγάτηρ* is employed. Since John could be quoting from Hebrew, from a Targum, or from another Greek text [perhaps his own translation], this difficulty is by no means insuperable). B. A. Mastin has argued that *θεόν* is "A Neglected Feature of the Christology of the Fourth Gospel," *NTS* 22 (1976), 32-52. So also G. Reim, "Jesus as God in the Fourth Gospel: The Old Testament Background," *NTS* 30 (1984), 158-60. It could be that John conflates Zech. 9:9, where the King comes, with Isa. 35:4 and 40:9, where God comes as King, as part of his presentation of Jesus as God (cf. John 1:1, 18; 20:28; and 18:5—the passages discussed by Mastin and Reim).

[16] For a plausible understanding of the structural and theological function of the *ἵνα πληρωθῇ* (that it might be fulfilled) formula in John, see Evans, "On the Quotation Formulas in the Fourth Gospel," 80-83.

and hardened their hearts, that they might not see with their eyes and understand with the heart and turn, and he heal them [Isa. 6:10].' Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory, and spoke concerning him [Isa. 6:1]" (12:39-41). Our purpose here is neither to interact with the scholarly literature on this passage,[17] nor to offer an interpretation of it. Here we are merely noting that at a significant juncture in his Gospel, namely, at the close of Jesus' public ministry, John uses a fulfillment formula with other citation formulas to cite Isa. 53:1, 6:10, and 6:1 as he explains why many Jews were not believing in Jesus (12:37).[18]

Thematic Connections

As noted before, all of the thematic connections between John and Isaiah owe themselves to what the evangelist chose to include in his Gospel. In the narrator's comments, however, there are at least two places where Isaianic resonations are felt that are not direct quotations.

The first of these is the light/glory theme that runs through the Gospel. In the narratorial material this theme is seen in John 1:4-5, 7-9, 3:19-21,[19] and 2:11. Isaiah had promised a day when

[17] Along with the major commentaries, cf. the articles on this passage in note 3 above.

[18] Evans has suggested "that John 12:1-43 is, at least in part, a midrash on Isa. 52:7-53:12" ("Obduracy and the Lord's Servant," 232). See his discussion for a dozen suggested connections between John 12 and Isaiah (*ibid*., 232-36). Space considerations prevent discussion of these, nor are they represented on the chart. But I find the connections Evans suggests compelling.

[19] Some think that Jesus' words continue through verse 21. See e.g. F. J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, SP 4 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 90. Others think that Jesus' words end with verse 15. See e.g., D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 185, 203; and others see his comments ending after verse 12. E.g., G. R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 2nd edn., WBC (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 46. I find Morris' comments for Jesus' words ending after verse 15 persuasive. See L. Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, rev. edn., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 202.

Yahweh would cause glory in Galilee (8:23 [ET 9:1]). Isaiah's next statement is that those walking in darkness would see a great light (9:1 [ET 9:2]). This theme of light in Isaiah is picked up in 42:6 and 49:6, where twice Yahweh proclaims to the Servant that he has been made a light to the nations. Finally, in Isa. 60:1 and 60:3, the coming of the light is proclaimed, along with the radiance of Yahweh's glory (cf. also 2:5 and 10:17).[20] This motif of light and glory[21] in Isaiah is pertinent because John introduces Jesus as the true light (John 1:4-5, 9), while taking pains to point out that the Baptist was not the light (1:7-8). The incarnation of the Word, whom John identifies as the Light (1:4-5), results in a manifestation of glory (1:14). Further, just as Isa. 8:23 stated that glory would be shown in Galilee, in John 2:11 the narrator points out that in Cana of Galilee Jesus "manifested his glory," with the result that "his disciples believed in him."

The second point of correspondence between the evangelist's comments and Isaiah in John is the possible connection between John 19:34 and Isa. 48:21. John 19:34 describes the flow of blood and water that results from the soldier thrusting his spear into Jesus' side. John could be alluding to the words of Isa. 48:21 here, "And he cleft the rock, and water gushed out." Jesus is not referred to as a "rock" in John, but he is in other early Christian literature (cf. 1 Cor. 10:4). Perhaps there is an allusion to Isa. 48:21 in John 19:34.[22]

[20] Cf. R. E. Clements, "A Light to the Nations: A Central Theme in the Book of Isaiah," in *Forming Prophetic Literature*, ed. J. W. Watts and P. R. House, JSOTSupp 235 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 57-69.

[21] See the juxtaposition of light and glory in Isa. 8:23-9:1, 42:6-8, 49:3, 5-6; and 60:1.

[22] This connection is not noted by NA[27]. Wai-Yee Ng claims, "In the light of OT imagery [Christ] is the eschatological rock (cf. 19:34)". See *Water Symbolism in John*, Studies in Biblical Literature 15 (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 80.

The Baptist's Use of Isaiah in John

The prophetic voice of Isaiah echoes not only in the narrator's comments in John, the fourth evangelist presents the Baptist as one who appears to have been deeply influenced by the prophecy of Isaiah.[23] Here again we will begin with direct fulfillments before considering thematic connections.

Direct Fulfillments

The interview concerning the Baptist's identity concludes with a citation of Isa. 40:3, and the evangelist presents the Baptist punctuating the citation with the words "Just as Isaiah the prophet said" (John 1:23).[24] The evangelist thus presents the Baptist identifying himself as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, but this appears to be the Baptist's only direct quotation of Isaiah in John.

Thematic Connections

Though a citation formula with reference to Isaiah only occurs on the lips of the Baptist in John 1:23, there are other connections with Isaiah in the Baptist's words in John. On two occasions the Baptist identifies Jesus as "the lamb of God" (John 1:29, 36). There is dispute over which Old Testament "lamb" might be in view here.[25] Barrett has plausibly suggested that the evan-

[23] Cf. J. D. G. Dunn, "John the Baptist's Use of Scripture," in *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. C. A. Evans and W. R. Stegner, JSNTSup 104 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 53-54: "The tradition of the Baptist's mission and preaching was through and through scriptural… the most obvious specific influence comes from Isaiah… with Isaiah prominent among other more diffuse themes and motifs."

[24] Evans cites *ἔφη* (he said, John 1:23) as a quotation formula in John, as though it introduces Isa. 40:3 ("On the Quotation Formulas," 80). It seems, however, that "he said" introduces the words of the Baptist (cf. "they said" in 1:22). The citation of Isa. 40:3 is then closed with (rather than being introduced by) the quotation formula, *καθώς εἶπεν Ἠσαΐας ὁ προφήτης* (1:23; Evans does not list this phrase as a quotation formula [*ibid.*]).

[25] Barrett, for instance, notes the paschal lamb (cf. Exod. 12), the servant lamb (Isa. 53:7), the goat of the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16), and the ram provided

gelist uses the Old Testament "as a whole."[26] If that is the case, it could well be that when the Baptist identifies Jesus as the "lamb of God" (1:29, 36), the Gospel's audience is pointed generally toward the various lambs in the Old Testament (see note 25). The lamb of Isa. 53:7 might rise to prominence, however, in view of the fact that the Baptist has just cited Isaiah (John 1:23), and in view of the Isaianic overtones in John 1:32-34.

There the evangelist depicts the Baptist claiming that the decisive factor in his identification of Jesus as the one whose way he was to prepare was the Spirit coming down upon him and remaining upon him (John 1:32-34). Isaiah 11:2 stated that the Spirit would rest upon the Davidic branch of Jesse. Further, Isaiah indicated that the Spirit would be upon the Servant (Isa. 42:1; cf. 48:16; 61:1).[27] In the Baptist's proclamation, then, we see the declaration that the Spirit is upon Jesus (1:32-34) between two declarations that he is the lamb of God (1:29, 36). The Baptist identifies himself in Isaianic terms (John 1:23; Isa. 40:3), and then he identifies Jesus in Isaianic terms (John 1:29-36), for Isaiah's Servant would have the Spirit (Isa. 42:1), and was likened to a lamb (53:7).

Jesus' Use of Isaiah in John

In John there is nothing so explicit as Luke 4:17-21, where Luke shows Jesus claiming to fulfill Isa. 61:1. In Jesus' words in John, citation formulas where Isaiah could be cited (and these are somewhat ambiguous, see below) occur at only three points. Nevertheless, in John's presentation of the words and actions of Jesus, the influence of the prophecy of Isaiah is easily discerned. Having discussed the three places where Isaiah might be di-

in place of Isaac (Gen. 22). See "The Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel," 155-56. Similarly S. E. Porter, "Can Traditional Exegesis Enlighten Literary Analysis of the Fourth Gospel?" in *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. C. A. Evans and W. R. Stegner, JSNTSup 104 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 407-08.

[26] Barrett, "The Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel," 168.

[27] These texts are not noted in the margin of NA[27] at John 1:32-34.

rectly cited by Jesus in John, we will seek to show that much of what John shows Jesus saying and doing corresponds to the words of Isaiah.[28]

Direct Fulfillments

In John 6:45 Jesus says, "It has been written in the prophets, 'And they will all be taught of God;' everyone who hears from the Father and learns comes to me." This could refer to several Old Testament texts, one of which is Isa. 54:13 (cf. also Jer. 31:33-34).[29] Isaiah 54:13 opens with the words, "And all your sons will be taught of Yahweh."

Another citation formula which probably has several Old Testament passages in view is found in John 7:37-39. There are several disputed points in these three verses,[30] but for the purposes of the present study we are only concerned with the citation formula[31] and the words that follow it in 7:38. John 7:38 reads, "The one who believes in me, just as the Scripture says, rivers of living water will flow from his belly." Again, several Old Testament texts seem to be in view here, among which are Isa. 12:3; 43:19; 48:18; 49:10; 55:1; and 58:11.[32] Since the words

[28] Cf. Ball, *"I Am" in John's Gospel*, 264.

[29] But cf. Menken, "The only OT text which really resembles Jn 6:45, is Isa. 54:13" ("The Old Testament Quotation in John 6,45," 168).

[30] For the debate over how the verses should be punctuated, what Old Testament texts might be in view, and from whose belly the water flows, with the commentaries, see G. M. Burge, *The Anointed Community* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 88-93; J. B. Cortés, "Yet Another Look at Jn 7:37-38," *CBQ* 29 (1967), 75-86; S. H. Hooke, "The Spirit Was Not Yet (Jn 7:39)," *NTS* 9 (1963), 372-80; J. Marcus, "Rivers of Living Water from Jesus' Belly (John 7:38)," *JBL* 117 (1998), 328-30; M. J. J. Menken, "The Origin of the Old Testament Quotation in John 7:38," *NovT* 38 (1996), 160-75.

[31] The Isaianic texts alluded to in this passage are probably the same texts alluded to in John 4:10-14, but there no fulfillment formula is employed.

[32] The relevant phrases from these passages in Isaiah are as follows (all but 48:18 and 58:11 are noted in NA[27]):

12:3, "You shall draw water in joy from the springs of salvation."

43:19, "I will put a way in the wilderness, rivers in the desert."

that follow the citation formula in John 7:38 do not precisely match any one Old Testament passage, it seems that Jesus is presented referring broadly to the promises of water that would flow in the messianic age. As can be seen from the number of Isaianic references, this water theme is prominent in Isaiah.

The last fulfillment formula on the lips of Jesus in John which might hearken back to Isaiah is found in John 17:12. As Jesus prays he says, "And none of those [you gave me] have perished except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled." Here a passage is not quoted, but the Scripture is said to be fulfilled.[33] While this might be an allusion to the many places in the Old Testament that speak of the destruction of the enemies of the Messiah (cf. e.g., Gen. 3:15; Ps. 110:5-6), a particular passage from Isaiah could be in view. Isaiah 33:1 reads, "Woe to the one who destroys, and will you not be destroyed? And woe to the one who deals treacherously, when they did not deal treacherously against him. When you finish destroying you shall be destroyed,[34] and when you cease dealing treacherously, they shall deal treacherously against you."[35] In the context, Isa. 32:1 predicts the reign of a righteous king, and 32:15 speaks of the outpouring of the Spirit. John presents Jesus as the King who has been betrayed (John 18:2, 36-37), and who gives the Spirit to

48:18, "If you had inclined to my commandments, then your peace would have been as a river."

49:10, "They will neither hunger nor thirst… for the one who has compassion on them will lead them to springs of water" (cf. John 7:37, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink").

55:1, "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters" (cf. John 7:37).

58:11, "And you will be as a watered garden, and as a spring of water whose waters will not disappoint."

[33] Freed thinks that John 17:12 has the fulfillment of John 6:70-71 in view (*Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John*, 96-98).

[34] The LXX uses forms of *ταλαιπωρέω* (ruin, afflict) rather than John's *ἀπόλλυμι* and *ἀπώλεια*, but the MT's שדד clearly refers to destruction, and can be translated as *ἀπόλλυμι* and *ἀπώλεια*. Cf. E. Hatch and H. A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint*, 2nd edn. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 136, 151.

[35] This text is not noted in the margin of NA[27].

his followers (20:22). Perhaps Isa. 33:1 is the Scripture being fulfilled in John 17:12.[36]

It does not seem likely that Isa. 57:4 (noted in the margin of NA[27]) is being fulfilled in John 17:12, but the language from that verse could be influencing the language of John 17:12. Isaiah 57:4 speaks of the "seed of deception," and in John 17:12 Judas is called the "son of destruction."

Thematic Connections

The thematic connections between the words and actions of Jesus in John and the book of Isaiah are plenteous. The plan of cataloguing these correspondences between Isaiah and John here is to proceed through the Gospel of John noting Isaianic resonations as we come to them. When a conceptual echo of Isaiah occurs at numerous places in the Gospel, all of its occurrences will be noted with the first occurrence so that redundancy can be minimized.

The first allusion to Isaiah in the words of Jesus in John appears to come in John 3:14, where Jesus speaks of the "lifting up" of the Son of Man to Nicodemus. While other Old Testament texts are surely in view (e.g., Num. 21:8), given the influence of Isaiah upon John seen thus far, a reference to Isa. 52:13, which speaks of the "lifting up" of the servant, cannot be ruled

[36] Freed does not mention this as a possibility, nor do the commentators I surveyed: C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 2nd edn. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978), 509; G. R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 2nd edn., WBC (Nash-ville: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 299; J. H. Bernard, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 2 vols., ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1928), 571-72; R. E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2 vols., AB (New York: Doubleday, 1966, 1970), 760; Carson, *John*, 563-64; Morris, *John*, 644-45; H. N. Ridderbos, *The Gospel accor-ding to John*, trans. J. Vriend (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 553-54; R. Sch-nackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3 vols. trans. K. Smith (New York: Crossroad, 1968, 1979, 1982), 3:182. Most cite Ps. 41:10 (ET 41:9), "Even my close friend, whom I trusted, with whom I at my bread, has made great his heel against me;" or 109:8, "Let his days be few; let another take his ap-pointment." It seems that Isa. 33:1 is nearer to the meaning of John 17:12 than these passages.

out.[37] This "lifting up" theme (using ὑψόω) is carried forward in John 8:28 and 12:32 (cf. 12:34).

Jesus offered the Samaritan woman the "gift of God" and "living water" in John 4:10-14. The Isaianic texts discussed above as informing John 7:37-39 are relevant for this passage as well (cf. note 32 above, and see too Isa. 48:21).[38]

In John 4:21 Jesus states that a time is coming when worship will no longer be focused on Jerusalem, which corresponds to the indications in Isa. 66:1 that Yahweh transcends localities. In the next verse, John 4:22, speaking with the Samaritan woman, Jesus affirms Jewish worship and states that "salvation is from the Jews." While there are no verbal connections to Isa. 2:3 here (noted in the margin of NA[27]), that verse does speak of "many peoples" going to Jerusalem to learn the ways of Yahweh. The correspondence, then, seems to be the centrality of God's chosen people and his chosen place in his plan of salvation.[39]

In John 4:26 Jesus says, "I, who speak to you, am he (ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ λαλῶν σοι)." Ball points out that these words are "almost a direct parallel to the words in Isa. 52:6,"[40] where the text reads, "I myself am the one who speaks (ἐγώ εἰμι αὐτὸς ὁ λαλῶν)."[41]

Jesus speaks of the one who sows rejoicing together with the one who reaps in John 4:36. Here there could be an echo of Isa. 9:2 [ET 9:3] (noted in the margin of NA[27]), which states, "They shall rejoice before you, as with the joy of the harvest."

The judgment that has been entrusted to Jesus is the topic of John 5:22, and this calls to mind Isa. 11:3-4,[42] where we read

[37] Cf. Marrs, "John 3:14-15: The Raised Serpent in the Wilderness," 142-43.
[38] NA[27] notes only Isa. 58:11, though the reader is referred to John 7:37.
[39] For the view that God's "chosen place" is the temple in the Old Covenant, which is replaced by the believing community as the temple in the New Covenant, see my dissertation, "He Is with You and He Will Be in You" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003), esp. chapter 5.
[40] Ball, *"I Am" in John's Gospel*, 179; Young, "A Study of the Relation of Isaiah to the Fourth Gospel," 224.
[41] Not noted in NA[27].
[42] Not noted in NA[27].

that the anointed root of Jesse will judge in righteousness. This passage also seems to inform Jesus' command, "Do not judge according to sight, but make a righteous judgement" in John 7:24 (cf. Isa. 11:3, "He will judge not by what his eyes see," and 11:4, "and he will judge in righteousness").

Isaiah 26:19 is not the only Old Testament text to speak of the resurrection of the dead (cf. e.g., Dan. 12:2-3; Ezek. 37:12), but it is one of the more explicit statements of this nature. This indicates that it is partly behind the words of Jesus on the resurrection of the dead in John 5:28-29.

The themes of light and glory in John and Isaiah have been noted above. This correspondence between Isaiah and John is carried forward by Jesus in John. John presents Jesus claiming to be the light of the world (8:12; 9:5), speaking of walking in the light (11:9-10; 12:35-36), and averring that he has come to deliver those who believe in him from darkness (12:46). These latter elements match Isaiah's proclamation that "those walking in the darkness have seen a great light" (Isa. 9:1 [ET 9:2]). The former element, Jesus' claim to be the light of the world, seems to answer the Isaianic motif of the Servant as the "light to the nations" (42:6[43]; 49:6; cf. also 60:1, 3).[44]

At several points in John, Jesus says the words "I am" and offers no predicating element.[45] Brown suggests that at certain places a predicate is understood, even if not expressed.[46] There remain a number of places which have been referred to as "Absolute 'I Am's in John's Gospel."[47] Noting the influence of Isa-

[43] NA[27] has 42:8 instead of 42:6, which appears to be a typographical error, since the reference to the Servant being a light to the nations is at 42:6 in both the LXX and the MT.

[44] Ball writes, "It was the role of the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah to be a light to the nations. Thus, when Jesus claims to be that light, he implicitly assumes the identity of the Servant" (*"I Am" in John's Gospel*, 260).

[45] In contrast to those places where he says "I am the bread of life" or the like (cf. John 6:35; 15:1 etc.).

[46] Brown, *John*, 533.

[47] A. J. Köstenberger, *Encountering John* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 261.

iah's prophecies on these formulations, Ball argues, "In contrast to previous studies of *ἐγώ εἰμι*,… it was not only the words 'I am' which pointed to the Old Testament, but also their formulation and context."[48] The *ἐγώ εἰμι* formula occurs in the LXX of Isaiah at 41:4; 43:10, 25; 45:19; 46:4 (2 times); 48:12; and 51:12.[49] Ball goes on to claim that while others have seen the significance of Isaiah for the Johannine "I am" statements, his contention that "it is *the whole phrase* and not only the words *ἐγώ εἰμι* that refer to the worlds of Isaiah is a significant advance in the study of the way John uses Isaiah."[50]

Isaiah 43:1 opens with a command that Israel not fear (LXX, *μὴ φοβοῦ*). Shortly thereafter Yahweh assures his people that he alone is God, "I am (MT, אני הוא; LXX, *ἐγώ εἰμι*), before me none was formed, and after me there shall be none" (43:10). In John, when Jesus comes to the disciples walking on the water (6:19), most understand his words in 6:20, *ἐγώ εἰμι μὴ φοβεῖσθε* ("I am; do not fear") as a simple statement of self identification—"it is I."[51] Ball bases his argument for a double meaning—self identification *and* Jesus identifying himself with Yahweh—on the fact that "the verbal analogy between Jesus' words and those in Isaiah radically alters the meaning of those words."[52]

There appear to be a number of connections between Isaiah 43 and John 8. Ball suggests that just as Jesus assumed the role of the Servant as light to the nations in John 8:12, when Jesus says in 8:18, "I am the one who testifies concerning myself," the testimony of the Servant in Isa. 43:10 is in view.[53] Another Isaianic overtone in this passage is felt when Jesus says in John 8:24, "For unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins."

[48] Ball, *"I Am" in John's Gospel*, 258.
[49] Cf. Lincoln, "Trials, Plots and the Narrative of the Fourth Gospel," 22.
[50] Ball, *"I Am" in John's Gospel*, 258 (emphasis his).
[51] NA[27] does not cite any texts in the margin. Cf. also Barrett, *John*, 281; Morris, *John*, 309-10 (who allows for a subtle hint at deity).
[52] Ball, *"I Am" in John's Gospel*, 184.
[53] Ball, *"I Am" in John's Gospel*, 186. NA[27] does not note this connection.

The conceptual correspondence with Isa. 43:10 is apparent here: "'You are my witnesses,' declares Yahweh, 'and my Servant, whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me, and understand that I am.'" In both cases, John 8:24 and Isa. 43:10, the significant element is the call for the audience to believe the claim, "I am." This recurs when Jesus says in John 8:28, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am."[54]

Jesus' declaration in John 8:58, "Before Abraham was, I am," also matches Isaiah 43, but this time it seems nearer to 43:13 than 43:10. There Yahweh proclaimed, "Even from eternity, I am" (Isa. 43:10).

Another "I am" in John that bears Isaianic overtones is found in John 13:19. There Jesus says, "From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, that when it comes to pass you might believe that I am" (John 13:19). This statement is reminiscent not only of the "I am" passages in Isaiah discussed above,[55] but also of Isa. 46:10 and 48:5. In these texts Yahweh bases his claim to exclusivity on his unique ability to declare the future. Isaiah 48:5 is particularly close to John 13:19 conceptually, "Before it came to pass I caused you to hear, lest you should say…" (Isa. 48:5[56]; cf. also the use of "I am" in John 18:5-6).

Returning to the canonical order of John's Gospel, we find the next thematic connection to Isaiah on the lips of Jesus in John at 9:7.[57] Having healed a man blind from birth, "He said to him, 'Go to wash in the pool of Siloam' (which is translated, the one sent)." This appears to be a direct allusion to Isa. 8:6, where

[54] Ball, *"I Am" in John's Gospel*, 189, points out the similar wording between the LXX and John:

Isaiah 43:10, *ἵνα* ***γνῶτε*** *καὶ* ***πιστεύσητε*** *καὶ συνῆτε ὅτι* ***ἐγώ εἰμι***.

John 8:24, *ἐὰν γὰρ μὴ* ***πιστεύσητε*** *ὅτι* ***ἐγώ εἰμι***.

John 8:28, *τότε* ***γνώσεσθε*** *ὅτι* ***ἐγώ εἰμι***.

[55] Cf. Ball, *"I Am" in John's Gospel*, 199, where he argues for several parallels between Isa. 43:10 and John 13:16-19.

[56] Not noted in NA[27].

[57] It seems to me that the links Derrett uses to connect John 9:6 with Isa. 6:10 and 20:9 are not strong enough to establish a clear connection (cf. Derrett, "John 9:6 Read with Isaiah 6:10; 20:9").

we read, "These people have rejected the waters of Shiloah." "Shiloah" is a transliteration of הַשִּׁלֹחַ, which is related to the Hebrew verb שלח, "send." The LXX translates this Σιλωαμ. Given John's proclivity for referring to Jesus with phrases such as "the one sent," since Siloam appears to be a proper name unrelated to the Hebrew verb שלח, this text could indicate that John knew both Hebrew and Greek versions of Isaiah.

Isaianic influence also seems to shape John's presentation of Jesus identifying himself as the good shepherd (John 10).[58] Jesus says in John 10:16, "And I have other sheep, which are not of this sheepfold; it is necessary for me to bring them also. They will hear my voice, and they will become one flock with one shepherd." Isaiah said of the Servant that he would "bring Jacob back" to Yahweh (Isa. 49:5), but that was too small, so he would also be a light for the nations (49:6). The Servant then seems to be cast in the role of a shepherd leading his flock to pasture and water (Isa. 49:9-10). Similarly, just as the flock of Israel and the other sheep not of that fold would be gathered by the good Shepherd in John 10, so also Isa. 56:8 reads, "The Lord Yahweh declares, the one who gathers the banished of Israel, I will gather more in addition to them, to those who have been gathered." Affirming this connection between John 10:16 and Isa. 56:8, Köstenberger points out, "It is crucial to read [Isa. 56] v. 8 in the context of vv. 3-7, which emphatically affirm the inclusion of 'foreigners' in God's covenant… It is those previously excluded from God's covenant with Israel that God will gather."[59]

At the raising of Lazarus in John 11, Jesus says to Lazarus, "Come forth" (11:43), then John writes that he said, "Loose him and allow him to go free" (11:44). This is reminiscent of Isaiah's

[58] Cf. A. J. Köstenberger, "Jesus the Good Shepherd Who Will Also Bring Other Sheep (John 10:16): The Old Testament Background of a Familiar Metaphor," *BBR* 12 (2002), 67-96. Köstenberger traces the shepherd theme in John 10:16 through Ezekiel, Zechariah, Isaiah, and Davidic typology.

[59] Köstenberger, "Jesus the Good Shepherd," 80. NA[27] does not note either Isa. 49:5-10 or 56:8 in relation to John 10:16.

proclamation that the Servant would say "to those who are bound, go forth, and to those who are in darkness, show yourselves" (Isa. 49:9).[60] Lazarus was in darkness in the tomb, came forth bound, and Jesus proclaimed his release (John 11:43-44).[61]

Another possible connection is between John 12:20-33 and Isa. 11:10.[62] There are at least three points of contact between John 12:20-33 and Isa. 11:10: (1) In John 12:21, Greeks are seeking Jesus; in Isa. 11:10, "the nations will seek him [the root of Jesse]." (2) In John 12:32, Jesus speaks of being lifted up and thereby drawing all people to himself; in Isa. 11:10, "the root of Jesse will stand as a signal for the peoples, and the nations will seek him." (3) In John 12:23 and 28, Jesus speaks of the glory that the cross will bring to himself and the Father; in Isa. 11:10, "his resting place will be glorious."

The cross as Jesus' glory is at issue in John 13:31-32, where Jesus says, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify himself in him,[63] and he will glorify him immediately." It seems that

[60] Not noted in NA[27].

[61] A. T. Hanson might have suggested that the fourth evangelist "has invented this incident on the basis of" Isa. 49:9. See Hanson makes this statement regarding John 18:6, which he thinks has been "invented on the basis of Pss. 56:10 and 109:6" in "John's Use of Scripture," 369. Hanson proposes this sort of relationship, where John "apparently introduced on the basis of Scripture some episode or some piece of teaching that seems to have no other basis in history" for the following passages in Isaiah: John 16:8-11 from Isa. 42:1-9; John 19:17 from Isa. 53:11; John 19:39 from Isa. 11:10 (*ibid.*, 368-69). Irrespective of the question of history, I do not see a close relationship of any kind between these texts. Hanson proposes other connections between John and Isaiah that I do not find persuasive, e.g., John 7:18 and Isa. 55:5-6 (cf. *ibid.*, 371).

[62] Not noted in NA[27]. In my judgment Isa. 11:10 is closer to John 12:20-33 than Isa. 52:15, but since Isa. 53:1 is cited in this chapter the influence of 52:15 cannot be excluded. For discussion of Isa. 52:15 (LXX) in relation to John 12:20-33, see J. Beutler, "Greeks Come to See Jesus," *Bib* 71 (1990), 333-47.

[63] I have translated the *αὐτόν* in John 13:32 as a reflexive, "God will glorify *himself* in him" (rather than the mor common "God will glorify him in him")

John is again portraying Jesus representing himself in Isaianic terms. In Isa. 49:3 we read, "You are my Servant, Israel, in you I will glorify myself." Thus, God glorifies himself in the Servant in Isa. 49:3 and John 13:32. Then, just as Jesus claims that he will be glorified in John 13:31, the Servant says in Isa. 49:5, "I am glorified in the eyes of Yahweh."[64]

Jesus' famous statement in John 14:6, "I am the way," may also have an Isaianic point of reference. In the heavily messianic Isaiah 11, we read in 11:16, "And there will be a highway for the remnant of his people who are left from Assyria, just as there was for Israel in the day when he brought them up from the land of Egypt" (cf. also Isa. 35:8).[65]

The connection between John 15:1-8 and Isa. 5:1-7 is generally acknowledged, though it is not noted in NA[27]. Whereas Isaiah likened Israel to a vine, Jesus claims to be the true vine. Thereby he seems to put himself forward as what Israel failed to be.

In John 16:13 we read, "When he comes, the Spirit of Truth, he will lead you into all truth." The LXX of Isa. 63:14 is slightly different from the MT, and runs, "A Spirit from the Lord came down and led them."[66] Here the verbal connection (Spirit, lead/led) is more prominent than the conceptual (cf. also 16:14-15).

John 16:21 records Jesus' describing a woman in the pains of labor, an image also found in Isa. 26:17. Similarly, John 16:22

because John elsewhere uses *αὐτόν* as a reflexive: *Ἰησοῦς οὐκ ἐπίστευεν αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς* ("Jesus did not entrust *himself* to them") in 2:24.

[64] Neither Isa. 49:3 or 49:5 is noted in NA[27].

[65] Not noted in NA[27], but cf. Ball's discussion of the "way" connections between Isaiah and John, *"I Am" in John's Gospel*, 234-40. Ball also suggests a "tentative verbal allusion" between John 14:2-3 and Isa. 49:11, 20 (*ibid.*, 234-35), and cites several other Isaianic "way" statements. It seems to me that Isa. 11:16 and 35:8 are most prominent. They promise a way, and then John presents Jesus claiming to be the way.

[66] Not noted in NA[27].

speaks of sadness that is turned to rejoicing, and Isa. 66:14 reflects a similar progression from woe to weal.

In Isa. 41:23 and 44:7 Yahweh asserts his exclusive ability to declare the future, challenging his rivals to do the same. In John 16:23, among other places, Jesus does just that—declaring things to come.[67]

In Isa. 55:10-11 Yahweh proclaims that his word will accomplish the purpose for which he sends it. In John 17:4 Jesus, the Word (cf. 1:1), announces that he has finished the work the Father gave him to do.[68]

In Isa. 45:19 Yahweh asserts, "I have not spoken in secret. Similarly, Jesus says to Pilate, "I have spoken openly to the world" (John 18:20).[69]

Conclusion

These are all the connections, whether verbal allusions, conceptual similarities, or direct citations, that I have located between the Gospel of John and the book of Isaiah.[70] The chart resulting from this discussion here is not exhaustive (see it below), but again, a beginning has been made.

[67] Not noted in NA[27].

[68] Not noted in NA[27]. Dahms argues that Isa. 55:11 influences a whole series of texts in John, and claims to have "established the indebtedness of the Fourth Gospel to Is. 55:11 for the proceeding from/returning to God motif" ("Isaiah 55:11 and the Gospel of John," 88). I have not included discussion of this motif here, nor have I listed the references on the chart, but I think he is largely correct. For these references, see his discussion.

[69] Not noted in NA[27].

[70] I have not discussed the texts Young identifies, where there are contacts between Isaiah and John regarding the use of the concepts: "name" (Isa. 52:5; 55:13; 62:2; and 65:15-John 5:43; 17:6, 11); "proclaim (ἀναγγέλλω)" (Isa. 41:26, 28; 42:9; 43:9, 12; 44:7; 45:19; 46:10; 47:13; 48:14-John 4:25; 16:13-15); and "word (ῥῆμα)" (Isa. 40:8; 55:11; 59:21-John 6:63), nor are these passages included on the chart. Nevertheless, the connections Young points to are stimulating. For discussion, see Young, "A Study of the Relation of Isaiah to the Fourth Gospel," 222-30.

It now seems safe to affirm with some degree of certainty that Isaiah exercised extensive influence upon the Gospel of John. This study has attempted to catalogue both the direct citations of Isaiah in John as well as the thematic connections between the two books. These connections hold powerful implications on several levels, but no attempt here was made to offer interpretations of these points of contact. That enterprise will be reserved for a subsequent endeavor. This study merely sought to set forth where Isaiah seems to have influenced John. If this effort has contributed to a better understanding of where Isaianic influence upon the Gospel of John may be detected, and if it contributes to the attempt to understand John's use not only of Isaiah, but also of the Old Testament more generally, it will have been successful.

Chart: Connections to Isaiah in John

	Direct Fulfillment: Some type of fulfillment formula used		**Thematic Connection:** No fulfillment formula, but actions or words correspond to Isaiah's Prophecy	
	John	**Isaiah**	**John**	**Isaiah**
Evangelist	12:15 12:38-41	35:4; 40:9 53:1; 6:10, 1	1:4-5, 7-9; 2:11; 3:19-21 19:34	8:23-9:1; 42:6; 49:6; 60:1, 3 48:21
Baptist	1:23	40:3	1:29, 36 1:32-34	53:7 11:2; 42:1; 48:16; 61:1

Jesus	6:45	54:13	3:14; 8:28; 12:32 (34)	52:13
	7:37-39	12:3; 43:19; 48:18; 49:10; 55:1; 58:11	4:10-14	12:3; 48:21; 49:10; 58:11
	17:12	33:1; 57:4	4:21	66:1
			4:22	2:3
			4:26	52:6
			4:36	9:2 [ET 9:3]
			5:22	11:4
			5:28-29	26:19
			6:20	43:1, 10
			7:24	11:3
			8:12; 9:5; 11:9-10; 12:35-36, 46	8:23-9:1; 42:6, 8; 49:6; 60:1, 3
			8:18, 24, 28, 58; 18:5-6	41:4; 43:10, 13, 25; 45:19; 46:4; 48:12; 51:12
			9:7	
			10:16	8:6
			11:43-44	49:5-10; 56:8
			12:20-33	49:9
			13:19	11:10; 52:15
			13:31-32; 17:5	43:10; 46:10; 48:5
			14:6	49:3, 5
			15:1-8	11:16; 35:8
			16:13	5:1-7
			16:21	63:14
			16:22	26:17
			16:23	66:14
			17:4	41:23; 44:7
			18:20	55:10-11
				45:19

What Did Christ Accomplish at the Cross? With Reference to Recent Controversies namely "The Lost Message of Jesus" and the "New Perspective on Paul"

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ABSTRACT. Tracing the atonement from its necessity—man's "problem" in Romans 1 (we are under wrath active through retribution) to God's solution (satisfaction through substitution) in chapter 3, with interaction with a range of Scriptures and doctrinal issues, this article asserts that penal substitution is the central and indispensable, though not the only, achievement of the atonement. The article concludes with brief surveys of contemporary controversies: first, issues raised by Steve Chalke's book *The Lost Message of Jesus* and, second, the view of the atonement that appears in the theology of N. T. Wright and the *New Perspective* on Paul.

Introduction

The night before his crucifixion the Lord said to his Father, "I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do" (John 17:4).[1] On the cross, he said "It is finished" (19:30). What was this work?

The Integrating Principle: Obedience

The words of Jesus in John 17:4 guide us: it was the work his Father had given him to do. It was the course of his obedience on earth, that work described in Philippians 2:5-11 which cul-

[1] Bible quotations are from the English Standard Version (Crossway Bibles, 2001) unless otherwise stated.

minated in his death on a cross. On its completion the Father highly exalted him and he was given the glory which he had before the beginning of the world (John 17:5). He entered on to the reward promised in the eternal covenant of redemption referred to in Isaiah 53:10-12, John 17:2-5 and Hebrews 12:1-3. Obedience is the overarching category within which to understand the work of Christ. Obedience was the great representative work he completed on behalf of those federally united with him in eternity, the "one act of righteousness" of which Paul speaks in Romans 5:18 which cancelled out the "one trespass" of the first Adam and marked a new beginning for humanity. On the basis of the imputation of his righteousness, they are justified. By this work of the second man, the last Adam, a new creation is inaugurated.

Any description of what Christ accomplished on the cross must have this broad, cosmic perspective in view and see the work of Christ characterised by obedience. It is what God requires. It is what man must render. Where Adam failed, Christ succeeded. Two elements in Christ's obedience are rightly distinguished but never separated: his obedience to the precepts of the law and his obedience to the penalty of the law. He had to obey the law perfectly as man because man had failed to do it. He had to bear the penal sanction of the law—death. "Preceptive" and "penal" are better descriptions than active and passive, because all of his obedience was active, no more so than in his death where he loved the Lord his God with all his heart soul mind and strength as no human being has ever done; and all was passive in the sense that his humiliation was a state he entered at conception and which characterised his whole life and death.

This work was part of Christ's priestly work, of a piece with his continuing work of intercession in heaven. It was also a work that was complete before his resurrection though without resurrection it would have had no saving efficacy, accessibility or perpetuity.

But the culminating point of this work was at the cross. It is not (yet) a point of controversy among evangelicals that Jesus Christ's obedience unto death on the cross was somehow central to salvation. What is too often in controversy is precisely what "happened" on the cross—what Christ accomplished and how.

This is where we turn to a passage rightly valued for its richness on the meaning of the cross—Romans 3:21-26. It does not say everything there is to be said on the subject but as a single passage it says more than any other in the New Testament.

The "Problem": Wrath active through retribution: the background to Romans 3:21-26

A study of 3:21-26 requires a grasp of the preceding argument in Rom. 1:18-3:20. Paul proclaims the revelation in the gospel of a righteousness of God to be received by faith. This is necessary because of the prior existence of another reality—the wrath of God. This is being revealed in the course of history as God judicially hands man over to the sinful course of life he has chosen (1:18-32). It is further "stored up" for the end time, even for the moral man and the Jew who know better but do not do it (2:1-5; 17-24). The conclusion is that not one is righteous, neither Jew nor Gentile (3:9-20); all are under sin, every mouth will be silenced on the last day. There is no escape, and there is no escaping the conclusion—the wrath of God against human beings because of their sin is the presupposition for the revelation of the righteousness of God in the gospel. Emil Brunner says: "…the objective aspect of the divine which corresponds to the condition of man is the wrath of God. Hence a theology which uses the language of Christianity can be tested by its attitude toward the Biblical doctrine of the wrath of God, whether it means what the words of Scripture mean".[2]

We must pause to look at this great truth which is central to understanding the cross and is the one thing that detractors of

[2] *The Mediator* (Lutterworth, 1927), 152.

penal substitution have to ignore, explain away or play down. Indeed this is to say that the debate about the atonement is nothing less than a debate about our view of God.

Its necessity

If God is a holy God then wrath is a necessary response to sin. Wrath is "no capricious passion, but the stern reaction of the divine nature towards evil"[3], his "holy reaction to evil".[4]

It is personal

C. H. Dodd in his commentary on Romans[5] explained God's wrath as "the inevitable process of cause and effect in a moral universe" and A. T. Hanson in *The Wrath of the Lamb* followed him.[6] Certainly there is a "process" of wrath described in Romans 1 but it is process which God initiated and which he superintends. The interposition of secondary causes do not cancel out the agency of the first cause who put those secondary causes into place. The "impersonal" argument has been put more recently in slightly different form by Stephen Travis[7] and is answered well by Garry Williams in his EA lecture in July 2005.[8] Williams points out that "…with God the creator it is quite possible for a punishment to be intrinsic, to follow from an act, and yet still to be retributive in character" (that is, to be divinely inflicted punishment).

[3] Leon Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross* (Eerdmans, 3rd edn., 1988), 150.
[4] John Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (IVP, 1986), 103.
[5] Moffatt, *New Testament Commentary* (Fontana: London, 1932, 1959).
[6] A. T. Hanson, *The Wrath of the Lamb* (SPCK: London, 1957).
[7] In *Christ and the Judgement of God: Divine Retribution in the New Testament* (Marshall Pickering, 1986).
[8] All references to "EA Lectures" are to the lectures held at the London School of Theology on 6-8 July 2005 under the auspices of the Evangelical Alliance following the controversy caused by Steve Chalke's book *The Lost Message of Jesus* (Zondervan, 2003). A number of these papers can be seen on the EA website, www.eauk.org/theology.

It is operative in retributive justice

The divine logic is that sin deserves to be punished. Retribution has not as its main aim the reformation of the offender, nor merely the declaration of what is right and wrong, nor the warning of others lest they offend, but the visiting of sin with its just deserts. This is the very essence of justice. Man is responsible and the principle of retribution treats him as responsible, not as sick or ignorant or under the influence of others. Retribution protects both human dignity and divine honour. The only alternative to retribution is a change in the law and that means a change in the character of God. Retribution is seen in the Old Testament for example in Psalm 106 which gives six examples of what incurs God's wrath: discontent (13-15); rebellion (16-18); idolatry (19-23); unbelief (24-27) apostasy (28-32) and obstinacy (32-33). Moreover the form that God's wrath takes expresses the *lex talionis* principle—an eye for an eye. There is in other words a correspondence between crime and punishment: God "hands over" people to their choices- if they are greedy, to meat that will kill them; if they make alliances with pagan nations, to the rule and the gods of those nations, as Stephen teaches in Acts 7:41, 42. Paul makes *paredoken* ("he handed over") a principle of history in Romans 1. But there is more direct infliction too—Dathan and Abiram are struck dead immediately for trespassing on the holy.

All this is subject in the case of God's people to two crucial qualifications: first, God's undergirding love and faithfulness to them expressed in the *covenant* and in such passages as Hosea 11:8-9: "How can I hand you over O Israel…?; and second, the *provision for the aversion of retributive punishment* either by the sacrificial system, the sacrifices being expiatory or attached to those that were; or by a mediator (Moses in Exodus 32, 33 or Phinehas among the Midianites (Num 25:10f; Ps. 106:28-31). The prophets reminded Israel and Judah time and again of God's wrath but also that in the end he was amazingly gracious: "You will know that I am the Lord, when I deal with you for my name's sake and not according to your evil ways and your corrupt

practices, O house of Israel, declares the Sovereign LORD" (Ezek. 20:44). The covenant God is faithful when he is gracious.

The New Testament references to wrath also demonstrate retribution and the "correspondence" principle of punishment as in Romans 1. One of the contemporary objections to penal substitution is that "revenge" is unworthy of God. How can one who bids us turn the other cheek or prays "Father forgive them they know not what they do" be one with a God who inflicts punishment on those who offend him? Is this not this the "myth of redemptive violence" to use Walter Wink's phrase?[9] But noone taught more on hell, which is the ultimate in retribution and correspondence, than the Lord Jesus Christ and Paul's teaching is the same as that of Jesus. In Romans 12:19-21 he asserts that we are not to take revenge but he then says: "..but leave it to the wrath of God for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord'." Why not say "do not avenge yourselves because God is a God who does not take revenge"? On the contrary Paul affirms that God is a God of retribution. The restoration of justice has been temporarily delegated to the state in international relations and internal peace and security, but on a cosmic scale and in the sphere of sin, God avenges himself and his own. He is the guardian of justice. And for this reason we leave it to him.

It is at work now

This is asserted in Romans 1, in that sin and its consequences are the punishment for sin.

But it is primarily eschatological

See Romans 2:5; 1 Thess. 1:10; 2 Thess. 2:5-10. It is this eschatological wrath that the proponents of wrath as "impersonal" or merely "cause and effect" fail to deal with. It is this wrath from which Christ saves us, not the outworking of it in history. Yet for believers, those within the covenant, the experience of even

[9] Quoted by Chalke, *The Lost Message of Jesus*, 125.

"historical" wrath is transformed from the infliction of judgment to fatherly chastisement.

The solution: satisfaction accomplished through substitution

Wrath is relieved by satisfaction through substitution. First, *substitution***.** The Old Testament sacrificial system was built on this principle. The sacrificial animal was a substitute for the sinner who offered it. The heart of the system was the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16). The blood of a bull was sprinkled on the mercy seat lest the High Priest should die. In addition there were two goats: the scapegoat was sent into the wilderness, representing visually what was accomplished in the death of the sacrificial goat—the taking away of sins by a substitute. This is taken up in Hebrews 9 and applied to Jesus as the sacrificial animal who dies (vv. 7 and 12) and the scapegoat who takes away sin (v. 28).

Then again of course we have the substitution of Isaac by a ram in Genesis 22 and above all; the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 who "bears their iniquities", all together pointing us to Jesus Christ the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Two points emerge in the Old Testament system: (1) The principle of grace, which means that substitution is an expression of grace. It bears witness to the truth that atonement is God's work. In Psalm 78:38, 79:9 it is God who atones. This is most expressly stated in Leviticus 17:11: "For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life". This states the principle of substitutionary atonement: life is given for life, of the victim for the offeror. It was given *by God* for this purpose. Atonement is ultimately his provision. (2) The principle of inadequacy, which means that in the sacrifices the people of God could see the principle of grace but also the inadequacy of their system. Sacrifices had to be repeated. The priest himself was sinful. Some sins could not be atoned for but were visited with the death penalty. All pointed

to the need for a greater sacrifice. God in his grace would reveal not only substitution but self-substitution.

The principle of substitution is impossible to deny. Moreover so is what substitution achieved, that is—*satisfaction*. Concluding a study of the *kipper* (atonement) word-group in the OT, Leon Morris[10] found that both within and outside the sacrificial system it meant much the same thing: averting punishment especially the divine anger, by the offering of a ransom which could be a life or money. For instance, see Exod. 32:30; Num. 35:33; Num. 16:41-50; 2 Sam. 21:1-14; Deut. 21:1-9. Remember also Psalm 106. Until atonement is made the displeasure of God rests upon the sinner.

Stott[11] has a useful discussion of what satisfaction means: (1) the satisfaction of God's law in that its sanctions are met; (2) upholding moral order in the universe. Emil Brunner says: "The Law of his divine being, on which all the law and order in the world is based… the logic and reliable character of all that happens, the validity of all standards… the Law itself in its most profound meaning, demands the divine reaction, the divine concern about sin… if this were not true, then there would be no seriousness in the world at all; there would be no meaning in anything, no order, no stability…"[12]; (3) the satisfaction of God himself. This occurs in (1) and (2) in that there is no law or moral order outside of or greater than God which are to be satisfied independently of him. But this third point also takes into account the Biblical expressions of very personal reactions to sin—God's being provoked (Deut. 32:16; Ps. 78:40,41); "burning" (Gen. 39:19; Ex. 32:19; Jer. 4:4; Deut. 4:24—"God is a consuming fire") and of "satisfaction" itself in which God's anger is spent, accomplished, poured out (Lam. 4:11; Ezek. 7:7, 8). Hence

[10] See *Apostolic Preaching*, chapters 5 and 6.
[11] Chalke, *The Lost Message of Jesus*, 122-23.
[12] *The Mediator,* 444-45 (Westminster Press, 1947) quoted by Stott, *The Cross of Christ*, 103.

Stott's conclusion is that the biblical means of atonement is God's self-satisfaction by self-substitution.

What we learn from God's provision of atonement is that *God's wrath is entirely compatible with God's love*—indeed a Christian understanding of the gospel requires these two realities. This is not to say that wrath and love are of equal ultimacy. Love is essential to God; wrath is reactive to sin. Love will be forever; wrath can be assuaged. But that both are real and compatible is essential to the gospel. The cross is where wrath and mercy meet. To quote only one of many such statements: James Denney says of 1 John 4:9, 10: "So far from finding any kind of contrast between love and propitiation, the apostle can convey no idea of love to any except by pointing to the propitiation—love is what is manifested there; and he can give no account of the propitiation but by saying, Behold what manner of love. For him, to say 'God is love' is exactly the same as to say 'God has in His Son made atonement for the sin of the world'. To posit a conflict between God's love and wrath is biblically impossible."[13]

Morris concludes that while we want to do away with the crude notion of man bringing gifts to appease an angry deity, the concept of propitiation cannot be expunged from the Old Testament. The principle of retribution is that "the soul that sins shall die". The principle of substitution is that God may accept another death in the place of the sinner. The principle of satisfaction is that thereby God's wrath is quenched.

In this light therefore we return to Rom 3:21-26.

The Righteousness of God

Verse 21: "But now…" the righteousness of God is manifested. This righteousness is evidently that referred to in 1:17 and is the answer to man's plight. Its revelation is independent of the law (probably meaning here the "law covenant", the law as a system) yet the law and the prophets bear witness to it—it is new

[13] *The Death of Christ* (1902; Shepherd Classic Edition, 1981), 276.

but has been long announced. It is in fact the righteousness of God. This is the righteousness of God on the basis of the imputation of which God justifies sinners (Rom. 4:5; 5:1, 9, 10; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9).[14]

Verses 22, 23, 24a: It is a righteousness that is received through faith and is for all who believe, for all have sinned—there is no distinction in the plight or the remedy.

Verse 24b: Now Paul brings in the death of Christ. What is its place in this argument? It is the rationale for justification through faith alone. It is the reason why God can be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Christ Jesus, the justifier of the ungodly. It is the justification for justification. Sinners are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood to be received by faith (or, through faith in his blood).

If the origin of justification is God's grace, its historical basis is "the *redemption* that came by Christ Jesus". The biblical term *apolytrosis* denotes liberation on the payment of a price. It is the ransom of which the Lord speaks in Mark 10:45. In the New Testament sinners are seen as being in bondage which is many-sided but is specifically to (1) the law and (2) to sin.[15] Quite evi-

[14] For a brief discussion as to why this does not mean "God's covenant faithfulness" as eg N. T. Wright would have it see Don Carson's useful exposition of this passage in *The Glory of the Atonement*, ed. Charles Hill and Frank A. James III (IVP, 2004); and for a longer discussion see *Perspectives Old and New on Paul* (Stephen Westerholm: Eerdmans 2004), 286-96.

[15] As to the law, we are in bondage (a) to its curse which is its penal sanction and Christ redeemed us from this curse being made a curse for us (Gal. 3:13); (b) to the law of works as a condition of salvation from which we are redeemed by the perfect obedience of Christ being constituted righteous by that obedience (Rom. 5: 19) and (c) from the ceremonial law and its tutelary role. Hence obedience for Christ also meant fulfilling all the ceremonies of the law (Luke 2:22-24; cf Matt. 3:15) for he was born under the law (Gal. 4:5). As to sin, we are in bondage to sin "in all its aspects and consequences" (Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, 46) and salvation is not fulfilled until the redemption of our bodies. Redemption embraces all salvation including the eschatological deliverance from sin (Rom. 8:23, Eph. 1:14). But

dently what is uppermost here is deliverance from the guilt of sin which is precisely what justification is (cf Eph. 1:7, Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:15).

How is this redemption effected? Because Jesus Christ was "put forward" by God "as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith". In John Murray's words commenting on "to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45), "Redemption, therefore, in our Lord's view, consisted in substitutionary bloodshedding… with the end in view of thereby purchasing to himself the many on whose behalf he gave his life a ransom".[16]

What does Paul mean by *hylasterion* in Rom. 3:25? A first century Greek would have thought in terms of propitiation. In the LXX it translates "mercy seat" on 22 out of some 27 appearances. It means "place of atonement" or "means of atonement". In addition the *hilaskomai* word group is used overwhelmingly to translate the Hebrew *kipper* which Leon Morris says "carries with it the implication of a turning away of the divine wrath by an appropriate offering".[17] There are therefore good *linguistic* reasons for "propitiation" or "mercy seat" (that is, a propitiatory offering or place) over C. H. Dodd's preferred alternative of expiation, and probably for propitiatory offering/sacrifice over "mercy seat" as the introduction of a Levitical "cult" word seems out of place here. In addition the *contextual* considerations for "propitiation" (either "place" or "means" is secondary) are overwhelming. Expiation has sin as its object; it means the cancelling out, putting away or covering of sin so that it no longer constitutes a barrier between man and God. Propitiation has God as its object. It means the pacifying of his wrath. In Morris' words, "….while other expressions in verses 21-26 may be held to deal with the judgement aspect, there is nothing other than this word to express the turning away of the wrath. Wrath has

in Rom. 3:24 Paul has in mind something already accomplished and in this regard we think of bondage to (a) the guilt of sin and (b) the power of sin.

[16] *Redemption Accomplished and Applied* (Banner of Truth edition, 1961 reprint 1979), 47.

[17] *Redemption*, 170.

occupied such an important place in the argument leading up to this section that we are justified in looking for some expression indicative of its cancellation in the process which brings about salvation".[18] Propitiation is secured as a result of expiation of guilt. "God is propitiated as the result of the expunging, the wiping out, the making atonement for the sin. What has been done satisfies God and he therefore forgives; he is propitiated as the result of expiation" (D. M. Lloyd-Jones).[19]

So propitiation must be there; the work of Christ on the cross is directed first to God and by his sacrifice God's wrath is assuaged. The very thought contains the idea of substitution. Because Christ died, God's wrath is quenched in respect of those who believe. There is real redemption because there has been a real propitiation.

Verse 25: The phrase "through his blood" surely emphasises the Old Testament context of sacrifice. See Rom. 5:9; Eph. 1:7; 2:13; Col. 1:20. The life is in the blood; it is the blood that atones. Verses 25b, 26: Finally, the purpose for which this is done: there is the justification of God and the justification of sinners. Our thinking must be guided by the last phrase—that God may be just, not merely be *seen to be* just, and the justifier. To summarise a complex argument, the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ enables God to maintain his righteous character in postponing punishment of sins in the past and in justifying those who in the present age place their faith in Jesus.[20]

God may therefore be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. The cross is at one and the same time the satisfaction of God's justice, the demonstration of it and the provi-

[18] *Ibid.*, 201. See also Stott, *The Cross of Christ*, 172.

[19] *God's Ultimate Purpose* (Banner of Truth, 1978), 156-57.

[20] "His righteousness" in vv. 25 and 26 being his attribute of justice, not the righteousness whereby he justifies the ungodly; the former is "demonstrated" (*eis endeixin)* at the cross, the latter, on the basis of which generations before Christ were proleptically justified, is "made manifest" (*pephanerotai)*, v. 21. See Douglas Moo's discussion, *Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary, Romans 1-8* (Moody Press, 1991), 238-43.

sion of a "righteousness of God" on the basis of which God justifies the ungodly.

"Romans 3:21-26", says Don Carson, "makes a glorious contribution to Christian understanding of the 'internal' mechanism of the atonement. It explains the need for Christ's propitiating sacrifice in terms of the just requirements of God's holy character".[21]

What did Christ accomplish on the cross? The removal of wrath active through retribution by providing satisfaction through substitution. More simply, with regard to God—satisfaction; with regard to man—righteousness leading to justification. How did he accomplish it? By consenting to be a wrath—bearing sacrifice—or as we may also call it, by penal substitution, effectting redemption and reconciliation, providing the rationale for justification.[22]

I shall return to "penal substitution" later and try to show how, whatever else may be true of Christ's achievement, penal substitution is the infrastructure without which everything collapses. Let's now look briefly at the current debates. The fundamental objection is to "penal substitution" as a description of what Christ "did" on the cross.

Steve Chalke, "The Lost Message of Jesus" and Recent Objections to "Penal Substitution"

This created a furore in 2004 mainly after it was publicized by a review in *Evangelicals Now*. It is not a book primarily about the atonement but to recapture Jesus' lost message that "the kingdom of God, God's inbreaking shalom, is available now to everyone through him". In the course of the book Chalke is dismissive of what he sees as evangelical shibboleths including the

[21] *Glory,* 138.

[22] Sinclair Ferguson in a lecture at Keswick in July 2005 listed six consequences of the Fall from which Christ's death redeems us: guilt (by justification), alienation (in reconciliation), bondage to sin (in redemption), captivity to Satan (by victory over the devil), death (through his death and resurrection) and the cosmic curse (by inaugurating the new creation as the last Adam).

need to be born again. His basic conviction about God is that God is love and is never defined as anything other than love.[23] He quotes 1 John 4:8 yet not verses 9, 10 which explain that God's love is most clearly seen in the cross—indeed, in Christ's propitiatory sacrifice. He says:

> John's gospel famously declares, " God so loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son" (John 3:16). How, then, have we come to believe that at the cross this God of love suddenly decides to vent his anger and wrath on his own Son? The fact is that the cross isn't a form of cosmic child abuse—a vengeful Father, punishing his Son for an offence he has not even committed. The truth is, the cross is a symbol of love. It is a demonstration of just how far God as Father and Jesus as his Son are prepared to go to prove that love. [24]

He is concerned because he thinks the world sees evangelicals as hard and censorious and the implication is that this is due at least in part to a theology of the atonement that legitimises power and a God of anger, justice and power. We need to restate everything in terms of love and tell people that God loves them and that they are fundamentally good rather than originally sinful.[25] And so on.

Chalke's book is bad in theology and exegesis. A wrong view of God, of man and of the cross, were the accurate headings in the "Evangelicals Now" review. Moreover it makes its point by setting up and knocking down straw men—caricatures of positions he wants to demolish.

But what is behind this? Chalke's book did not come out of thin air and the recent EA debate in July revealed a movement within broader evangelicalism that opposes penal substitution. One of the speakers was Joel Green the co-author with Mark

[23] *Lost Message,* 63.
[24] *Ibid.*, 182-83.
[25] *Ibid.*, 67.

Baker of *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross*[26] which argues against penal substitution. What are the arguments of those who oppose penal substitution ?

Garry Williams in an excellent paper defending the doctrine categorises (and answers) four them as follows. A number of the answers will have been anticipated in what I have already said.

Penal substitution entails a mistaken doctrine of God

Principally in that it ascribes retributive justice to God. What has already been said covers the main answers to this objection.

Penal substitution conflicts with the doctrine of the Trinity by severing the Persons

Williams quotes Joel Green: "any atonement theology that assumes, against Paul, that in the cross God did something 'to' Jesus" is "an affront to the Christian doctrine of the triune God".[27] Williams in his argument quotes in reply among others, Stott: "We must never make Christ the object of God's punishment or God the object of Christ's persuasion, for both God and Christ were subjects not objects, taking the initiative together to save sinners".[28] Also, John Owen says: "The Agent [Subject] in, and chief author of, this great work of redemption is the whole blessed Trinity; for all the works which outwardly are of the Deity are undivided and belong equally to each person, their distinct manner of subsistence and order being observed".[29] Remember the words of Jesus in John 10:17, 18—he lays down his life, no-one takes it from him, yet this is why—even when he is forsaken—the Father loves him. The Son is willing; the Father sends; the Son is sent; the Father strikes (Matt. 26:31—quoting Zech.

[26] Mark Baker, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2001).
[27] Baker, *Recovering*, 57.
[28] Baker, *Recovering*, 151.
[29] John Owen, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*, Bk. I, chap. 3; Works (Banner of Truth edition) vol. 10, 163.

13:7); the Son bears. This is not anti-trinitarian; it is the profound heart of the revelation of the mystery of the Trinity.

Penal substitution thrives in the soil of modern Western individualism

This is a strange criticism to make of a doctrine that depends on the federal unity of the Surety and the members. The corporate—covenantal context of penal substitution is the very opposite of individualistic. It is the more modernist interpretations of the cross that are individualistic.

Penal substitution cannot look beyond itself (it is solipsistic)

This has various elements. (1) "It cannot make sense of the life of Jesus". But the obedience of Christ as we have seen was both preceptive and penal all his life long. At the cross it all came to a climax: he was loving his Father with all his heart and mind and soul and strength even as he bore his Father's wrath. But his life was an experience of the curse all the way through." (2) "It cannot make sense of the cosmic scope of Christ's work on the cross". Williams says: "Penal substitution teaches that on the cross the Lord Jesus Christ exhausted the disordering curse in our place. It is thus that there can be resurrection and new creation, because the curse, our punishment, has been spent". (3) "It cannot ground the work of sanctification". But it is rooted in the same doctrine of union with Christ: we died with him as well as he for us. Moreover the freedom of redemption is an incentive to holy living. (4) "It amounts to cosmic child abuse". This is a common feminist critique of the cross. Coupled with this is the accusation of "violence" paraded as salvific. How can one respond: (1) As long as we believe the Bible we have no option but to see the death of Christ ordained by the Father. (2) To object to Christ's death as "violent" is at root to strike against any system of justice in a fallen world; for ultimately, Christ's death was punishment for sin. (3) The willing approach of Jesus Christ to his own death makes any suggestion of "abuse" blas-

phemous. His was a loving obedience as was the Father's gift costly.

Other objections to penal substitution are:

It is relatively new

Chalke alleges (in a website article) that it first emerged in Anselm, matured under Calvin and came to full growth in Hodge. But Williams in an *Evangelicals Now* article[30] gives plenty of evidence of the doctrine in the Fathers and cites Justin Martyr, Ambrose, Augustine and Gregory the Great.

Penal Substitution is the cause of or contributory to evangelicals being regarded as harsh and censorious

This begs many questions. (1) How widespread is that image? (2) Is there a causal connexion? (3) What difference would changing either the theology or the image make to the acceptance of the gospel? (4) Who are we listening to most—the world or the Word?

It represents a "bookkeeping" or "commercial" model of atonement

"Yes—and…?" almost suffices as an answer to this. Remove the emotive and negative connotation of "bookkeeping" or "comercial" and what you have is the fact that the atonement involves substitution, imputation and exchange. Alleluia!

It represents God as being in a "legal bind"

Subject to a law bigger than himself. We must be careful how we preach the atonement if we use language of "God's having a problem" etc. God's law is unchanging not because it is an expression of his will by which he is then bound eg as King Darius was by his edict and then had to pronounce another one to get himself out of a "fix"; but because it expresses his character which is unchanging. But God is not subject to powers higher

[30] October 2004.

than he; he is being self-consistent in sending his Son to the cross. But this objection is to a distortion of the real doctrine.

There are many models of the atonement in Scripture and penal substitution is only one and probably not the best

This is the line taken by *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross*: that the NT material on the atonement is varied and that we should construct similarly varied models to suit different situations today—one of which may be penal substitution. So penal substitution may at best be one of a constellation of models of the atonement but no more. How do we respond to this "one of many metaphors" argument?

That there is "polyphony" in Scripture in speaking on the death of Christ is not denied. What is denied is: (1) that the various pictures used are mere metaphors and we are free to jettison them to reach a "deeper" truth; (2) that we can pick and mix between them; (3) that they give us licence to create our own equally valid metaphors. What must be remembered is that (1) these are God's accommodation to our weakness and being God's language they have divine authority; (2) they reveal truth about the atonement; (3) they will harmonise perfectly and not be conflict—there is in them a consistency because God's truth is ultimately one truth and we should expect a cogent picture to emerge; (4) we should not be surprised if one "model" is seen to be dominant, central, even indispensable, to the understanding of all the others. It is demonstrable that "penal substitution" (which after all is not a biblical "model" in the same way as "reconciliation" but is theological shorthand to describe a biblical truth) summarises the truth of God as to the "mechanism" of the atonement.

In *The Glory of the Atonement* Roger Nicole[31] explains why, with reference to other "models" of the atonement, why penal substitution is the "linchpin". (1) If there is a model of Christ as our example (1 Pet. 2:21) then the self-giving must be properly

[31] Postscript on Penal Substitution, *Glory*, 445.

motivated—not an empty gesture. (2) If the cross was to move us to love God, then how are we to be moved by death as an expression of "love" that meets no need in us? It is a strange expression of love—as likely to repel as attract. (3) If the cross is a victory, then it is a victory over Satan because it deals with human guilt. For Satan's power over believers is to accuse, and when a believer can point to the cross and say "he took my guilt" Satan is cast down (John 12:31; Rev. 12:10, 11—"they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony"). (4) If the cross is a governmental display of God's justice, then unless Christ really bore the sin of men it is a flagrant act of injustice in itself. (5) If the cross is in any sense seen as a vicarious repentance—this cannot be. A vicarious sacrifice is possible; a vicarious repentance is not. We have to repent; if Christ had repented for us, we would not have to. At his baptism he was not repenting, only identifying with us.

So Christ's substitutionary interposition as a "sinbearer who absorbs in himself the fearful burden of the divine wrath against our sin and secures a renewal of access to God"[32] is the "linchpin" of the doctrine of the atonement which makes possible the unified function of the other parts. If the linchpin is removed, the rest fail to function. So whether our problem is guilt, alienation, bondage to sin, captivity to Satan, death or the cosmic curse, it is met by the work of Christ as a wrath bearing sacrifice. As Garry Williams was brave enough to say at the EA debate, this is not a discussion "within the family". Penal substitution is not all there is to the cross but it alone makes sense of all there is and if we reject it we are flying in the face of the Scriptures and of God's grace. To the question "Can one be an evangelical and reject the doctrine of penal substitution or even reject its central and essential role?" the answer must be "No"—unless the word evangelical has lost all meaning.

[32] *Ibid.*, 446.

The New Perspective on Paul

The nub of the "NP" is its redefinition of justification by faith and therefore of the gospel. Proponents of the NP differ on many things but let's take N. T. Wright as its most influential exponent at least in the UK. For Wright[33] the gospel is the announcement of a great victory of Christ, not an account of how people get saved. It is "an announcement of the true God over against false gods"; the true God has sent his Son to redeem his people from bondage to false gods. The proclamation of the gospel results in people getting saved; through the proclamation the Holy Spirit works on man's hearts and they believe the message. The very announcement is the means whereby God reaches out and changes hearts.

Justification meanwhile is *implied* by the gospel but is not itself the gospel. "The "gospel" is the announcement of Jesus' Lordship, which works with power to bring people into the family of Abraham, now redefined around Jesus Christ and characterised solely by faith in him. "Justification" is the doctrine which insists that all those who have this faith belong as full members of this family on this basis and no other".

Justification is therefore an ecclesiological doctrine not a soteriological one—to do with how the people of God are defined, not a declaration that an individual is right with God. Implicit in this is that the imputation of Christ's righteousness as the basis of justification is denied.

What consequences does this have for their understanding of the cross work of Christ? One would expect an interpretation along the lines of the "victory" model and this is borne out at least in Wright's exegesis of texts in Romans.[34] On Romans 3:21-26. Wright supports "propitiation" as the meaning of *hilasterion* on lexical but primarily contextual grounds, as do more conservative scholars. It is "exactly [the idea of punishment as a part of atonement] that Paul states, clearly and unambiguously, in

[33] *What St. Paul Really Said* (Lion, 1997).
[34] *New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. X (Abingdon, 2002).

8:3, when he says that God 'condemned sin in the flesh'—i.e. the flesh of Jesus".[35] But what does Wright say on 8:3?

> God, says Paul, condemned sin. Paul does not, unlike some, say that God condemned Jesus. True, God condemned sin in the flesh of Jesus; but this is some way from saying, as many have, that God desired to punish someone and decided to punish Jesus on everyone's behalf. Paul's statement is more subtle than that. It is not merely about a judicial exchange, the justice of which might then be questioned (and indeed has been questioned). It is about sentence of death being passed on "sin" itself, sin as a force or power capable of deceiving human beings, taking up residence within them. And so causing their death (7:7-25). To reduce Paul's thinking about the cross to terms of a lawcourt exchange is to diminish and distort it theologically and to truncate it exegetically. For Paul, what was at stake was not simply God's honor, in some Anselmic sense, but the mysterious power called sin, at large and destructtive within God's world, needing to be brought to book, to have sentenced passed and executed upon it, so that, with its power broken, God could then give the life sin would otherwise prevent. That is what happened on the cross.[36]

Wright therefore sidelines penal substitution and the imputation of righteousness even while "agreeing" with the texts that teach both.

Guy Prentiss Waters[37] confirms the impression that Wright's theology of the cross is more to do with breaking sin's power than removing its guilt. The connection between justification (remember—that you are a member of God's covenant people, not that you are right with God through faith) and Christ's death is vague. On Rom. 3:25a Wright says "Thus is God's righteousness revealed in the gospel events of Jesus' death and resurrection: God has been true to the covenant ('covenant

[35] *Ibid.*, 476.
[36] *Ibid.*, 578.
[37] Guy Prentiss Waters, *Justification and the New Perspectives on Paul* (P&R, 2004).

faithfulness' is Wright's understanding of *dikaiosyne theou*), has dealt properly with sin, has come to the rescue of the helpless and has done so with due impartiality between Jew and Gentile".[38]

"Vague" is the only word that Waters can use to describe the connexion Wright makes between the death of Christ and the believer's pardon. He comments "Since Wright rejects imputation as a Pauline category… he cannot mean by 'atonement' and 'propitiation' what these terms have traditionally been understood to mean. Atonement and propitiation cannot, therefore, play a central role in Wright's real understanding of the significance of Christ's death".[39]

Wright gives us a primarily *Christus Victor* view of the atonement, focussing on the defeat of sin as power rather than dealing with guilt. The *obedience* of Christ is his succeeding where Israel failed, entering into the "exile" of the cross and re-emerging in resurrection to new covenant life. Sinners are saved by identification with him in his death and resurrection—he is representative but not strictly a substitute.[40]

Conclusion

There is absolutely no need for evangelicals to be defensive about the doctrine of penal substitution. There is nothing new in the recent attacks once the contemporary wrappings have been removed. The evangelical understanding of the cross does full justice to the biblical material. It most fully expounds the character of God as he has revealed himself as Triune love and holiness. The "high mysteries" of his Name an angel's grasp transcend but we should glory in understanding them as well as we can. Let us regard the Word as more authoritative than the world. Understand the doctrine accurately. Preach it carefully

[38] Wright on *Romans,* 477.
[39] Waters, *Justification*, 142.
[40] Interestingly, Wright is obviously an influence on Chalke—he is frequently cited and commended Chalke's book as "rooted in good scholarship".

but passionately. It alone is the power of God unto salvation. Moreover never let penal substitution be sidelined as one understanding of the atonement among many, whatever truth there is in other aspects of the multifaceted cross. In a real sense, penal substitution *is* the gospel:

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned he stood;
Sealed my pardon with his blood:
Hallelujah! What a Saviour.[41]

[41] This work was first given as a paper to the Westminster Fellowship, London, 3rd October 2005.

Facing Opposition from Inside and Outside the Church

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ABSTRACT. In the years following the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the growing Christian Church faced many difficulties. At times the problems were external, open persecution from an unbelieving and hostile world. At other times troubles arose from within the assemblies. Four New Testament letters will be examined to trace the movement from the open persecution to the inner corruption of the churches. From the internal evidence alone a relationship will be established between these four letters together with the lessons that the authors draw from these different experiences in the life of the church. These lessons are just as valid today when the Church faces open persecution or inner corruption.

Four New Testament letters form the subject for this article: 1 and 2 Peter, Jude and 1 John. Scholars differ as to the dating of these letters. The contents do however provide evidence for a suggested chronology. I will approach these four books on the basis that they appeared in this order: 1 Peter, 2 Peter, Jude and 1 John. I am not suggesting that they were written to the same people nor would I wish to argue that this is the only way in which these letters may be related. The approach proposed here gives a useful framework for understanding the content, the application, and the present relevance of these four God-inspired letters.

1 Peter

At the time of writing about thirty years have passed since the death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. The

Holy Spirit has come and the disciples of Jesus are empowered and enthusiastic to proclaim the gospel. Thousands have come to faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The church is growing. But over those thirty years, persecution that was periodic and occasional has become the regular experience of the people of God.

The Apostle Peter addresses his first letter to Christians under severe persecution. He pictures the devil, the great enemy of the Church, prowling "about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). These are days of open, outward hostility from the unbelieving world. Peter counters the impact of persecution by showing the positive ways in which suffering may be experienced. Faith shines brightest under trials. God is honoured when his people endure suffering for the sake of righteousness. God will bless his people when they endure suffering for his name's sake.

2 Peter

Not many years later the Apostle Peter detects a change of strategy from Satan. He addresses his second letter to warn Christians of hidden dangers to come. False teachers will arise among the true people of God. They "will secretly bring in destructive heresies" (2 Peter 2:1). So from external, outward persecution the attack will change to internal, inward corruption. There will be corruption of doctrine and corruption of morals; bad teaching will lead to bad behaviour. Peter urges the resisting of these false doctrines by holding fast to the Word of God and the promises of God.

Jude

Jude, the brother of the Lord Jesus Christ, writes his letter shortly after the second letter of Peter. The danger of false teachers "who will secretly bring in destructive heresies" (2 Peter 2:1) has now become a reality: "For certain men have crept in unnoticed… ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus

Christ" (Jude 4). Jude urges his readers to combat these alien influences and "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

1 John

The Apostle John has known persecution as a Christian pastor. He will know times of hard persecution again when he is exiled to the Island of Patmos (Revelation 1:9). He writes to the churches for which he exercises pastoral care and oversight. False teachers have ravished the churches and left destruction in their wake. They are no longer present in the congregations. "They went out from us," writes John, "but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us" (1 John 2:19). The churches have been shaken. The influence of the false teachers is still evident in the congergations. Christians are confused as to the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. John writes steering a steady course between the destructive rocks of error and heresy.

Let us consider them now in more detail.

Stage One: The First Letter of Peter

The first letter of the apostle Peter is written to Christians facing hostility and suffering. They are being persecuted for their faith in Christ. "The persecutions did not stem from the imperial government, but originated from the local populace in the form of verbal slander and social pressures (4:14-15)."[1] Many believers are experiencing acute stress in the community, in the workplace and in the home. Peter reminds them of their heavenly inheritance and he encourages them to live lives of submission to God's will. He instructs them how to respond to their persecutors in a Christ-like manner.

[1] Robert G. Gromacki, *New Testament Survey* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1974, reprint 2004), 350.

Outline

1. (1:1-12) Believers are to understand that trials have a place in God's purposes of salvation.
2. (1:13-2:10) Believers are challenged to live in obedience, holiness and love as the people of God.
3. (2:11-3:12) Believers are to be exemplary witnesses before the unbelieving world: all are to be submissive to civil authority; slaves are to be submissive to their masters; wives are to be submissive to their husbands; husbands are to treat their wives with dignity and respect; the people of God are to love one another and treat each other with tenderness and courtesy.
4. (3:13-5:11) Believers need a clear perspective on suffering in order to maintain a good conscience and to follow the example of their Saviour; they have turned from their old ways of sin; they now live for the glory of God and joyfully accept suffering for the name of Christ; elders are encouraged in their ministry; the people of God are to be humble and watch out for the attacks of the devil.

Suffering

The key word of 1 Peter is "suffering". Sixteen times the word appears and six of the references are to Christ's own sufferings (1:11; 2:23; 3:18; 4:1, 13; 5:1). Peter challenges believers to follow the example of the Saviour and to suffer patiently (2:20-23), for the sake of righteousness (3:14, 18), for doing good rather than evil (3:17), with rejoicing (4:1, 13), as a Christian (4:16), and "according to the will of God" (4:19).

Christology

The sufferings of Christ were planned in eternity (1:20); the Saviour lived a sinless life here on earth (1:19; 2:22); he died bearing his people's sin that we "might live for righteousness" (2:24); the righteous One dying for the unrighteous to "bring us to God" (3:18). Peter refers to the Lord's resurrection (3:21), his ascension and accession to the throne of God (3:22), and his re-

turn in glory (1:7, 13; 4:13; 5:1, 4). The crucifixion and resurrection of Christ are presented as crucial in the context of suffering. The sufferings of Christ not only wonderfully save his people but also provide an example when his people face suffering themselves. The resurrection of Christ is the basis of Christian hope and that "living hope" sustains believers through all life's difficulties and trials.

The Prophets and the Sufferings of Christ

Peter gives a New Testament commentary upon the understanding of the Old Testament prophets: "Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when he testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow" (1 Peter 1:10-11). When the prophets spoke about the cross and the kingdom of the Messiah, they were perplexed. If Christ is to suffer and die how can he reign? If Christ is to reign why must he suffer? When is all this to be achieved? The prophets did not understand that the prophecies about Messiah required two advents for the Son of God. The time lapse between the first coming of Christ and the second coming of Christ was not revealed until after the Incarnation.

Stage Two: The Second Letter of Peter

In his second letter Peter addresses opposition of a different kind. The focus of attention switches from outside to inside the Church. Peter knew that the provinces of Asia Minor would soon be invaded by false teachers (2:1; 3:3). It would seem that these heretics were known to him and were already influencing Christians in other areas with their moral and doctrinal errors for Peter speaks about them in the present tense: They "speak evil" (2:12); "These are wells" (2:17); "they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure" (2:18); and "they wilfully for-

get" (3:5).[2] Peter warns the churches that false teachers will attack two major doctrines: the doctrine of the atonement (2:1) and the doctrine of the Parousia, the return of Christ (3:4). The Apostle describes the heresies and demonstrates how this false teaching and consequent immorality are to be resisted.

Outline

1. (1:3-11) Believers are to cultivate genuine Christian character based upon the "exceedingly great and precious promises" of God, thus confirming their calling and election.
2. (1:12-21) Peter takes his responsibility seriously. It is his duty to remind Christians what constitutes true Christian doctrine and ethics; he knew he was about to die, he therefore provides a written record for them, reminding them of the testimony of eyewitnesses and the reliability of the prophetic Scriptures.
3. (2:1-22) Peter warns of the emergence of false teachers within the assemblies. Their "destructive heresies" will undermine true doctrine and holy living and lead many astray. These apostates are under the judgment of God and will be punished accordingly. Their punishment will be the more severe because they have led many astray to destruction. Three biblical examples provide reinforcement to the warning: God's punishment of the angels who sinned, God's punishment of the people in the days of Noah, and God's punishment of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The present false teachers are arrogant and immoral: corrupt doctrine has produced corrupt behaviour.
4. (3:1-16) Scoffers will arise who will make mockery that Christ has not yet returned; they will challenge the promises of God and misunderstand the reasons behind the delay; Peter responds with an argument from history, from Scripture, from the character of God, and from the promise of Christ himself; the ethical implications of the second Advent are then forcefully set out—those who look forward to the return of Christ do so "in holy conduct and godliness… diligent to be found by him in

[2] *Ibid.*, 361.

peace, without spot and blameless." This teaching, says Peter, is in entire agreement with that of the Apostle Paul.
5. (3:17-18) Let the people of God take heed and, continuing in the way of truth, "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ".

Knowledge
The key word in 2 Peter is "knowledge", that is, "the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord" (1:2). There are sixteen occurrences of the verb "to know" or one of its derivatives. Only a clear grasp of revealed truth can provide a sure defence against error.

Christology
The transfiguration of Christ that the apostle Peter witnessed along with his two colleagues James and John was an outstanding experience. They "were eyewitnesses of his majesty" (v. 18). Furthermore, writes Peter, "We also have the prophetic word made more sure" (1:19). As eyewitness of the Messiah, the Apostles witnessed the wonderful fulfillment of so many prophecies. This provides confident reassurance that the remaining prophecies will certainly be fulfilled—"the prophetic word made more sure."

Scripture
The source, and therefore the reliability, of Scripture is set forth in the clearest terms: "…knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:20-21). How well this dovetails with Paul's glorious declaration: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Paul writes, "All Scripture is God-breathed…" Peter explains how this is achieved—"holy

men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Peter also indicates the perfect harmony between the words of the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament apostles (3:2). He particularly mentions the teachings of the Apostle Paul and declares, by implication, that Paul's New Testament letters (probably all written by that time) are to be regarded in the same light as the Old Testament Scriptures (3:15-16).

New heavens and a new earth

The present world is to be refined by fire (3:10). The Lord has promised "new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" (3:13). The people of God may rely upon the promise of God, and look forward to the coming of the day of the Lord with enthusiasm and eagerness.

Review of 2 Peter

The only effective antidote to error and heresy is "to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." This can only be achieved through careful study and application of the Scriptures which have been given under the inspiration and supervision of the Holy Spirit.

Stage Three: The Letter of Jude

The strong similarities between Jude 4-19 and 2 Peter 2:1-3:3 raise the inevitable question: How did this come about? Peter and Jude could have written independently upon the same subject but the contents of each letter are so alike that such an idea is quite inadmissible. It is possible that they both used a common source, but there is no manuscript evidence to support this notion. It seems more probable that Jude quoted material from Peter's letter or Peter quoted material from Jude's letter. But who wrote first?

Peter warns of false teachers arising in the future (2 Peter 2:1), whereas Jude warns of false teachers already present (v. 4). When Jude writes regarding the apostolic warning about mockers (vv. 17-18) he seems to be referring to the words of Peter (2

Peter 3:2-4) and of Paul (Acts 20:28-30; 2 Timothy 3:1-9). Also the fact that Jude quotes other sources (vv. 9, 14-15) suggests that Jude quoted Peter rather than Peter quoted Jude.

In Jude, there is a reinforcement of the teaching of 2 Peter. Peter's warning about the emergence of false teachers "who will secretly bring in destructive heresies" has now been realised. Jude declares that they have "crept in unnoticed" (v. 4).

Outline

1. (1:3-19) Jude warns against the insidious tactics of the false teachers. The only safe recourse in the face of heresy and error is to hold fast to the God-given truth, "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints". There is an enemy within. They twist the grace of God into an excuse for excesses—sinful behaviour of every kind. God's unmerited favour towards sinners has been turned into a pretext for sinful self-indulgence. Three biblical examples give weight to the warning about God's judgment upon the ungodly and immoral: the unbelievers in the Wilderness, the angels who rebelled, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The characteristics of present false teachers are enumerated—so too their unsparing punishment at the hands of the holy God. The warning is consolidated by reference to the words of the apostles.
2. (1:20-23) The second section of Jude's letter contains encouragement to persevere: to keep in the love of God and display compassion towards those who have been influenced by the false teachers.
3. (1:24-25) The letter ends with a strong positive note that the Lord is able to preserve his people.

Grace and godliness

These heretics are "ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 4). God's free grace is never to be seen as an excuse for sin. As the apostle Paul taught, God's grace trains believers to "live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present

age" (Titus 2:12). "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not!" (Romans 6:1-2).

Keep and kept

Believers are to keep the faith (v.3); confident in the knowledge that the Lord keeps them (v.24). It is a great reassurance to the people of God that in the midst of all the wrong teaching and careless living that is abounding in the world *and in the church,* the Lord is able to preserve his own: "Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: 'The Lord knows those who are his', and 'Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity' (2 Timothy 2:19). See also 'Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to God our Saviour, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen" (Jude 24-25).

Resumé

1 Peter is written in an environment of open persecution. The people of God are suffering—some are suffering in the community, some are suffering in the workplace and some are suffering in the home. Peter helps his reader to understand the nature of suffering for righteousness' sake.

Some years later, maybe only a few years later, the apostle Peter writes again. The situation is changing. He sees the encroachment of false teachers and warns his Christian brothers and sisters of the forthcoming insidious intrusion of false teaching concerning the atonement and the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. These false teachers will not only bring their vile teaching but also introduce their vile behaviour and infect many with their corruptions.

The letter of Jude follows the second letter of Peter, emphasising the wickedness of these immoral false teachers. He informs his readers that Peter's prediction has come true. False teachers are in among the company of believers. Like Peter, Jude does

not hold back the full force of his denunciation. These false teachers will come under the severest punishment from God. They are to be resisted by a firm adherence to the truth of God's revealed Word.

Stage Four: The First Letter of John

A few years pass and the situation in the churches changes. The false teachers who had emerged from inside, or secretly infiltrated the congregations from outside, have now left. They have taken others with them and formed their own gatherings. They have departed but their insidious influence is still being felt. Claiming a special spiritual knowledge these teachers denied the reality of the incarnation of Christ and the necessity of holy living. The apostle John identifies the features of this supposed "anointing" or new enlightenment. He sees it as an attack on the very foundations of the Christian faith. Such teachers are "false prophets", "antichrists" and "of the devil."

Who were the heretics?

Various attempts have been made to identify the character of these heretics. Some argue that they are the forerunners of the Gnostics who taught that there was a dichotomy between matter (evil) and spirit (good). These teachers claimed to have been given a special anointing or enlightenment, a special knowledge (the Greek word *gnosis* means "knowledge"). "Full-blown Gnosticism is almost certainly an amalgam of Jewish, Christian, and pagan deviations… whose flowering is… later than the New Testament."[3]

Docetism was a branch of Gnosticism and rejected the incarnation of the Son of God since God who is good could not become flesh which is evil. Consequently they taught that Christ *only appeared* to be a real man (the Greek word *dokeo* means "it seems"). According to this teaching, Christ did not have a real

[3] Don A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo and Leon Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1992), 454.

material body. His appearance was like the theophanies or Christophanies of the Old Testament period. Others see traces of the heresy of Cerinthus who taught that Jesus was born *naturally of both* Mary and Joseph. Then the spirit of the divine Messiah [Christ] descended upon the man Jesus at baptism, remained in him throughout his ministry and departed from him shortly before his crucifixion, which means that the Son of God did not suffer and die; the human Jesus did. Stephen Smalley couples a low view of the deity of Christ with a high view of the Jewish law; and a low view of the humanity of Christ with Gnostic tendencies.[4]

Does it really matter that we cannot identify or agree about the exact nature of these heretics? Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, the apostle John has provided a clear antidote to false teaching concerning the person of Christ. Whatever the error the safest response is a careful and faithful presentation of the truth. The Son of God is the Word of life who has been with God from the very beginning. He became flesh, a real, true human being, and died on the cross to make a perfect satisfaction for sin. He arose from the dead and will return in glory and in full view. Furthermore, in order that the people of God may know where they stand, John defines the distinguishing marks a true believer in Christ. His goal is to stir Christians to reject false teaching, adhere to the truth, and apply sound God-given doctrine to daily living.

Outline

Many attempts have been made to establish an outline for this first letter of the Apostle John.[5] There is little agreement among the scholars. John's letter does not have the structure typical of Paul's letters, but then there is no reason why it should have logical structure. He is not writing a university essay. It is not

[4] Stephen S. Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John* (Milton Keynes: Word, 1991), xxiii.

[5] I. Howard Marshall, *The Epistles of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978, 1990 reprint), 22-27.

even in the usual form of a letter since there are no opening or closing greetings. He is writing from the heart to people whom he loves in Christ Jesus. Marshall suggests that "…it seems preferable to regard the Epistle as being composed of a series of connected paragraphs whose relation to one another is governed by association of ideas rather than by a logical plan. This does not mean that John is illogical, but rather that his Epistle is not meant to be divided into large sections on a logical basis."[6] The aged apostle is deeply concerned for his "children" in the faith whose stability in the truth is being undermined by the pernicious doctrines of the false teachers and the pull of worldliness. To give grounds for assurance to the true people of God, major themes of Christian truth and Christian behaviour are interwoven, repeated, emphasised, clarified and confirmed.

1. (1:1-4) John begins with the reality of the incarnation of the Son of God. The apostle was himself an eyewitness. He heard, saw and touched the embodiment of the Word of life. John and his colleagues were witnesses. Because of what they have seen and heard, they are able to proclaim the only basis for true fellowship with God, with God's Son and with God's people.
2. (1:5-2:2) God is holy. Sin breaks fellowship with the holy God. Sin must therefore be acknowledged, confessed and forgiven.
3. (2:3-27) John introduces three tests of true faith: *the moral test* of obedience to the commandments of God, *the social test* of love for God's people and *the doctrinal test* of knowing the truth about Jesus Christ.
4. (2:28-4:6) In the fourth section the three tests of true faith are repeated in a different form: *the moral test* is seen in the purity of life, living righteously, keeping from sin; *the social test* is genuine, practical love for one another; and *the doctrinal test* is belief in the true humanity of Jesus Christ.

[6] *Ibid.*, 26.

5. (4:7-5:13) A third cycle is discernable. The three tests of true faith are consolidated: *the social test*, those born of God love one another; *the doctrinal test* is knowing that Jesus is the Son of God and Saviour of the world; *the social test* is love for God as a response to being loved by God; *the doctrinal, social and moral tests* are interwoven—belief that Jesus is the Christ, love for God, love for God's Son, love for God's children, keeping God's commandments. These are evidences of the new birth. True Christians believe the testimony of God to his own Son and know they have eternal life in him.
6. (5:14-21) In the final section, John asserts that true Christians have confidence in prayer and compassion in intercession. *The moral and doctrinal tests* are reiterated for the last time: new birth issues in purity of life based upon knowing Jesus Christ. And finally, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols".

Theology

John emphasises the character of God as light and love. God is holy and pure (1:5, 7); truthful (1:8, 10; 5:20); faithful (1:9); forgiving (1:9; 2:12) and loving (4:7-12). He is the Father of all those who truly believe in his Son Jesus Christ. The Father loves his children and has sent his Son into the world to become a human being and die as the complete atoning sacrifice for sin.

The Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of truth" (4:6; cf. John 15:26; 16:13; 14:17) and he bestows an anointing that enables God's children to know the truth (2:20-21, 27).

Christology

The heresy of the false teachers centred in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. They denied the true humanity of God's Son (4:2-3). They also denied that Jesus was the Christ (2:22; 5:1). Countering these heresies, John declares the pre-existence of the Son of God, the reality of his incarnation, and his wonderful and glorious achievements on the cross. He came in the flesh to die on the cross and so became "the propitiation for our sins" (4:10). The faith that saves must be based on truth

and a clear understanding of the person of Jesus as the Christ and Son of God (2:22; 4:3; cf. John 20:31). Furthermore, the reality of the incarnation, the full humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, is vital to his unique role as Saviour of the world (4:14). Jesus Christ is entirely pure (3:2-3), without sin (3:5) and entirely righteous (3:7). His *parousia* is confidently asserted.

Righteousness

Because God is righteous (1:5) and his Son Jesus is righteous (2:1), God's children are to be righteous also (3:7). The Lord's life on earth provides the ethical model for all believers: they must emulate his sinlessness and his righteousness (2:6; 3:7, 16-17). His teachings are to be lived out in every avenue of life. Furthermore the thought of his return is to be a stimulus to his people to live pure lives in anticipation (3:3). Through Christ they will enjoy eternal life without sin (3:2; 5:20). Fellowship with God and with his Son carries the highest ethical demands. True faith expresses itself in righteousness and sinlessness. Believers are to keep the commandments of God and not fall into sin. "I write to you," says John, "so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (2:1-2). John "may not be able to explain the tension between sin and righteousness in the Christian life, but he does not turn a blind eye to it." His "insistence on sinlessness and perfect love places before us the divine ideal for the Christian life and reminds us that this is meant to be an attainable ideal for those who have been born of God."[7]

Assurance

John's Gospel record, his account of the life, ministry, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, was motivated by evangelistic concern that the reader might "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing… may have life in his name" (John 20:31). This first letter of John is the outcome of a

[7] *Ibid.*, 54.

deep concern to confirm the faith of believers, assure them of eternal life, and to encourage them to continue in the faith (5:13). The key word in the first letter of John is "we know". Fourteen times this term occurs and derivatives of the two Greek words are found over forty times.[8] To know like this is to know with absolute certainty, without doubt and without hesitation. Forty years or so earlier, the apostle Peter had declared his confidence in the Lord Jesus: "You have the words of eternal life. Also *we have come to believe and know* that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6:68-69).

Love for God's children

Jesus is the example of love for the brethren even to the point of being willing to die for them (3:16). Loving care for the family of God is to be practical (3:17). For the apostle John love "is clearly more than emotion, sentiment or affection… love is commitment."[9] Christian love is the response of a believing heart to the amazing love of God (4:19). Love for one another in the family of God is the message heard from the beginning (3:11; cf. John 15:12-13); is a commandment of God (3:23); is a fundamental ingredient in knowing God (4:7); follows the example of God (4:11); cannot be separated from love for God (4:20-2; 5:1-2) and is evidence that we have been born anew: "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death" (1 John 3:14).

Worldliness

John warns about the attraction of the world. Worldliness, loving the world, is directly opposed to loving God: "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not n him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is

[8] *γινώσκομεν* (e.g. 2:3) and *οἴδαμεν* (e.g. 3:2).
[9] Marianne M. Thompson, *1-3 John* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 23.

passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides for ever" (1 John 2:15-17). These three categories of sin—"the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" were evident in the downfall of Eve: "So when the woman saw that the tree *was good for food*, that it *was pleasant to the eyes*, and a tree *desirable to make one wise*, she took its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate" (Genesis 3:6). Interestingly these three categories are discernible in the temptations of the Lord Jesus Christ. The devil tries firstly to appeal to *the appetite of his flesh* by reference to his hunger (Luke 4:3). His second approach is an appeal through what he shows the Lord, *what the Lord sees with his eyes* (Luke 4:5). The final temptation is attempted *upon the basis of pride* (Luke 4:9). The devil failed utterly. He could find no resonance in Christ. In the incarnate Son of God there was no "lust of the flesh… lust of the eyes…" or "pride of life."

Review of 1 John

As John endeavours "to confirm the right assurance of the genuine" he also destroys "the false assurance of the counterfeit."[10] Love, faith, obedience and assurance are recurring themes interwoven throughout the letter. New birth as children of God manifests itself in: (1) *the doctrinal sphere* for true believers must believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God who has come in the flesh, and this belief must work itself out (2) in *the social sphere* as love for the children of God, and (3) in *the moral sphere* as righteousness and purity of life. Faith, love and holiness are the work of the Holy Spirit and give evidence that we have been born of God.

Conclusion

The relevance of these four New Testament letters: 1 and 2 Peter, Jude and 1 John, should by now be obvious. Every church

[10] John R. W. Stott, *The Epistles of John: and introduction and commentary* (Leicester: InterVarsity, 1976), 52.

in every generation and in every nation faces either the experience of outward persecution or the possibility of inward corruption. Some churches are experiencing both forms of attack at the same time.

In his first letter Peter's primary concern is "for truly Christian living in the context of hostility and suffering… these concerns are placed within the context of Christ's suffering and resurrection, his suffering offering a pattern for believers as well as saving them, his resurrection giving them hope in the midst of present suffering."[11]

In his second letter Peter warns of false teaching that will emerge with particular reference to the atoning work of Christ and his promised return in glory. Peter presents the antidote to all false teaching—the "exceedingly great and precious promises" given to us by God (2 Peter 1:4). Peter confirms the reliability of these promises by reference to history, Old Testament prophecy, the apostolic eyewitnesses and the testimony of Jesus.

Jude reinforces the warnings of 2 Peter. He goes beyond all other New Testament epistles in its relentless and passionate denunciation of apostate teachers who had invaded the church. He too uses the Scriptures as the only reliable means to combat heresy and error. He urges Christians "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). The church needs to be constantly reminded that the only sure foundation for salvation in Christ, and God-honouring living, is to be found in the Bible.

The apostle John presses home the point when he shows that true faith, the faith that saves, rests on real historic events involving the fully humanity, suffering and death of the Son of God, Jesus the Christ.

True faith, the faith that saves, is inseparably linked with love. Christians are called to love God, to love God's Son, to

[11] Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible Book by Book: a guided tour* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2002), 402.

love God's children, to love God's truth, and to love righteousness and purity. Christians can know, with certainty and full assurance, the truth about Christ and salvation: "…we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life" (1 John 5:20).[12]

[12] This lecture was delivered at the Evangelical Press Conference, Emanuel University, Oradea, November 2005.

Martin Luther's Animal Farm in Germany

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ABSTRACT. This work presents Martin Luther's use of animal imagery in order to convey fundamental theological ideas. Luther made frequent appeal to animals especially when he presented the reality of human sin and its disastrous effects on the life of men and women. It was not his intention to offer an elaborate theology of nature with special references to animals but rather to provide us with an image of theological doctrines which he already knew and accepted. The violent language used by Luther in more than one occasion was not meant to offend anybody but to illustrate vividly what he had to say about a certain sin or clusters of sins which affected human nature. At the end of the day, Luther's main concern was the church of Christ and its members so, lest he should spare the gravity of sin, he decided to use whatever language and imagery necessary in order to safeguard the morality of believers.

George Orwell published his now famous *Animal Farm* in England in 1945.[1] Initially subtitled "A Fairy Story," it was a clever and biting satire on the Soviet Union. It reached a wide circulation in the West, but was also obtained illegally in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Although Orwell had a keen eye for the various characteristics of farm animals and birds, he was not basically interested in them, but wrote about the Soviet Communists and how they gained, abused, and defended their power. Lord Acton's great insight that "All power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely," was now analyzed in actual historic setting.

[1] George Orwell, *Animal Farm* (London: Penguin Books, 1945, reprinted 1989).

Martin Luther's concern with animals, birds, and reptiles was more complex. These numerous references served to display the various effects of sin on human character and life. In this approach, Luther no doubt has surpassed every other major theologian, which may or may not be seen as a great accomplishment. Luther's concern, however, was always an one way direction—from an existential analysis of sin and stupidity to the animals as traditionally accepted illustrations. At the same time, Luther did not seek to explore the animals, birds, and reptiles on their own terms and, as it were, from their point of view. As H. Paul Santmire has insightfully noted, Luther's concern with nature was distinctively limited, "Nature clearly was not a milieu for communion with God, as it was, for example, for [St.] Francis. Nor did Luther generally see the great cosmic harmonies as Augustine did. Luther often tended to see nature as a concatenation of hostile energies—above all the insects! —which motivate the despairing soul to seek out and to cling to 'the right hand of God,' the free mercy of God communicated through Christ and mediated by the Word and Sacraments." [2]

Consistently, Luther's references to animals only illustrated the insights which Luther already had. His sources were Greek, Latin, and German proverbs and proverbial expressions as well as some of his own compositions.[3] Some of the texts that Luther used were vulgar, even obscene, but in this regards Luther was surpassed by François Rabelais (1494-1553), *The Histories of Gargantua and Pantagruel,* translated by J. M. Cohen[4] and the controversial works of St. Thomas More (1478-1535), notably his

[2] H. Paul Santmire, *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1985), 125.

[3] *Fables of Aesop,* trans. by S. A. Handford (London: Penguin Books, 1974), *Luthers Fabeln und Sprichwoerter,* ed. Reinhard Dithmar (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1995).

[4] François Rabelais, *The Histories of Gargantua and Pantagruel,* translated by J. M. Cohen (London: Penguin, 1935).

Responsio ad Lutherum.[5] At times Luther admitted that he was aware of his shortcomings. At the Diet of Worms, when examined about his personal beliefs, Luther admitted, "I confess I have been more violent than my religion or profession demands. But then, I do not set myself as a saint; neither am I disputing about my life, but about the teaching of Christ."[6] The real issue, claimed Luther, was not how he sounded or even who he was—but who possessed the ultimate truth, "You should… say: Whether Luther is a rascal or a saint I do not care; his teaching is not his, but Christ's."[7]

For the controversial and often crude culture of the sixteenth century, not only the common people but even scholars did at times appreciate rudeness, if it had a point. At the same time, Luther's extended vulgar references to farm life may have been able not only to speak to his audience, but also to gain a measure of added credibility. While the appeal to the Holy Writ was paramount, the popular proverbs had a notable measure of wide acceptance. Of course, the proverbs could not be placed above Scripture, but where ecclesial tradition had been widely challenged as not trustworthy, the proverbial wisdom had at least some acknowledged standing. Implicitly, the proverbs presented a popular consensus. And so Luther used them to do battle against sin and sinners both in common life and in the Church.[8]

[5] Yale Edition of the *Complete Works* of St. Thomas More, Latin and English texts, trans. by Sister Scholastica Mandeville, ed. John M. Headley (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969), vol. 5, 1 and 2.

[6] Luther, *Luther's Works* (Philadelphia: Fortress, and St. Louis: Concordia, 1957), 32.111.

[7] *LW*, 36.265.

[8] James C. Cornette, Jr., *Proverbs and Proverbial Expressions in the German Works of Martin Luther* (Chapel Hill, NC: Univ. of North Carolina, Ph.D., 1941), 20-24.

1.

Of all God's creatures great and small, pigs had a special appeal to Luther (as they also had to George Orwell!). Reflecting on how the Providence of God has preserved various kinds of governments, Luther noted, "You may say that ungodly governments are like God's swine. He fattens then; he gives them wealth, power, honors, and the obedience of their subjects. Therefore they are not molested, but they themselves molest and suppress others. They do not suffer violence; they inflict it on others. They do not give. But they take away from others until the hour comes when they are slaughtered like swine that have been fattened for a long time." [9] And the people are no better than their rulers, "No animal would live as disgracefully as does this world, no, not even a sow. For a sow knows the housewife or maid from whom she receives her slops and swill; and runs after her and cries to her. But the world does not know and honor the God who so richly and bountifully blesses it; much less does it thank and praise him." [10] "…they live as they believe; they are and remain pigs, believe like pigs, and die like pigs."[11]

According to Luther, the origins of unbelief always begin with the individual people, "Thus many people regard also what we say about heaven and hell as mere fable and fiction, contrived solely for the purpose of terrifying the common people, who presumably could not be tamed or restrained except by painting the devil black and making hell hot for them. But nothing is accomplished by that either. For if people are not better instructed than to believe this empty delusion, they will still remain as they are and both live and die like pigs. They will believe just as much as a certain village mayor. When he was about to die, he told his pastor, who had debated a long time with him about the resurrection in an effort to convince him of

[9] *LW* 2.35-36, cf. Jeremiah 12:3.
[10] *LW* 14.112.
[11] *LW*, 28.147.

its reality. 'To be sure, I am ready to believe this; but you will see that nothing comes of it.' The majority of the people in the world still think that. But whoever is a Christian must not be so uncertain in his belief; he must be sure of it, knowing how he will fare and paying no heed to the supposing and wavering or the mocking of the people."[12] And perhaps even more strongly, "All right, if you refuse to believe, go your way and remain a pig!"[13] Such a situation Luther was prepared to attribute to parental neglect of religious education, "Here we see that a pig will remain a pig, but that human parents do not know anything. Such a man is not even pagan; he is beastly."[14]

In Luther's time pigs were also raised in the city. Hence the life-style of pigs was universally understood, and Luther could reasonably argue that what was good enough for pigs, would not suit humans, "For a sow lies down on her featherbed, on the street, or on a dung-heap; she rests securely, snores gently, sleeps sweetly, fears neither king nor lord, neither death nor hell, neither the devil nor God's wrath, and lives entirely without care so long as she has her bran. And if the emperor of Turkey were to draw near with all his might and his wrath, she in her pride would not move a bristle for his sake. If someone were to rouse her, she, I suppose, would grunt and say, if she could talk: You fool, why are you raving? You are not one-tenth as well off as I am. Not for an hour do you live securely, as peacefully and tranquilly as I do constantly, nor would you even if you were ten times as great or rich. In brief, no thought of death occurs to her, for her life is secure and serene. And if a butcher performs his job with her, she probably imagines that a stone or piece of wood is pinching her. She never thinks of death, and in a moment she is dead. Neither before, during, or in death did she feel death. She feels nothing but life, nothing but everlasting life!" The reason for this was very clear as far as Luther was

[12] *LW* 28.101, 102.
[13] *LW* 28.188.
[14] *LW* 29.55.

concerned: "She never ate of the apple which taught us wretched men in Paradise the difference between good and evil."[15]

Now the believers know this difference, and also know that they are mortal—but they often somehow ignore this reality. Surely, the Israelites were not exception! "They ate their bread from heaven as a sow eats bran and husks. What good does her fodder do her? She will be slaughtered as soon as she has been fattened." Similarly, having reflected on Christ's discourse in John 6, Luther paraphrased, "But I did not come to fatten you like a sow and offer you nothing but physical food to make you plump and sleek. I strive for something else than this life alone, namely, bread and food that will endure when this life and bodily food cease. This is a bread radically different from the kind Moses gave you."[16] Indeed, "a Christian must be acquainted with a wisdom different from this swinish wisdom, so that he does not judge and believe as matters appear to the eye and as every cow understands them." [17]

In addition to such general portraits of unbelievers with their unconcern for faithful and ethical living, Luther could also be very specific, for example, " We ought to give thanks to God for providing us with food and drink and then, besides, liberating us from papacy." However unecumenical, here Luther was speaking as a man of his times. His cultural limitations, however, became even more apparent, when he offered some practical advice for coping with depression, "If you are tired and downhearted, take a drink; but this does not mean being a pig and doing nothing but gorging and swilling." [18] As follows from his subsequent comments, Luther did not fully understand that alcohol could be addictive, and that the addict may no longer be able to stop drinking at will. Luther shortsightedly

[15] *LW* 47.293-294.
[16] *LW* 23.32.
[17] *LW* 28.190.
[18] *LW* 51.294-295.

counseled, "it is possible to tolerate a little elevation, when a man takes a drink or two too much after working hard and when he is feeling low. This must be called a frolic. But to sit day and night, pouring it in and pouring it out again, is piggish. This is not a human way of living, not to say Christian, but a pig's life." [19]

At the same time, Luther preferred sobriety, at least in principle, "Eating and drinking are not forbidden, but rather all food is a matter of freedom, even a modest drink for one's pleasure. If you do not wish to conduct yourself this way, if you are going to go beyond this and be a born pig and guzzle beer and wine, then, if this cannot be stopped by the rulers, you must know that you cannot be saved. For God will not admit such piggish drinkers into the kingdom of heaven." [20]

Despite his occasional tolerance, Luther realized that alcoholism was a problem. And so he spoke as a German Christian patriot, "The Italians call us gluttonous, drunken Germans and pigs because they live decently and do not drink until they are drunk. Like the Spaniards, they have escaped this vice. Among the Turks it is really the worst sin for a man to be drunk. So temperate are they that they do not even drink anything which inebriates. This is why they can make war and win; while we drunken sows sleep they keep awake, and thus can consider their strategy and then attack and conquer. When the time comes for us to defend ourselves and be prepared, we get drunk. This has become so widespread that there is no help for it; it has become a settled custom. At first it was the peasants who drank to excess, then it spread to the citizens. In my time it was considered a great shame among the nobility. Now they are worse than the citizens and the peasants… Now the ten-year-old milksops, and the students, too, are beginning, and ruining themselves in their flower; when the corn should be growing and flourishing it is beaten down by a storm. We preach,

[19] *LW* 51.293.
[20] *LW* 51.293.

but who stops it? Those who should stop it do it themselves; the princes even more. Therefore Germany is a land of hogs and filthy people which debauches its body and its life. If you were going to paint it, you would have to paint a pig. Some spark of sobriety may remain among young children, virgins, and women, though underneath one finds pigs among them too. However, there remains some bit of decency for it is still said that it is especially shameful for a woman to be drunken."[21]

In concluding his reflections on drinking, Luther summed up: "God does not forbid you to drink, as do the Turks; he permits you to drink wine and beer; he does not make a law of it. But do not make a pig of yourself; remain a human being, then keep your self-control." Finally, "If you have been a pig, then stop being one."[22]

Having reflected on earthy matters, Luther did not neglect to meditate on heavenly concerns as well. For Luther, the life of prayer and meditation on Scripture were correlated, as one would not flourish without the other. About prayer, Luther wrote, "Christ encourages and exhorts His own in a friendly manner to pray, and He indicates that prayer gives Him heartfelt pleasure. It is the glory and the consolation of Christians, who are endued with the grace and the spirit to understand what God has given them in Christ. No matter how much is said about this, the others neither understand nor heed it any more than a sow appreciates music played on the harp."[23] As Luther was musically gifted, he enjoyed playing the lute and singing with his family. Hence came the comparison: as the musician is to bring out from his instrument the most beautiful sounds, so a Christian by praying can delight the heart of his Savior Christ. But this does not happen when prayer is not practiced and Scriptures are not daily cherished. A few examples reflect Luther's mood.

[21] *LW* 51.292-292.
[22] *LW* 51.296.
[23] *LW* 24.89.

In writing against Duke Henry of Braunschweig-Wolfenbuettel, a bitter enemy of the Protestant reformation, Luther claimed that Duke Henry was "versed in Holy Scripture as a cow in a walnut tree or a sow on a harp."[24] Still not exhausted, Luther amplified: "And that vulgar boar, blockhead, and lout from Wolfenbuettel, that ass to cap all asses, screams his hee-haws, judges and calls men heretical." [25] And this was no rare outburst! In lecturing on the book of Genesis, Luther lamented that the depth of this book had been often overlooked, "It has been the common saying of all that in this Book of Genesis nothing is recorded except sexual relations of the Jews. But do they not have pigs' eyes that blindly pass over the greatest virtues and are engrossed solely in the passion of lust?"[26] At times Luther could lump all of his opponents together and declare, "these judgments of theirs are like those of a pig or an ass would pronounce on some illustrious lutenist;" [27] or claim that such people proceed, impelled by the devil, "to fall into this like filthy sows fall into the trough, defaming and reviling what they refuse to acknowledge and to understand."[28]

In Luther's view the situation was not improved by appealing to Church tradition. In denying that tradition, like Scripture, was revelatory, Luther undertook to scorn tradition, "Note, then, that human traditions are nothing else than the vomit of a drunken peasant, a food for which you need swine, not the consciences of the godly."[29] Of course, those learned theologians who had defended tradition, received additional vituperation. In retrospect it seems utterly unfair that Dr. Johannes Eck would be called "that Ingolstadt pig"[30] and "Dr. Sow." [31] Clear-

[24] *LW* 41.219.
[25] *LW* 41.212.
[26] *LW* 3:210.
[27] *LW* 5.322.
[28] *LW* 47.291.
[29] *LW* 16.223.
[30] *LW* 34.310.
[31] *LW* 44.235 and 293.

ly, Luther also did not appreciate traditional liturgical garments and described their wearers as "great, coarse, fat asses decked out in red and brown birettas, looking like a sow bedecked with gold chain and jewels." [32] In short, these were what Luther called the "Sautheologen"!

While these selected references to Luther's reflection on pigs of his day do not cover his extended usage, the examples may be sufficient. On the one hand, Roland H. Bainton has rightly observed that "one is refreshed by his complete lack of sentimentality."[33] On the other hand, Bainton has also acknowledged with candid realism, "Life itself stank. One could not walk around Wittenberg without encountering the odors of the pigsty, offal, and the slaughterhouse. And even the most genteel were not reticent about the facts of daily experiences. Katie, when asked about the congregation on the day when Luther was unable to attend, replied, 'The church was so full it stank.' 'Yes,' said Luther, 'they had manure on their boots'."[34]

When daily life was difficult and short, and culture brutalizing, the negative effects were inevitable. Nevertheless, even in the case of pigs, Luther found some cheerful, and even humorous, observations. His use of other animals and birds will further enlighten the reader's perception of reality. To some examples of these we shall now turn.

2.

The Gospel message was that God has freely offered redemption in Jesus Christ. But all too many people did not realize "that through Christ we are redeemed and saved from sin and death; that we know that God's law is to be kept and that cross and afflictions must be borne, etc. No, these things are nothing.

[32] *LW* 45.375.

[33] "Luther on Birds, Dogs, and Babies," in *Luther Today, Martin Luther Lectures I* (Decorah, Iowa: Luther College Press, 1957), 6.

[34] Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (Nasville, TN: Abingdon, 1950), 298.

They know this very well—just as a goose knows the Psalter."[35] By contrast, counseled Luther, "we should crawl under the wings of our Brood Hen, the Lord Jesus, and depend solely on Him." [36] In another passage Luther emphasized, "But faith is precisely that which makes you a chick, and Christ a hen, so that you have hope under His wings."[37] And Christ is as near to the believers as is heaven, "Oh, they speak childishly and foolishly of heaven, assigning to Christ a particular spot in heaven like a stork with its nest in a tree."[38]

Indeed, while God in his majesty remains utterly incomprehensible, the saving knowledge and relationship is possible through the Word. God "gives only the Word, by means of which He leads us through that sea of perils and trials to the port, just as a fish is pulled along by means of a hook." [39]

In addition to the Word, Luther also emphasized the signifycance of the two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Speaking of Baptism, Luther noted that "it must not be viewed as plain water which any cow or horse might drink but that the dear Trinity, together with all His beloved angels, is present. It is a divine and heavenly water in which God Himself is at work, cleansing us from sin, saving us from eternal death, and giving us life eternal." [40] In regard to the Lord's Supper, Luther had taught, as he believed, the scripturally affirmed "real presence." He defended this view with vigor and chided his opponents, "Ugh! What shameful fools and monkeys the devil would make of us, that on account of such empty prattle we should deny these clear, manifest words, 'This is my body,' and allege that the Scriptures are contradictory and force us to this position." [41] At the same time, for a worthy reception both faith

[35] *LW* 20.156.
[36] *LW* 22.257.
[37] *LW* 32.236, cf. 52.97-98.
[38] *LW* 37.281.
[39] *LW* 4.360.
[40] *LW* 22.181.
[41] *LW* 37.81-82.

and love were required, "Bodily and outward reception is that in which a man receives with his mouth the body of Christ and His blood, and doubtless any man can receive the sacrament in this way, without faith and love. But this does not make a man a Christian, for if it did, even a mouse would be a Christian, for it, too, can eat the bread and perchance even drink out of the cup. It is such a simple thing to do."[42] The central significance of faith Luther illustrated in numerous ways, most graphically with reference to a stubborn cow, "But you must not conceive of this seeing and knowing God as being literal and physical, as a cow stares at a new gate; you must not think that he who sees Christ also sees with his eyes the form of the Father. .No, this must be done with the vision of the spirit and of faith."[43] The paradigm of looking and not seeing a new gate, apparently intrigued Luther as he used it on several occasions, e.g., Christ had said, "You must not stare at Me as a cow stares at a new door."[44] "But if you look at Me as a cow looks at a new gate, if you merely see Me going along in the greatest weakness, letting Myself to be so shamefully crucified, killed, and buried, then you cannot see or believe that I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and that you must come to the Father through Me alone."[45] As had to be expected, Luther's religious opponents were also caricatured with the help of the "new door" paradigm, "One must be on one's guard against the Anabaptists and the schismatic spirits, who speak sneeringly of Baptism and aver that it is mere water and of no benefit to any one. They gaze at this sacred act as a cow stares at a new door… They do not see farther than a horse or a cow; they see only the water. The thing they take note of is that the persons, the preacher or the midwives, are lowly people who dip water with their hands and sprinkle it over the infant. A sow or a cow can see that

[42] *LW* 51.92.
[43] *LW* 24.59.
[44] *LW* 24.33.
[45] *LW* 25.55.

much. They are befuddled. Consequently, they blaspheme about Baptism." [46] In reality, re-affirmed Luther, the total Christian existence consists of a believing understanding, "Christ wants to say: 'You are now celestial citizens; you hold citizenship up there in the heavenly Jerusalem; you are living in the company of the dear angels, who incessantly descend on you and ascend from you. Now heaven and earth have become one' …door and lock have been removed and … heaven is now open permanently. Even if I do not see this with my physical eye, as a cow looks at a door, that does not matter. I can still behold it with my spiritual sight of faith."[47]

Indeed, the warning against stubborn blindness due to a lack of insight, extends to the secular world as well, and Luther again illustrates it with a reference to the "new door":

> If, however, mercenaries are to be condemned, how are emperors, kings, and princes going to survive, since there are now only mercenaries available? …Ask the council's advice on whether this could be done! Yes, my dear friend, it is easily said that the council has decreed this, if one looks at the letters like a cow stares at he gate, without reflecting on the implications and on how one should act and comply."[48] And, similarly, "Here a bungling jackass of a sophist looks only at the outward appearance of a work, as a cow looks at a new gate.[49]

According to Luther, true faith was expressed not only by believing, but also through good works. "There is a fitting proverb for such people; 'Sit still, and have faith; wait for the fried chicken to fly into your mouth.' God wants no lazy idlers"[50] Luther knew that although necessary, work could become a mater of undue worry, "How birds fly without anxiety and without co-

[46] *LW* 22:173.
[47] *LW* 22.203.
[48] *LW* 41.263.
[49] *LW* 26.263.
[50] *LW* 14.115.

vetousness, and so we should work without anxiety and without covetousness. But if you are anxious and greedy, and want the roast chicken to fly into your mouth, then go on worrying and coveting and see if you will fulfill God's commandment and find salvation."[51] As Luther viewed it, work was to be the steadfast expression of one's faith and should include the proclamation of the Gospel, "it is hard to make old dogs obedient and old rascals pious; yet this is the work at which the preacher must labor, and often in vain."[52] At the same time, salvation could not be obtained by works alone, "Should he grow so foolish, however, as to presume to become righteous, free, saved, and a Christian by means of some good work, he would constantly lose faith and all its benefits., a foolishness aptly illustrated by the fable of the dog, who runs along a stream with a piece of meat in his mouth and, deceived by the reflection of the meat in the water, opens his mouth to snap at it and so loses both the meat and the reflection."[53]

As a believer in salvation and eternal life, Luther calmly accepted the reality of death, as it meets various positions in life, "Death terminates such a temporal differentiation. Maggots and snakes will one day consume our high social position and noble birth."[54] Of course, Luther rejected the denial of life after death, "Believing that all ends with death, you would die like the cattle and have no more than the heathen and unbelievers."[55] In another passage Luther put it this way, " The others, the great multitude, know nothing of this. They fear neither God's wrath and judgment nor devil or death. They think that their own death is not unlike the death of a cow;" [56] that is, they do not grasp that a "man's death is truly an event sadder and more se-

[51] *LW* 44.108.
[52] *LW* 46.253.
[53] *LW* 31.356.
[54] *LW* 22.100.
[55] *LW* 28.103.
[56] *LW* 28.104.

rious than the slaughter of a cow."[57] The death of the unbeliever is tragic, "For that matter, I, too, if I believed—and may God forbid—that I die like a cow, would never be baptized, take the sacrament, or come to hear a sermon."[58]

Without a doubt, Luther was most eloquent when highlighting human sins and vices. Speaking of pride, Luther knew that "no living being is prouder than a louse on a scabby head."[59] Luther could also quickly identify the "greedy old fox"[60] and the "godless teachers" who reflected "the stupidity of the ostrich" the blindness of "the night owl" and the selfishness of "the cuckoo."[61] Such people "love God as lice love a tramp; far from being interested in his welfare, their one concern is to feed on him and suck his blood."[62]

Luther also had harsh words about those who sought unjust promotions, "Many a fine man often serves faithfully and well and afterwards is left out or put out in a pitiful way. He is replaced by some scoundrel, who takes everything that the first one has earned, though on his own he would not even be able to lure a dog from the stove. Yet these men know how to flatter the ruler. "They are like the bumble-bees, these useless, lazy, and gluttonous insects; they are unable to make any honey, but they devour everything that the good little bees make. Still they buzz and hum and hiss with their wings just as much as, or even more than, the good and useful bees."[63] "Thus every hypocrite, most zealous for his own works, is the worst kind of tyrant and the most poisonous snake, and so they hide their poison under the appearance of godliness, but meanwhile they are burning with zeal for revenge and for doing evil."[64] Luther un-

[57] *LW* 19.95.
[58] *LW* 28.147.
[59] *LW* 3.52.
[60] *LW* 5.296.
[61] *LW* 9.135.
[62] *LW* 23.30.
[63] *LW* 13.181.
[64] *LW* 17.284.

derstood such people and pointed out that "a goat will never leave the garden of his own accord"[65], as well as that "there are usually sparrows or rats or mice near the grain."[66] Luther had also known that "the spider webs catch the little fly all right, but the millstone rolls on through."[67]

In his interpretation of sin, Luther pointed back to the originnal sin that had affected the entire animal world as well, "if Adam had not fallen into sin, wolves, lions, and bears would not have acquired their well-known savage disposition."[68] At the same time, Luther did not suggest that there could be degrees of creature sinfulness. Each in its own way, however, was to use his fallen nature to punish humankind, and hence we can ask, "what of thorns, thistles, water, fire, caterpillars, flies, fleas, and bedbugs? Collectively and individually, are not all of them messengers who preach to us concerning sin and God's wrath, since they did not exist before sin or at least were not harmful and troublesome?"[69] These assaults are further accentuated by the Devil who is both clever and strong, "Grappling with him is like taking an eel by the tail."[70] Now in theory such attacks might be seen as warnings of sin, yet these are not always effective, because "the flesh is so smug and evil that it not only distrusts the promises but also despises the threats…. For the world cares about neither of these tings, no more, in fact, than if a goose were hissing at it."[71]

The believer, so Luther thought, would recognize the fierce struggle against sin. Ordinarily, as Luther saw it, such an anguish filled encounter with the Almighty or tribulation (*Anfechtung)* would be initiated by God: "Reducing man to nothing, giving him up to death, and afflicting him with disasters and

[65] *LW* 17.284.
[66] *LW* 21.168.
[67] *LW* 44.93.
[68] *LW* 1.76-77.
[69] *LW* 1.208.
[70] *LW* 24.94.
[71] *LW* 8.202.

troubles without number—this is not playing, is it? It is a game of a cat with a mouse, and this is the death of the mouse."[72] In the end, however, the believer would emerge through despair into confidence and faith. Thus the frightening encounter would be beneficial in the end." For when that game of God is lacking, we snore and are cold. Therefore with this goad, as it were, God pricks and drives the stupid and lazy ass, our flesh, which oppresses us with its huge bulk."[73] There are times when the tribulations assail us not for our but for our neighbor's benefit, "This is the way the puppy gets flogged so the wolfhound may live in fear. God chastises His own children so that He may afflict even more severely the wicked who do not come to their senses, so that He may rage against them even more harshly."[74]

Without describing in detail the entire process through which, by grace, faith emerges, we shall note that Luther always acknowledged the significance of repentance, "a lonely sparrow on the housetop (Ps. 102:7) is bound to make a mournful sound, and so also the turtledove, for we must always be in the groaning of penitence, for blessed are they that mourn. (Matt. 5:4)"[75] Of course, not all tribulations resulted in actual repentance, "For an evil conscience cannot rest or be quiet. It is like a little dog, in German called Remorse; if it is quiet in life, it is nevertheless present at the time of death and barks." [76] For a successful resolution of a tribulation Luther credited the Word of God and its carriers, "The messengers of this Word are doves, that is, devout men and without malice, full of the Holy Spirit."[77] But a significant role belonged also to prayer, "When Luther's puppy happened to be at the table, looked for a morsel from his master, and watched with open mouth and motionless

[72] *LW* 7.225.
[73] *LW* 8.15.
[74] *LW* 18.145.
[75] *LW* 11.139.
[76] *LW* 6.84.
[77] *LW* 2.163.

eyes, … [Martin Luther] said, 'Oh, if I could only pray the way this dog watches the meat! All his thoughts are concentrated on the piece of meat. Otherwise he has no thought, wish, or hope'." [78]

3.

In so far as Luther's vivid and illustrated presentations of sin and salvation challenged his readers to repent and to seek forgiveness in Christ, his approach was ultimately positive. His Animal Farm vocabulary offered a popular version of serious theological insights. Yet, we acknowledge, it was also his farmyard illustrations that Luther employed for his scathing attacks on his opponents. As the Church fragmented, Luther's word, while intending to heal, carried fire that harmed love. Today in the midst of serious ecumenical concerns, the historians may still need to read Luther's harsh and salty words of judgment on the old Church and its sixteenth century dissidents, accompanied by his verbal illustrations—but may not wish to display them even though these have become outdated, that is, have lost their once imagined dimensions of evangelization and humor. While Luther's Christocentric and ethical farmyard comments can be seen as relevant, his bitter polemic is not. His polemical tirades belong to the past and not to the present.

[78] *LW* [Table Talk] 54.37-38.

Religious and Secular Paradigms of Addressing Pluralism

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ABSTRACT. The following essay looks at the religious and secular paradigms of addressing pluralism. Firstly we will look at religious pluralism from a Christian standpoint, considering its three major responses: particularism, inclusivism and pluralism. Secondly we present the secular perspective on religious pluralism, examining the way secular lifestyle and secular spirituality competes with institutionalized religion. This paper argues that secular spirituality, while encouraging respect towards the study of organized religion, promotes alienation and disregard for any type of religious participation. In addition, the secular rationale cannot applied to all humanity, because a rational, ethical or religious prescription for the humankind that would be in agreement with all people does not constitute reality, and so, the world ethos remains an abstraction. Also, the paradigms offered by inclusivism and pluralism are not compatible with traditional Christianity which affirms the objectivity of the revelation of God in the Bible, through his Son Jesus Christ who we believe is the sole Savior of every culture or religious tradition.

In the context of ethnical, religious, and cultural diversity we encounter questions concerning the nature of the society that comprises these differences. Specifically, we ask, how can Hindu polytheism, Islamic fundamentalism, Buddhist atheism and Christian monotheism dwell in proximity? How can religious pluralism unite Hindu's preoccupation in exercising control over the universe[1] with Confucianism's preoccupation for the

[1] Roy W. Perret, *Hindu Ethics: A Philosophical Study* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998), 49.

welfare of humanity when both coexist in the same society? What about the Islamic *Jihad* and Jewish *Halakhah* or Hebrew law? From a historical and theological perspective, both the religious and secular world answered differently to the challenges brought by religious pluralism.

Religious Paradigms

From a Christian perspective, the relations between diverse religions can be addressed in one of three major ways: exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism. In *God Has Many Names,* John Hick writes about these approaches, without using the terminology,[2] but the concepts appear in 1983 in Alan Race's book, *Christian and Religious Pluralism* and are largely used ever since.[3]

Exclusivism is a label that has been attributed to the traditional approach of religious pluralism by its critics with the purpose of placing it in a negative light. Exclusivists are frequently described as being dogmatic, narrow-minded, intolerant, and arrogant while its opponents are regarded as being open minded, intellectual, civilized and tolerant. In order to eliminate the prejudices toward the traditional approach, Dennis Okholm and Timothy Phillips recommend the term "particularrism" instead of "exclusivism." Particularism sustains that (a) the Bible is the only written, true and normative declaration of God's revelation to human kind and when a Bible statement is incompatible with a statement found in another religious or sacred book, the Bible must be considered true; (b) Jesus Christ is the only Son of the true God, fully God and fully man and the only path for human deliverance; (c) God's saving grace can not be mediated through other religious teachings, practices and institutions.

Particularism defines itself in theological terms and not through cultural or social exclusivism. This position shows respect

[2] John, Hick, *God Has Many Names* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980), cap. 2.
[3] See Alan Race, *Christians* (London: SCM Press, 1983).

towards other traditions or cultures, but affirms that God's revelation for humanity is through Jesus Christ who is the sole Savior of every culture or religious tradition. Harrold Netland argues that this attitude was prevalent in the Christian world up until the end of the nineteenth century.[4] In the beginning of the twentieth century we find the first significant deviations both in the Protestant and the Catholic side, but most evidently in the World Council the Churches.

Inclusivism gained contour as the traditional perspective toward inter-religious relations adopted a more flexible approach. If until the 1950s, the majority of Christian scholars debated the relation between "Christ and culture," today the preoccupation shifted towards the relation between "Buddha and Christ."[5]

In 1893, the First Word Parliament of Religions, that took place in Chicago, brought to the West's consciousness the piety and the sincerity of Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and of other religious people that were, since not so long ago, the subject of speculation and rumors. One hundred years after this meeting, in 1993, at the Second World Parliament of Religions which took also took place in Chicago, Wilma Ellis, member of the Baha'i Spiritual Association pleaded for the recognition of common ground between all faiths, insisting that the fundamental truth of all religious manifestations is the concept of *peace* that is found at the basis of every religion.[6]

From a general standpoint inclusivism maintains that: (a) in a particular way, Jesus Christ is unique and superior to other religious leaders and in a undefined way humanity has access to deliverance through Christ; (b) Saving grace is in one respect tied to Jesus Christ, but it can be offered or mediated through

[4] Harold Netland, *Encountering Religious Pluralism* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 2001), 49-51.

[5] Larry Witham, "Wrestling with Religious Pluralism" in *The Washington Times*, November 15 (1997), 5.

[6] Wilma Ellis according to Brad Stetson, *Pluralism and Particularity in Religious Belief* (London: Praeger Westport, 1994), ix.

other religions; (c) other faiths are perceived as being a part of God's plan for humanity.

The statements of inclusivism are usually clad in ambiguity in order to accommodate the various opinions toward a series of traditional Christian doctrines such as: the Trinity, Christ's double nature, sin and salvation. The common ground of all inclusivist views is the desire to somehow retain the uniqueness of Jesus Christ, but with the mention that God's grace and salvation (regardless of how they are defined) can be found in other religions.[7]

Pluralism. In the western world, the ever growing diversity is tied, on one hand to the new demographic configurations due to the latest immigration patterns, and on the other hand to the general decline of the Judeo-Christian values. Brad Stetson, for example, feels that the pluralistic hypotheses originated in the interaction between Christianity and the other religions of the world.[8] Also, Netland argues that religious pluralism was found, firstly as a consequence of the emerging Bible skepticism, and secondly, because of the rejection of exclusivistic claims.[9] In these circumstances, during the last decades of the twentieth century, we witness a radical change in the debates concerning the relations between different religions. Accordingly a growing number of western theologians reject both the particularist and the inclusivistic positions regarding the uniqueness and the superiority of Jesus Christ. The publication of John Hick's book, *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness* in 1987 is considered the moment in which the "theological Rubicon ha been passed."[10] In the introduction of the book, Paul Knitter says that the collection of essays show the sketching of a pluralistic turn,

[7] Clark Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy: The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Zondrevan, 1992), 12-15.
[8] Stetson, *Pluralism*, 5.
[9] Harold Netland, *Dissonant Voices: Religious Pluralism and the Question of Truth* (Regent College Publishing, 1999), 29.
[10] Harold Netland, *Encountering Religious Plularism* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 2001), 52.

supported by a large number of renowned theologians. His hope is that, as a consequence, this will prove to be a viable progress for Christians, even if it is still controversial.[11]

The controversy was generated not by empirical pluralism, but by the egalitarian perspective of philosophical pluralism that maintains that all religious truth claims are equally true. Further more, philosophical pluralism argues that salvation, enlightenment or liberation are found in every religion. Form this perspective, no religion can claim exclusivity or superiority, because all religions are complex human answers toward one divinity, answers that are historically and culturally conditioned. For example, Christians can say that Jesus Christ is unique and normative for them but not for other religions because each religion has its own uniqueness and personal norms.

Ernst Troeltsch is one of the first Christian theologians that dealt systematically with the subject of religious pluralism. Troeltsch acknowledged both the strong tie between European values and Christianity, and the existence of other religions that comprise values and practices that are compatible with Christianity. As a result, towards the end of his life, Troeltsch reached the conclusion that all religions are historically conditioned and they each contain different portions of Divine manifestations that are also culturally determined.[12]

Due to the impact of his works, John Hick is considered to be the main representative of religious pluralism. He argues that theology needs a "Copernican revolution." In other words, John Hick reasons that in the same way that Copernicus rejected the Ptolemaic myth regarding the centrality of the Earth, society needs to categorically reject parochial conceptions regarding the centrality of our naïve faith. Quite the opposite, society needs to acknowledge the centrality of God in the universe of faiths. Hick explains that all religions gravitate around the same

[11] Paul Knitter, "Introduction" to *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness*, ed. John Hick and Paul Knitter (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987), viii.
[12] Ernst Troeltsch according to Stetson, *Pluralism*, 6.

God.[13] However, noticing that some religions do not even recognize the presence of a personal God, Hick replaced the term "God" with the term "Reality"—which is central to all faiths. Therefore, the visible differences between religious practices are not more than the result of human answers that are culturally and historically conditioned.[14]

Ronald Nash responds to Hick's arguments and says that if truth is culturally and geographically determined, than Nazism, cannibalism, infanticide and witchcraft are all equally valid choices. As a result, according to Hick's proposal, any faith can be in the same time valid and invalid depending on the society, and religious truth is not epistemologically governed but is a particular trait of a particular culture in a particular geographical setting.[15] Analyzing Hick's perspective, Roger Trigg is asking if this position does not make us conclude that, in the end, religion is not in any way more authoritative than atheism.[16] Hick, however, thinks that in the following decades, religions will continue to change, and with the use of dialogue, the labels "Christianity," "Buddhism," "Islam," or "Hinduism" might no longer be used to describe the actual configurations of religious experiences as we move towards a new global religiousness.

For a significant number of pluralist theologians, religious knowledge is, in the end, the result of human effort in understanding reality. This concept does not leave any space for revelation, because revelation assumes that the religious object is known only with the divine accord which transcends the possibilities of human investigation.

[13] John Hick, *God and The Universe of Faiths* (London: Macmillan, 1973), 131.
[14] John Hick, *The Outcome: Dialogue into Truth*, 151, according to Stetson, *Pluralism*, 15.
[15] Ronald Nash, *Is Jesus the Only Saviour?*, 96, according to D. A. Carson, *The Gagging of God, Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 177.
[16] Roger Trigg, *Religion and the Threat of Relativis*m, 19, according to Carson, *The Gagging of God*, 177.

Religious pluralism constitutes to be not only a challenge for the traditional paradigm, but, according to some authors, is becoming a value in itself, even a priority. Oz Guinness notes that in today's pluralistic society, the right to choose becomes a priority, the essence of life.[17] Pluralistic theology considers that all religious traditions have the same likelihood of understanding the religious object. Pluralists have in common the fact that they approach religious knowledge pragmatically as evolving and as culturally determined.[18] In this case, Wilfred Cantwell Smith argues that we develop a pluralistic epistemology that is in contrast with Hick's pluralistic hope for a universal vision.[19] As a consequence, Smith states that religions should not be evaluated in respect of originating events—which he calls "Big-bang theory of religious origins"—but with regards to the contributions they have on the lives of believers. Therefore, the world's religions are encouraged to progress towards a "unifying pluralism"[20] that will not, however, underestimate there distinctive elements.

The paradox of this proposal is that, on one hand, it advocates the value of religious diversity and, on the other hand, it shifts toward a new meta-narration. Thus, the true knowledge is the knowledge that is shared by all intelligent individuals, and is verified increasingly by observation and participation. This knowledge finds expression in global consciousness, and to share in this trans-cultural consciousness means to contribute to the citizenship of a religious world or to a post-conventional or universal religious identity, which is from Knitter's point of view equivalent with "unifying pluralism." Clearly, having the religious citizenship of the world represents the highest goal for

[17] Os Guinness, *The Gravedigger File, Secret Papers on the Subvension of the Modern Church* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1983), 96.
[18] Terrence Merrigan, "Pluralist Knowledge in the Pluralist Theology of Religions" in *Theological Studies* 58/4 (1997), 1.
[19] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Towards a World Theology: Faith and the Comparative History of Religion," in *Theological Studies* 58/4 (1997), 2.
[20] Paul Knitter, "No Other Name" in *Theological Studies* 58/4 (1997), 2.

religious pluralism, and the most evident means of realizing this goal is the dialogue between religious people. Consequently, Knitter encourages religious people to experiment as many different religious practices as possible. However, the problem is that this value is not universally accepted, and so the humankind is confronted by the so-called war of civilizations, that is in its essence, profoundly religious and sustained by fundamentally opposing concept towards revelation, truth, morality, authority and the ultimate purpose of humanity.[21]

Secular paradigms

Another perspective on religious pluralism is offered by secularism. Most sociologists consider secularism not as an attempt to eradicate religion but as a struggle to marginalize religion.[22] In other words, religious institutions can survive, or even prosper, but their influence on the culture is progressively diminished. Wallace believes that secularism signifies the reevaluation of religion in spiritual terms. Accordingly, the spiritual existence of the secular world requires the progressive integration of experiences, thoughts and practices of increased complexity through which a person reacts and relates to the proximate reality. Peter H. Van Ness notices that the secular lifestyle and secular spirituality compete with the world's religious traditions, but this is not necessarily, says Ness, a negative point. If the adherents of those religious traditions discover the common preoccupations for tradition, community, ritual and morality the competition can become benefic.[23]

Secular spirituality, argues Wallace, has its origins in the European Enlightenment, as in this period a new belief has emerged that humanity must exercise its reason free from religious

[21] John Courtney Murray, *Religious Liberty, Catholic Struggles with Pluralism* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 128-130.
[22] Peter L. Burger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967), 108.
[23] Peter H. van Ness (ed.), *Spirituality and the Secular Quest* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1996), 15.

superstitions and political tyrannies.[24] Therefore, this movement is the very foundation of contemporary beliefs and practices both secular and ecumenical. From this enlightened paradigm regarding tolerance and inter-religious dialogue emerge the diversity of the liberalism and political pluralism that define the significant developments of the last century. The values and the ideals of the Enlightenment originate in the philosophical innovations of the seventeenth century. Especially, the writings of René Descartes and John Locke set the base for the concepts that define the next philosophical writings about venerating reason and promoting religious tolerance.[25]

The influence of Descartes' work on enlightened thinkers such as Voltaire, Rousseau, Hume and Kant is evident in the triumph of autonomous and procedural reason over the moral value of the Church in establishing the authority of religious or secular knowledge. Therefore, faith sustained only by revelation, miracles or church authority has lost its credibility, necessitating the consent of reason or experience. The influence that Locke has upon Enlightenment is also significant, but for different motives. His critiques of the traditional foundation of knowledge are more radical then those of Descartes'. As a result, Locke rejects the Cartesian theory of inborn ideas, arguing that all knowledge originates from experience. The mind is as a *tabula rasa* that passively records the numerous impressions that later become human experience. In other words, the primary source of knowledge is the sensorial experience of external objects. However, the author notes that a series of mental operations such as perception, reasoning, doubt, or willpower can, also, lead to valid knowledge.[26]

[24] Mark I. Wallace, "The European Enlightenment" în Peter H. van Ness (ed.), *Spirituality and the Secular Quest*, 75.

[25] René Descartes, "Meditations on First Philosophy", John Veitch (trans.) in *Rationists* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1974), 118.

[26] John Locke, "An Essay concerning Human Understanding", Alexander Campbell Fraser (ed.), in *Great Books of the Western World,* see also Robert

In spite of the fact that the Enlightenment is recognized through the fact that it planted the seed of modern atheism, most philosophers did not completely renounce their faith in God. Wallace observes that,

> The Enlightenment is regarded, and rightly so, as a time of extraordinary latitude in matters religious, a time when men and women of letters openly declared their disgust with clericalism and wore their impiety as a badge signaling their emancipation from the past. Most early modern and modern philosophers, however, possessed at least a vestigial belief in divinity (although a belief often very far removed from Christian orthodoxy).[27]

One of the most prominent philosophers of the eighteenth century is Voltaire. His famous cry against institutionalized Christianity "Ecrasez l'infâme!," proves his repulsion of the hypocrisy and immorality of the priestly religion. Voltaire's attack is intended, however, only against clericalism and religious superstitions not against religious faith. His belief is that "natural religion"—which is a religion that has been rationally purified of all additional mythologies and immoralities—was compromised by the dogmatism of church hierarchy. Accordingly, while Voltaire considers non-compromising atheism as being in opposition with the moderate theism that he proposes, the true adversaries of faith are the institutionalized protectors of truth based on the Bible and church tradition.[28] Also, Kant shows aversion towards institutionalized religion, while in the same time placing value on moral living.[29] This is yet another indica-

Maynard Hutchins (ed.), *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Chicago, 1952), 349-50. (book 4, chapter 10, paragraph 3).

[27] Mark I. Wallace, "The European Enlightenment" in Peter H. Van Ness (ed.), *Spirituality*, 86.

[28] D. Cragg, *The Church and the Age of Reason, 1648-1789* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960), 237.

[29] For more details see Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's, 1965), 635-652; Immanuel Kant, "What is Enlightenment?", trans. Carl J. Friedrich, in Carl J. Friedrich (ed.),

tion of the way that a large part of contemporary ethical activism wears the label *spiritual,* but not *religious*.[30] David Hume offers a constructive argument in favor of the rationality of an "ambiguous faith"—a human and indistinct quasi-religious belief consistent with empirical principles.[31] This faith refers to the probability that the origin (or originator) of the universe may bear some traces of intelligence analogous to human reason. It is likely, says Hume, though never incorrigibly certain in the manner of Descartes or even Kant, that the physical order of the universe is somewhat akin to the nature of human reason. Beyond this limited statement of probability, however, Hume is not prepared to go. Stripped of metaphysical and even moral content, Hume's position encourages an attitude of vagueness, ambiguity, and humble openness toward the mystery and order within the universe.

In the United States the movement of secular spirituality was greatly influenced by the pragmatic naturalism of 1880-1930 through the writing of C. S. Peirce, William James, John Dewey, George Santayana, George Herbert Mead and Alfred North Whitehead. For these thinkers, despite their significant differences, the critique of supernaturalism was accompanied by a shift of focus to the transcendent qualities of immanent relationships in this world. No longer pointing vertically to infinite, absolute Being, transcendence came to signify the horizontal process of temporal movement toward an open-ended future state.[32] Nancy Frankenberry, observes that,

The Philosophy of Kant: Immanuel Kant's Moral and Political Writings (New York: Random House, 1949).

[30] Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, vol. 1: The Rise of Modern Paganism (New York: Knopf, 1967), 1:417.

[31] David Hume, *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion,* Henry D. Aiken (ed.), (New York: Hafner, 1948), 66.

[32] Nancy Frankenberry, "The American Experience" in Peter H. van Ness (ed.), *Spirituality*, 104.

> Rejecting the ancient Parmenidean or ontotheological belief in an absolute, unchanging order of being that transcends the temporal world, pragmatic naturalism affirmed a risk-filled cosmos in which becoming has primacy over being. In place of a perfect God, one who creates and preserves the many, it proposed a view in which the many finite and free acts of individuals literally create the one complex cosmic whole, transfiguring or disfiguring the very face of the divine.[33]

The primary characteristic of pragmatic naturalism is the doctrine of internal relations developed by James, Dewey, Whitehead and Mead. These thinkers have contributed with a new understanding of the nature of self as being inherently social or relational. Thus, relations are considered to be internal, essential and constitutive, not just accidental or derived. In contrast to the liberal view that the individual is fulfilled through his or her participation in the lives of others, the theory of the social nature of the self emphasized, more radically, that relations constitute us as being who and what we are. It is not that the self first is and then secondarily has relations, but that in each moment the self is an emergent from a plenum or field of social relations and is nothing without them. The field is composed of event-processes in changing and overlapping patterns of interdependence, designated *matter* or *mind* according to context.[34] William James proposed a relational theory of consciousness using the notion of a "wider self."[35] John Dewey elaborated a similar, biologically based model of the self in terms of organism and environment in continuous transaction. However, the most systematic demonstration of the progressive-relational nature of the self belongs to Whitehead. In his work *Process and Reality,* he uses a biologically based model of the self in terms of orga-

[33] Frankenberry, "The American Experience", 104.
[34] Frankenberry, "The American Experience", 108.
[35] William James, *A Pluralistic Universe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977), 131.

nism and environment in continuous transaction.[36] Mead was also preoccupied with the dialectic between the spontaneous individual-pole ("I") and the deterministic social-pole ("Me"). The author proposed a middle position between individualism and collectivism. Arising out of the internalized community or "generalized Other," subjectivity, in Mead's analysis, was first of all inter-subjective communication.[37]

During the nineteenth century the field of religious study was decisively influenced firstly, by the systematic translation of religious texts in European languages and secondly, by the social sciences' accomplishments in gathering empirical data about the world's religions—other then those already known in Western Europe. This facilitated the emergence of a conceptual synthesis of such magnitude as those of sociologists Emile Durkheim[38] and Max Webber[39] or anthropologists Edward Burnett Tylor,[40] Branislaw Malinowski,[41] Ruth Fulton Benedict[42] and Claude Lévi-Strauss.[43] Also, these works led to the completion of vast religious compendium written by intellectuals such G. Van Der Leeuw[44] and Mircea Eliade.[45]

[36] Alfred North Whitehead, "Process and Reality", ed. Donald W. Sherburne and David Ray Griffin (New York: Free Press, 1978), 21.
[37] See Herbert Mead, *Mind, Self and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934).
[38] See Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, trans. Joseph Ward Swain (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1915).
[39] Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, trans. Ephraim Fischoff (Boston: Beacon, 1964; original edition 1922).
[40] Edward Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, 2 vols. (New Yor: Harper, 1958; original edition 1872).
[41] See Branislaw Malinowski, *A Scientific Theory of Culture* (New Yor: Oxford University Press, 1944).
[42] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (New Yor: Mentor, 1946; original edition 1934).
[43] Claud Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, trans. George Weidenfeld (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).
[44] G. van der Leeuw, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, ed. Hans H. Penner, trans. J. E. Turner, 2 vols. (New York: Harper and Row, 1963).

Robert Cummings Neville offers four models for the relation between the spiritual study and the practice of organized religion.[46] The first model is that of multiple religious identities. Scientists notices that in some cultures—such as procommunist China, or ancient Israel[47]—there were attempts of integrating multiple religious practices in the same community. John Berthrong feels that achieving religious compatibility in an individual's life that is found in a specific social location is a difficult challenge but not an impossible one.[48] This solution recognizes the need for individual participation within a community. The second model is that of deconstructivism, which, on one hand nurtures respect for the study of organized religion, and on the other hand promotes alienation and auto-distancing with regard to any form of religious participation—encountered or acquired.[49] The third model is that of abstraction of appreciation and secular syncretism concepts. Cummings considers that the majority of North Atlantic spiritual scholars exemplify this model. Due to the fact that they do not identify with any religious tradition, the spiritual scholars can make abstraction of certain elements of one or more religions and then rearrange them in order to create spirituality that is congruent with the spirituality study. The author argues that the strength of this model resides in its integrity towards the results of sophisticated spiritual study.[50] The limitation of the model resides in its difficulty of de-

[45] Mircea Eliade, *Istoria Credințelor şi Ideilor Religioase* (Bucureşti: Editura Ştiințifică şi Enciclopedică, 1086).
[46] Robert Cummnigs, Neville, "The Emergence of Historical Consciousness" in Peter H. van Ness (ed.), *Spirituality*, 150-151.
[47] See for example, Edith Wyschogrod, *Saints and Postmodernism: Revisioning Moral Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990). Also, see Mark C. Taylor, *Erring: A Postmodern A/Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).
[48] See John Berthrong, *All under Heaven* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).
[49] See Wyschogrod, *Saints and Postmodernism*. See also Mark C. Taylor, *Erring*.
[50] Neville, "The Emergence of Historical Consciousness", 151.

veloping a specific custom that is not influenced by the so-called deconstructive practices or that does not turn into the model of multiple religious identities.[51]

The fourth model is that of the spiritual study's first encounter with religion. A number of scholars—that either come from nations influenced by Marxism or from modernized North Atlantic countries—were educated in a secular atmosphere with no acquired family religion. Consequently, we have individuals that do not have an acquired religion, that have no religion to rebel to and that have not come across any challenging religious organization. For this particular segment, the spiritual study becomes a valid option with no other religious competetor. Undoubtedly, in the pursuit of knowledge, a certain scholar may come to respect or even sympathize with a particular religious tradition, but still decide not to belong to that particular religious community. Cummings observes that the public expression of this spiritual study model is not yet evident because of its recent nature, but it is becoming increasingly popular among the religious studies students.[52]

At the same time, several secular thinkers are beginning to realize that the European Christian past cannot be denied without renouncing, and possibly destroying, culture itself—and so are re-examining the role of religion in public. The core ideals of the culture, today framed in liberal secular terms, are rooted in Christianity. In consequence, a new thinking on the role of religion in the public sphere is beginning to emerge, led by the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, and cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the present-day pope Benedict XVI. The debate, organized by the *Katholische Akademie Bayern,* München took place on January 19, 2004, and soon became renowned throughout the entire world.[53] Jürgen Habermas is proposing a new model for

[51] See van Ness, *Spirituality*.

[52] Neville, "The Emergence of Historical Consciousness", 151.

[53] See Jürgen Habermas and Joseph Ratzinger, *Dialectica secularizării. Despre rațiune şi religie,* trad. Delia Marga, introducere de Andrei Marga (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Apostrof, 2005).

citizenship and the church-state relationship in culture. Habermas is convinced that the ideals of the secular state—of goodness, dignity, and equality of human beings—are derived from Christianity, without which the ideals are being lost. This loss is evidenced in Western culture in 20th century wars, increasing moral decadence, and the rising threat of bioengineering. It is also evidenced in the growing clash between the secular West and more traditional, religious cultures, especially Islam, but also Buddhism and Hinduism.

The modern age encouraged an adversarial relationship between religion and secularity, based on the assumption that religion would die away in the face of what was thought to be superior secular rationality. However, this has not happened, and Habermas has concluded that not only has religion not gone away, but it is growing. Furthermore, and most importantly, religious reasoning has much to offer culture, and so must be taken into consideration in public discourse. Referring to practical consequences, Habermas portrays a post-secular society, in which the determination to learn and the will of auto constrain is found on both sides, reason and religion.

Joseph Ratzinger considers that the modern era formulated a series of normative essentials through different declarations of human rights and thus obtained elements from the contest of majority. Today, says the author, we prefer the internal marks of these values, but the gradual marginalization of religion, or even its loss, is not a necessary step to be taken by the humanity eager for freedom and universal tolerance.

> Therefore, the existence of values that reside in themselves, that originate in the essence of humanity and that are inalienable for all those that possess this essence is real…[however] this evidence is not, at the present day, accepted by all cultures. Islam, for example, defined its own list of human rights that is unlike that in the West. China, is, certainly, marked, today, by a variety of culture born in the West, Marxism, as well as I am informed, asks itself if it is not possible, that as far as human rights are concerned, we

have a typical Western intervention whose presuppositions need questioning.[54]

The secular rationale is limited and can not be applied to all humanity. Accordingly, a rational, ethical or religious prescription for the humankind that would be in agreement with all people does not constitute reality, and the world ethos remains an abstraction. Ratzinger takes as example terrorism which assumes moral authorization and the new threats of biotechnologies, and proposes that religion and reason, equally become positive moral forces that exercise mutual restraint and supervision. The author's conclusion is that there are religious pathologies and reason pathologies. As a result, the solution is a necessary correlation between reason and faith, reason and religion that are called to simultaneous purification and recognition. Habermas' hope is that during this universal purification process, values and norms, known or sensed, in one way or another, by all people, will obtain a new power of illumination, and that which keeps the world in one piece will achieve, ones more, a new vigor.[55]

Concluding Reflection

Religions represent complex realities that include worldviews, religious experiences, narrations, doctrines, moral norms, institutions, rituals, and social patterns. Realizing that in pluralistic societies religions occupy a common social, political and economical space, we see that we are confronted by the growing diversity of the present-day culture. Because of rapid communication systems, education and migration, countries and cultures are brought together in dialogue and direct confrontation. Therefore, the ethnic and cultural homogeneity specific of modern national states is threatened by the rapid growth of the multiethnic and multicultural states. Taken by itself, empirical plura-

[54] Habermas şi Ratzinger, *Dialectica secularizării*, 104.
[55] Habermas şi Ratzinger, *Dialectica secularizării*, 114-115.

lism is not inherently positive or negative. However, if for those that prefer to live in a mixed racial society with a plurality of religions, the present developments are considered benefic, for those that prefer homogeneity, stability and the continuity of life norms, pluralism in not just uncomfortable but also threatening. Specifically, if pluralism has a positive aspect in eradicating prejudices, racial arrogance, and religious bigotries, it can also generate intolerance and tribalism. This last phenomenon is closely tied to ethnical and religious aspects, because the impact of this diversity has an effect on the way in which people perceive religion, in general, and the relations between different religions, in particular. This situation becomes increasingly controversial because of the relations that exist between religion, culture and morality.

This present-day context offers a large array of answers, from the Christian perspective to that of secularism. The secular perspective, especially secular spirituality, encourages the attainment of compatibility between religious practices, and cultivates respect towards the study of organized religion. In the same time, however, the secular spirituality promotes alienation and disregard for any type of religious participation. Consequently, the spiritual study becomes a valid option that does not necessitate (but discourages) any affiliation with a religious community.

From a religious perspective, the relation between differing religions can be considered on the basis of three major genres: particularism, inclusivism or pluralism. The problem with inclusivism is that it assumes that religions, in some way, refer to God in terms that Christians recognize that they are referring to the *same* God. If having some characteristics in common were a sufficient criterion for sameness, then the God of Mormons, is the God of Islam and the God of Christianity would, indeed, be the same. Consequently, Clark Pinnock seems prepared to say that people believe in some *other* God only if their God is unlike

the biblical God on every conceivable front.[56] However, even if there are common features between different religion's doctrines of God—for example, Judaism, Christianity and Islam speak of common monotheistic heritage—we must ask whether the pattern of how and why this God saves, including salvation's basis and conditions, is the same in each system of thought. "We must not conclude," writes Pinnock, "just because we know a person to be a Buddhist, that his or her heart is not seeking God."[57] True, but which God? At the end of the day, says Carson, it is difficult to see how this criterion is any different from the popular pluralist assurance that it is sufficient to be religiously sincere.[58] The pluralist paradigm redefines religious pluralism so as to render heretical the idea that heresy is possible. Tolerance is radically redefined, and sometimes masks a brutal intolerance. Even the adherents of pluralism admit that there are immense dangers ahead and that signs of cultural decay abound. Where they differ from particularist Christianity is in both diagnosis and solution. What we must realize is that the paradigm offered by pluralism is, because of the relativism it generates, not compatible with traditional Christianity. Traditional Christianity offers the paradigm of particularism that affirms the objectivity of the revelation of God through his Son Jesus Christ and in Bible. Therefore, it states that Christians must recognize the distinctiveness of the entire Bible narrative which provides the framework for a comprehensive explanation of reality and truth.

[56] Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy*, 112.
[57] Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy*, 112.
[58] Carson, *The Gagging of God*, 295.

Christen im römischen Reich: Statusinkonsistenz in der Alten Kirche und der Versuch, sie zu beseitigen

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ABSTRACT. I borrowed the sociologic term of inconsistence from Geza Alföldy and Gerd Theissen. Although they use it for their research on Roman social history during the time of Roman emperors and the very complex society of those days as well as for presenting the Jesus-Movement, I shall apply it to ancient church history and the Christian people who lived at the same time "in different worlds", the Roman Empire and the kingdom of heaven. The main argument of this article concerns the question whether individual Christians and the Church are an imitation of the surrounding society and its culture in all its different aspects, on the one hand, or an eschatological community, on the other; or maybe even the both.

1.

Es wundert mich, dass sich so wenige aus der unendlichen Zahl der Augustinusforscher darüber wundern, dass der Bischof von Hippo in *de civitate Dei*[1] erst im 9. Kapitel des 20. Buches, das von der Auslegung der Apokalypse bestimmt ist, den "institutionellen Charakter der Kirche... im eschatologischen Ausblick vorführt".[2]

Die in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten der Christentumsgeschichte auf der Grundlage von Apc. 20f. sehr lebhaften chiliastischen Vorstellungen, besonders ausgeprägt etwa in der irenäi-

[1] Vgl. den vorläufig letzten Forschungsbericht zu Augustins *De civitate Dei*: Philippe Curbelié, *Les études sur La Cité de Dieu*, REA 50, 2004, 311-323.
[2] E. Mühlenberg, RGG[4] 1 (1998), 965.

schen Theologie, verloren seit dem vierten Jahrhundert an Bedeutung, zumal "als Projektion einer Zeit ausgleichender Gerechtigkeit".[3] Für Augustin, der von sich selbst in CD 20, 7, 1 sagt: "*Huldigte doch auch ich einst dieser [chiliastischen] Anschauung*", war hier wie für viele andere Bereiche das Werk des grossen Donatistentheologen Tyconius von ausschlaggebender Bedeutung.[4] Auch Hieronymus bearbeitete so, versehen mit den Argumenten des Origenes *und* des Tyconius den Apokapypsekommentar des Victorinus von Pettau neu, der in einem grob chiliastischen Schluss ausgelaufen war.

In CD 20, 9 liegt neben anderen Stellen als Subtext, der die Argumentation trägt und vorwärts bringt, neben Apc. 20 bes. Mt. 13:39f. und Mt. 5:19f. zu Grunde. Der Abschnitt bietet einen guten Einblick in die hermeneutische Arbeit Augustins, wie er sie in *de doctrina christiana* dargelegt hat, mit dem doppelten primären Auslegungsprinzip, die Bibel durch die Bibel zu erklären und die Bibel vernünftig zu erklären. Auch dabei ist für den Kirchenvater wieder der Ketzer Tyconius bestimmend gewesen. Doch augustinische Hermeneutik[5] ist hier nicht unser primäres Thema, sondern seine Schriftauslegung wird für uns wichtig, wenn es darum geht, die Probleme der Statusinkonsistenz von Christen der theodosianischen Zeit seelsorgerlich zu

[3] K. Fitschen, RGG[4] 2 (1999), 138.

[4] Erich Dinkler, PW 6A (1937), 849-856: Ausgabe des *Liber regularum* mit ausführlicher Einleitung und Kommentar: Jean-Marc Vercruysse (Hg.), *Tyconius. Le livre des règles* (SC 488), Paris, 2004.

[5] Dazu zuletzt: Isabelle Bochet, *De l´exégèse à l'herméneutique augustinienne*, REA 50, 2004, 349-369; Karlfried Froelich, "Take up and read": basics of Augustine's biblical interpretation, *Interpretation* 58 (2004), 5-16; Jeff B. Pool, *Toward a christian hermeneutic of love: problem and possibility*, Perspectives in Religious Studies 28, 2001, 257-283; Rebecca H. Weaverm, "Reading the signs: guidance for the pilgrim community", *Interpretation* 58 (2004), 28-41, und—bes. zur Hermeneutik der paulinischen Schriften bei Augustin—Verf., Paulus und Augustin, in: Eve-Marie Becker, Peter Pilhofer (Hgg.), *Biographie und Persönlichkeit des Paulus* (Mohr-Siebeck, 2006), sowie ders., "Rezeption der Paulusbriefe in der Kirchengeschichte", in Oda Wischmeyer (Hg.), *Paulus: Leben, Umwelt, Werk, Briefe* (UTB, 2006).

behandeln. Dabei spielt für unsere Stelle von de civitate ein drittes tyconisches Erbe, das Augustin nicht ausgeschlagen hat, eine wichtige Rolle, der sog. gemischte Kirchenbegriff, die Idee der Kirche als eines *corpus permixtum* oder wie Tyconius im zweiten Teil seines *liber regularum* präziser sagt: *Domini corpus bipertitum*, bei dem er dann im dritten Teil herausarbeitet, dass die Zugehörigkeit des Einzelmenschen zu diesem oder jenem Teil allein in Gottes Willen oder Gnade gestellt ist. Bei der zweiten Regel *De Domini corpore bipertito* ebenso wie bei der vierten *De specie et genere* macht Tyconius Paulus zum Hermeneuten:

> *Et postquam docuit quemadmodum haec locutio inteligenda esset, eodem genere locutionis ostendit unum corpus et bonum esse et malum, dicens: (Röm. 11:28) secundum evangelium quidem inimici propter vos secundum electionem autem carissimi propter patres.*[6]
> Und dann lehrte er, wie diese Wendung verstanden werden muss, und zeigt, dass ein guter und ein böser Leib zu demselben Wortverständnis gehören wie Röm. 11,28: nach demEvangelium sind sie um euretwillen Feinde, nach der Erwählung aber die Geliebtesten wegen der Väter.

Sicher ist die Vorstellung eines solchen Kirchenbegriffs bei Augustin schon seit dem Beginn seiner Auseinandersetzung mit den Donatisten immer wieder als pastorales Argument nachzuweisen und gewinnt etwa im *Psalmus contra partem Donati* eine literarische Brillianz. Aber als eigentliches Theologumenon begegnet in de civitate der Gedanke erst hier.

Weil der Teufel jetzt im *saeculum*, in der Zeit des ersten Advents Christi, tausend Jahre gebunden ist, heisst die Kirche *jetzt* das Himmelreich. Es gilt aber, und Augustin ist ein erklärter Feind aller *simplificateurs*:

> *alio modo igitur intelligendum est regnum caelorum, ubi ambo sunt, et ille scilicet qui solvit quod docet, et ille qui facit; sed ille minimus, ille magnus: alio modo autem regnum caelorum dicitur quo non intrat nisi*

[6] Tyc., *Liber Reg*. 2, 13 (SC 164) vgl. zu. Röm. 11:28a auch ibd. 4:4 (SC 226).

> *ille qui facit. Ac per hoc ubi utrumque genus est, ecclesia est, qualis nunc est; ubi autem illud solumerit, ecclesia est, qualis tunc erit, quando malus in ea non erit. Ergo et nunc ecclesia regnum Christi est regnumque caelorum.*[7]
> Auf die eine Art muss als das Himmelreich das verstanden werden, wo beide sind, und zwar derjenige, der nach Mt. 5:19 das Gesetz auflöst, d.h. nicht tut, was es lehrt, und derjenige, der das tut. Aber jener ist der geringste, dieser der grosse. Auf einer anderen Art wird das als Himmelreich genannt, wohin nur derjenige eintritt, der es tut.

Auf eine sehr behutsame Weise unterscheidet Augustin hier das Sein *in regno Christi* vom *regnum Christi*-Sein:

> *Regnant etiam cum illo etiam nun sancti eius, aliter quidemquam tunc regnabunt; nec tamen cum illo regnant zizania, quamvis in ecclesia cum tritico crescant.*[8]
> Es herrschen freilich auch jetzt seine Heiligen mit ihm; dann werden sie freilich auf andere Art herrschen, unddoch herrscht das Unkraut nicht mit ihm, obwohl es in der Kirche mit dem Weitzen wächst.

Das Regieren der Täter des Wortes verbindet Augustin mit Kol. 3:1f. und Phil. 3:20. So kommt er dann zu dem schon angedeuteten Schluss:

> *Postremo regnant cum illo, qui eo modo sunt in regno eius, ut sint etiam ipsi regnum eius.*[9]
> Zuletzt herrschen mit ih, die so in seinem Reich sind, dass sie sein Reich sind.

Letztendlich wird dann auch hier das fundamentale augustinische Unterscheidungskriterium von *amor sui* und *amor dei* bei der grossen *collecta* entscheidend:

[7] Aug. CD 20, 9 (Dombart-Kalb 2, 428, 30-429, 7).
[8] Aug. CD 20, 9 (Dombart-Kalb 2, 429, 7-10).
[9] Aug. CD 20, 9 (Dombart-Kalb 2, 429, 15-17).

> *Quo modo autem sunt regnum Christi qui ut alia taceam quamvis ibi sint donec colligantur in fine saeculi de regno eius omnia scandala, tamen illic sua quaerunt non quae Christi*?[10]
> Wie aber können die Reich Christi sein, die, um von anderem zu schweigen, doch das Ihre suchen und nicht das, was zu Christus gehört, wie können die dort trotzdem sein, bis am Ende der Zeit aus seinem Reich alle Skandale geerntet werden?

Für Augustins Zeitgenossen, in der grösseren Zahl Mitglieder christlicher Kirchen der theodosianischen Zeit, war die Frage einer Statusinkonsistenz neu und mit einer bedrängenden religiösen Vehemenz aufgebrochen. Wo gehören sie hin?

2.

So scheinen schon die grossen Schismen in Nordafrika und Ägypten zum Beispiel am Beginn der konstantinischen Zeit als Nachwehen der grossen Verfolgung dieses religiöse Bedürfnis nach Eindeutigkeit und kultischer Reinheit zum Inhalt gehabt zu haben.

Hier kommt der in der neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft durch Gert Theissen eingeführte Begriff der Statusinkonsistenz ins Spiel.[11] In der römischen Sozialgeschichte spielt Statusinkonsistenz als Herrschaftsmittel nach Geza Alföldy[12] eine grosse Rolle mit allen Implikationen eines an bestimmte Bedingungen gebundenen erhofften sozialen Aufstiegs, und das in der ganzen Vielfalt der sozialgeschichtlichen Bedingungen des *Imperium Romanum*, bei Sklaven und Freigelassenene, Rittern und Provinzialen unter den Bedingungen des Reichtums und der sich im Kaiserkult ein Symbol schaffenden politischen Opportunität.

[10] Aug. CD 20, 9 (Dombart-Kalb 2, 249, 17-20).
[11] Gert Theissen, *Soziologie der Jesusbewegung*, 1977; ders., Studien zur Soziologie des Urchristentums, 1989³.
[12] Geza Alföldy, *Römische Sozialgeschichte*, 1984³; ders., Die römische Gesellschaft, 1986.

Doch besass das System unter diesen Voraussetzungen in religionspolitischer Hinsicht eine gewisse Liberalität den bekannten Religionen gegenüber, das Judentum eingeschlossen. Für die Anhänger der meisten Kulte, der genuin städtischen Kulte, die die Grundlage des klassischen religiösen Systems bilden,—antike Religion ist vor allem erst einmal städtische Religion, die Religion einer bestimmten Stadt—, des Reichskults, der Mysterienreligionen[13], besteht der aus der Unsicherheit der religiösen Statusinkonsistenz herausführende Weg vor allem in Kultakkumulation.

Hieran änderte sich im nichtchristlichen und nichtjüdischen Bereich nach der sog. konstantinischen Wende nichts. Der 384 verstorbene Prätorianerpräfekt und designierte Consul Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, den Macrobius (1, 17, 1) rühmt: "*sacrorum omnium praesulem esse te,Vetti Praetextate, divina voluerunt (hat doch das Göttliche gewollt, dass du, Vettius Praetextatus, allen Kulten vorstehst)*," war nach Aussage seiner Grabschrift in der römischen Religion und in den Mysterienreligionen ein Spezialist: "*augur, pontifex Vestae, pontifex Solis, quindecimvir sacris faciendis, curialis Herculis, sacratus Libero et Eleusinis, hierophanta, neocorus, tauroboliatus, pater patrum*" (CIL 6, 1779; Dessau 1259, vgl. 6, 1778).

Seine Frau Fabia Aconia Paulina (CIL 6, 1780; Dessau 1260), die selbst in der Inschrift als *dicata templis atque amica numinum (den Tempeln geweiht und eine Freundin der Götter)* gerühmt wird, betont in dem ihr in den Mund gelegten Grabepigramm die innige Verbindung des Paares auch in dieser religiösen Hinsicht (Rückseite 22-29):

Tu me, marite, disciplinarum bono
puram ac pudicam sorte mortis eximens
in templa ducis ac famulam divis dicas ;
te teste cunctis imbuor mysteriis;
tu Dindymenes Atteosque antistitem
teletis honoras taureis consors pius;

[13] Zuletzt: Angelo Bottini (Hg.), *Il rito secreto. Misteri in Grecia a a Roma*, 2005.

Hecates ministram trina secreta edoces
Cererisque Graiae tu sacris dignam paras.
Du, mein Gatte, hälst mich, die in ihren Sitten reine und schamhafte eines guten Todes für würdig, du führst mich in die Tempel und weihst mich den Göttern zur Dienerin, mit dir als Zeugenwerde ich in alle Mysterien eingeweiht, du als frommer Gatte ehrst den Priester von Didyma und des Attis mit Einweihungsfeiern von Stieren, du belehrst die Dienerin der Hekate im dreifachen Geheimnis und du machst sie den übrigen heiltümern Griechenlands wert.

Dabei steht nach der Theologie der *Divina,* auf die Macrobius anspielt und die, wie H.Bloch einst magistral herausgearbeitet hat[14], auch unser Epitaph zeigt, die multikultische Praxis auf keinen Fall im Widerspruch zu einer henotheistischen Theorie. So sehr diese Theorie aus apologetischen und vielleicht auch aus religionsphilosophischen und seelsorgerlichen Gründen binnenchristlich Verwendung findet, ist für Juden und für Christen aber die multikultische Praxis obsolet.

3.

Die Christen lebten in derselben Welt ihrer nichtchristlichen Zeitgenossen mit denselben politischen, kulturellen und sozialgeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen und Bedingungen.[15] In ihren Kreisen können wir von Anfang an konträre und ambivalente Reaktionen beobachten, die durch das Verhalten der nichtchristlichen Umwelt und durch das Verhältnis zur nichtchristlichen Umwelt verstärkt wurden. Die angesprochenen Reaktionen umfassen meistens vermischt die ganze Skala der Möglich-

[14] H. Bloch, "The pagan rivival in the west at he end of the fourth century", in A. Momigliano (Hg.), *The conflict between paganism and christianity in the fourth century*, 1963, 193.

[15] Vgl. zum Folgenden R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 1986, sowie Verf., Von Golgatha zum Ponte Molle. Studien zur Sozialgeschichte der Kirche im 3. Jahrhundert, 1992, und. ders, "The Sociology of Pre-Constantine Christianity: Approach from the Visible", in A. Kreider (Hg.), *The Origins of Christendom in the West*, 2001, 121-152.

keiten: Martyrium und Weltflucht, Verinnerlichung ebenso wie wie angepasste politisch-religiöse opportunistische Existenz, von der nach Cyprian die Scharen der in der decischen Verfolgung aufs karthagische Kapitol zum Opfer pilgernden Christen zeugen[16], und nicht zuletzt einethisches Engagement für ein politisches Gebilde, das im Traum vieler Kirchenschriftsteller in einer apologetisch angestrebten Christianisierung des Reiches zu seinem eigentlichen Ziel einer friedensstiftenden und –erhaltenden Ordungsfunktion kommen würde. Die Apologeten wären hier zu nennen, auch ein Tertullian, dessen glühemde Sehnsucht hinter den ätzenden Paradoxen zu oft übersehen wird, vor allem aber Origenes.

Die vorkonstantinische Christentumsgeschichte ist, allein schon was ihre äusseren Bedingungen angeht, durch eine mehrfache Statusinkonsistenz ausgezeichnet: politisch, sozial und religiös.

Die politische-militärische Inkonsistenz zeigen nicht nur die vielfachen Herrscherwechsel, oft durch usurpatorische Ausrufungen durch das Heer oder Heeresteile, die immer schwereren Aufgaben an den Reichsaussengrenzen und die Reichsreformversuche, unter denen die Tetrarchie und die konstantinischen Neuordnung die vielleicht herausragenden sind.

Der Zusammenhang sozialer Mobilität ist bestimmt durch die verschiedenen Möglichkeiten eines sozialen und gesellschaftlichen Aufstiegs und Abstiegs, die zur Triebfeder gesellschaftlichen Engagements werden. Hier ist nicht nur die literarische Fiktion eines Trimalchio von hohem Interesse, sondern etwa ebenso der Aufstieg provinzialer Familien in die Reichsführungsschicht oder der Aufstieg von Freigelassenen und ihrer Söhne etwa durch prokuratorische Ämter. Ebensohäufig aber zeigt das ambivalente System einer Fixierung der gesellschaftlichen Strata und einer sozialen Mobilität auch die aus vielen

[16] Verf., RGG^4 2 (1999), 508f. s.v. Cyprian und ders., RGG^4 5 (2002), 862-965, s.v. Märtyrer II. Alte Kirche, 873-875 s.v. Märtyrerakten, 875f. s.v. Märtyrerverehrung.

Gründen drohenden Möglichkeiten von Verarmung und Statusverlust. Und diese gefährlichen Möglichkeiten werden umso stärker real, je geringer Integrationswille und -fähigkeiten sich erweisen.

In religionspsychologischer Hinsicht spielen Gruppengefühl und Aussenseiterrolle, Sicherheit und Unsicherheit eine entscheidende Rolle und bestimmen auch das Verhalten der christlichen Gruppen in den Verfolgungs- und Friedenszeiten.

Das gilt schliesslich auch in Bezug auf die ethischen Regeln und auf die Fixierung von Glaubensregeln und Glaubensgut, freilich mit der bezeichnenden Einschränkung, dass hier eine Kultakkumulation nicht möglich war. In einer Umwelt, die wie Keith Hopkins zuletzt mit seiner postmodernen historiographischen Methode der Zeitreise eindrucksvoll und überzeugend gezeigt hat[17], voll von Göttern und Religion ist, was auch die umfangreiche gegenwärtige, teilweise von der neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft herkommende, neben anderen von Hans Dieter Betz getragenen Forschung zur antiken Magie bestätigt[18], mag das als Defizienz empfunden wurden sein, als Einschränkung von Fähigkeiten und Möglichkeiten, die dem homo religiosus zur Verfügung stehen. Wie weitgehend der magische Bereich aber auch von Christen integriert wurde, mag eine Inschrift des 5. Jahrhunderts aus dem kleinasiatischen Alexandreia Troas zeigen, in der es in einem Gebet zum "unschuldigen Kreuz" (*αξρανιος σταυρος*) mit Topoi von nichtchristlichen Rache—und Beichinschriften der hellenistischen und frühkaiserzeitlichen Epoche und mit biblischen Paraphrasen (Lev. 26:29;

[17] Keith Hopkins, *A world full of gods*, 2001.

[18] Hans Dieter Betz (Hg.), *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation including the Demotic Spells*, 1992², vgl. auch Verf., "Magische Texte. Vorüberlegungen und Materialien zum Verständnis christlicher antiker Texte", in J. vaan Oort, D. Wyrwa (Hgg.), *Heiden und Christen im 5. Jahrhundert*, 1998, 88-122, und Marie Therese Fögen, *Die Enteignung der Wahrsager. Studien zum kaiserlichen Wissensmonopol in der Spätantike*, 1993.

Deut. 28:53; Eccl. 4:5, Jes. 49: 26, Hes. 5:10) um die Bestarfung von Dieben geht:[19]

> *Διχον την σην οργη και φοβον δινον μεγαν*
> *ποισον αυτους προ σου βηματος μολιν*
> *εαυτους εσθιοντας και τεκνα και γυνεκας.*
> Zeige deinen Zorn und schreckliche, grosse Furcht,
> mache, das sie vor deinen Richterstuhl kommen,
> dass sie sich selbst essen, und ihre Kinder und ihre Frauen.

An all dem ist nicht nur der grosse Rahmen des römischen Reiches mit seinen schon seit den ersten Anfängen lokalen Traditionen des Christentums beteiligt, sondern auch—und das gilt weit und lange über die Kösterschen Entwicklungslinien durch die Welt des frühen Christentums hinaus[20]—die unterschiedliche kulturelle und religiöse Herkunft der Christen und ihr unterschiedliches kulturelles Niveau.

Die damit nur äusserst differenziert zu formulierende Antwort auf die Frage, was ist ein Christ in vorkonstantinischer Zeit, was ist eine christliche Kirche, nährte nicht nur sehr verschiedene Vorstellungen über Christen bei Nichtchristen, denen wir etwa bei Kelsos oder Porphyrios oder etwa auch in manchen Märtyrerakten begegnen und die dort—wie etwa in den *Acta Acacii*—Witz und Phantasie des Martyrographen beflügeln.[21] Es handelt sich um eine Unterschiedlichkeit, die den Nichtchristen den Umgang mit den Christen nicht einfacher machte sondern jene, römische Beamte und städtische Honoratioren und Mitbürger, ganz zu schweigen von der städtischen Plebs, um es mit den Worten eines Statthalters zu sagen, von Anfang an auf die Kategorien einer ebenso religiös wie gesellschaftlich revolutionären Integrationsunwilligkeit und -unfä-

[19] Marijana Ricl, *The Inscriptions of Alexandreia Troas* (IGSK 53), 1997, 168-170, nr. 188.
[20] Helmut Köster, *Entwicklungsliniem durch die Welt des frühen Christentums*, Tübingen 1971².
[21] Vgl. Verf., Vtip, ironia, satira v Acta Acacii, in Igor Kišš u.a. (Hgg.), *Humor a teológia* (Bratislava, 2003), 94-97.

higkeit führte: *pertinacia et inflexibilis obstinatio, amenta... superstitio prava, immodica*.[22]

Bei den Christen selbst liess diese Unterschiedlichkeit ein Normierungsbedürfniss gross werden, das im Laufe der Zeit der jesuanischen und paulinischen Freiheit eines Christenmenschen immer weniger konform wurde und immer stärker von eben jenen Bedingungen und Strukturen zeitgenössischer antiker und spätantiker Religion geprägt wurde, von denen sie sich absetzten. Dabei mag wie im politisch-sozialen Raum auch im kirchlichen das, was Eric Robertson Dodds das "age of anxiety" genannt hat, im Hintergrund stehen.[23]

Ganz sicher bestehen jedenfalls Relationen zwischen der zunehmenden Unsicherheit des Reiches in politisch-militärischer Hinsicht, der Bedrängnis der Organisation, die sich in einer steigenden Omnipräsenz von sich verhärtender Bürokratie und Gesetzen äussert, die die Rede vom spätantiken Zwangsstaat aufkommen liess, und in den grossen Rechtskodifikationen ihren Niederschlag fand, und einer philosophisch und populärphilosophisch begründeten religiös-kulturellen Fluchtbewegung in eine weltverneinend asketische Spiritualität, die in einer transzendenten Welt Harmonie und Frieden suchte.

Auf die verschiedenen christlichen Gruppen der Ökumene wirkte sich das alles besonders in zwei Tendenzen aus, theologiegeschichtlich in einer oft in staatlich-kirchlicher Kooperation vollzogener Dogmatisierungstendenz mit dem "demon of closure"[24] und frömmigkeitsgeschichtlich in einer zunehmend vergesetzlichten und weltflüchtigen Assimilierung des Christentums an antike Religion, die erst im langwierigen Säkularisierungsprozess der Neuzeit und der Moderne etwa unter der

[22] Plin. ep. 10, 96.

[23] E. R. Dodds, *Pagans and Christians in an Age of Anxiety*, 1965, vgl. Auch Arthur D. Nock, *Essays on Religion in th Ancient World*, 1-2, 1972.

[24] William Greenway, "Chalcedonian reason and the demon of closure", *Scottish Journal of Theology* 57 (2004), 56-79, in Auseinandersetzung mit Charles Taylor, *Human Agency and Language*, 1985, und ders., *Philosophical Arguments*, 1995.

Bonhoefferschen Perspektive eines religionslosen Christentums überwunden wird.

4.

In den christlichen Gemeinden zeigen sich vor allem zwei Wege, die Statusinkonsistenz zu überwinden, der Weg der Diakonie zur Überwindung oder Linderung sozialer Statusinkonsistenz auf dem Wege der Attraktion und der Weg der Seelsorge zur Überwindung einer inneren Statusinkonsistenz mittels Stärkung der Kohäsion.

In meinem Buch zur Sozialgeschichte des Christentums im dritten Jahrhundert habe ich mich näher über die entscheidende Bedeutung der sozialdiakonischen Hilfe ausgelassen, die neben dem Blut der Märtyrer und all jenen Vorstellungen, über die Glen Bowersock[25] uns so schön belehrt hat, ein Hauptgrund der Attraktion des Christentums gewesen ist, der in der nachkonstantinischen Kirche der Märtyrer selbst zu einem kalendarischen Gestaltungsprinzip mit einer eigenen literarischen Gattung im Feriale wird.[26]

Entscheidend dürfte für die Bewertung und Einstufung der altkirchlichen Armenfürsorge sein, dass die Dimension des Euergetismus, der ja immerhin so etwas wie das Nerven- und

[25] G. W. Bowersock, *Martyrdom and Rome*, 1995., vgl. auch M. Lambrerigts, P. van Deun (Hgg.), *Maryrium in Multidisciplinary Perspective. Memorial Louis Reekmans*, 1995.

[26] Zuletzt Knut Schäferdiek, "Bemerkungen zum Martyrologium Syriacum", *AnBoll* 123 (2005), 5-22. In diesem Zusammenhang sei auch an das Wiener Projekt von Johannes Divjak und des Verf.s zur Edition des Chronographen von 354 erinnert, zu dem die ältesten bekannten kalendarischen Listen von Märtyrer- und Bischofsgedenktagen gehören: das Feriale ecclesiae Romanae und die Depositiones episcoporum, vgl. Adolf Primmer, Kurt Smolak, Dorothea Weber (Hgg.), *Textsorten und Textkritik*. SB ÖAW phil.hist. Kl. 693 (VSCEL 21), 2002; vgl. auch Verf., "Wahrnehmung von Geschichte in der christlichen Literatur zwischen Lukas und Eusebius. Die chronographische Form der Bischofslisten," in Eve-Marie Becker (Hg.), *Die antike Historiographie und die Anfänge der christlichen Geschichtsschreibung* (BZNW 129), 2005, 263-276.

Knochengerüst der antiken Stadtkultur gewesen ist, überboten wird, durch eine auf Linderung von Armut und Not konzentrierte Wohltätigkeit.

Der *amicus pauperum,* den etwa die christlichen Grabinschriften rühmen, handelt nicht mehr oder nicht mehr primär auf Grund der Gesetze des traditionellen honour and shame-Konzeptes, sondern das Sammeln des Schatzes im Himmel enthält für den Armen und für den Geber einen stärkeren Impetus. Das gilt besonders in einer Gesellschaft, in der der Unterschied zwischen arm und reich immer grösser wird. Dies hat aber leider auch, und man kann dies nicht erwähnen, ohne auch den Nachteil zu akzentuieren, die Konsequenz, an sozialpolitischen Konzepten zur Beseitigung der Armut nicht oder immer weniger interessiert zu sein, da der Arme eine Bedingung für die Seligkeit des Reichen ist, für die Almosen Voraussetzung sind.

Persönliche und kirchlich-institutionelle Wohltätigkeit in diesem Sinne erhält natürlich nach der primitialen Bedeutung Bedeutung für die Missions- und Ausbreitungsgeschichte des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten auch im gesellschaftlichen Wandel der fortschreitenden Spätantike einen neuen, vielleicht sogar höheren Stellenwert, zumal wenn in der Ohnmacht der beginnenden dark ages der Bischof zunehmend die einschlägigen städtischen und staatlichen Funktionen besetzt[27].

Was die Kohäsion angeht, so kommen wir an unseren Anfang zurück, auf die Bedeutung des Kirchenbegriffs und seine seelsorgerliche Dimension in einer sich zusehends rapide christianisierenden Gesellschaft. Natürlich besitzt der Begriff auch seine theologiegeschichtliche Dimension; hier soll uns aber die Bedeutung seiner Definition für die Seelsorge interessieren. Diese Christen sind ein Teil der spätantiken Gesellschaft. Sie gehören der Kirche an. Der gängige religiöse Weg einer Sicherung des religiösen Status und Zieles durch Kultakkumulation ist

[27] Vgl. E. C. Hobbs, W. Wuellner (Hgg.), *The Role of the Christian Bishop in Ancient Society*, 1980.

ihnen verschlossen. Schrift und Predigt verschärfen durch moralische und ethische Forderungen und durch Gerichtspredigt das Dilemma. Wer ist Kirche, wer gehört ohne Zweifel und endgültig ihr zu?

Was aus der Statusinkonsistenz befreien sollte, bricht diese mit einer neuen Intensität ganz neu los. Dies geschieht schon sehr früh bei Montanisten und Novatianern und, soweit ich beobachten kann, ist für den Ausbruch solcher puritanisch-rigoristischer Tendenzen vor allem die Steigerung der Statusinkonsistenz durch Verfolgungssituationen eine vorauszusetzende Bedingung, seien es erst die antichristlichen Pogrome der Frühzeit, seien es dann die staatlichen Verfolgungen. Die Intensivierung der Bemühung um Konsistenz schlägt sich etwa in solchen Selbstbezeichnungen wie "die Reinen" nieder, generell im Exklusivitätsanspruch für die Sondergruppe, und führt ambivalent ebenso in die Selbstzerfleischung wie in einen sich versteinernden Hochmut.

Solche christliche Selbstzerfleischung können wir in moralischer und intellektueller Hinsicht beobachten. In ihrem Zusammenhang ist, was die exkludierende superbia angeht, auf der intellektuellen Ebene die schon angesprochene Dogmatisierungstendenz zu sehen, die bei aller erstrebten *koinonia* einer Orthodoxie stets auch in die weitere Inkonsistenz einer konfessionalistischen Kirchenspaltung geführt hat, nicht zuletzt bis in den heutigen ökumenischen Dialog hinein wegen der immer präsenten und dominaten politischen Einheitsvorstellung. Dies gilt für alle Partner heutiger Ökumene, die die vorhandene Einheit in Christus als das noch zu erreichende Ziel verkehren, das so die präsente Vielfältigkeit und den Reichtum der Trennung und ihr erfreuendes Interludium verdunkelt.

Die angesprochene Art christlicher Selbstzerfleischung ist aber nicht nur ein Grund zwischenkirchlicher und konfessioneller Statusinkonsistenz, von der man ja im 5.Jahrhundert unbedingt schon sprechen muss. Dies war seit dem 7. Jahrhundert sicher nicht der Auslöser aber wohl doch ein wichtiges Begleitmotiv des arabisch-islamischen Aufbruchs.

Es geht aber für die sog. Zeit der Alten Kirche auch um die im Christentum selbst zunehmende Verunsicherung des einzelnen Gläubigen, der nach seinem Status als Getaufter fragt. Gehört er zur Kirche im Sinne der eschatologischen Heilsversammlung? Beruhigende und anspruchsvolle Seelsorge im Sinne des Evangeliums und der geschenkten Freiheit nach Paulus ist gefragt.

Und hier nun spielt der gemischte Kirchenbegriff, von dem wir anhand von Augustins *De civitate* ausgegangen sind, eine entscheidende Rolle. Augustin weiss aber auch, dass er damit in seinem seelsorgerlichen Konzept nicht auskommt. So baut er in seelsorgerlichem Eifer eine grosse dialektische Figur auf und spannt dieses ekklesiologische Theologumenon vom *corpus permixtum* zusammen mit seiner Lehre von der prädestinierenden Gnadenwahl Gottes. Beide ziehen nicht den schweren Wagen der Liebe, sondern die Liebe gibt diesem Gespann Sicherheit und Freiheit.[28] In dieser Freiheit eines Christenmenschen, die Gott aus Gnade allein schenkt, soll die traumatische Angst des antiken Menschen, auch des spätantiken Christen vor allen Gefahren einer Statusinkonsistenz in gesellschaftlicher oder religiöser Hinsicht beseitigt werden.

Lassen Sie mich am Ende meiner Ausführungen, die nichts anderes sein wollen als kurze Hinweise auf eine Hermeneutik der Alten Kirche im Doppelrahmen von Theologie und Kulturwissenschaft, das Ergebnis augustinischer Seelsorge durch Ekklesiologie übersetzen in Themen der bildenden Kunst aus der Spätantike. Das dürfte methodisch nicht illegal sein, hat doch die jüngere transdisziplinäre Spätantikenforschung gezeigt, wie wichtig es ist, die verschiedenen Bereiche der Kultur analytisch zusammen zu sehen, und wie schwierig, ja eigentlich unmö-

[28] Zur theologischen Bedeutung von Widersprüchen seit Beginn der Kirchengeschichte: Gert Theissen, "Widersprüche in der urchristlichen Theologie", *Evangelische Theologie* 64 (2004), 187-200.

glich es ist, einen Bereich durch den anderen definitorisch zu erklären.[29]

Augustins Eklesiologie und ihre seelsorgerliche Funktion gleichen dann am ehesten im Bereich der Malerei oder des Mosaiks den Bildern vom glücklichen Landleben. Im Bereich etwa der Sarkophagplastik lässt sich das Bild des Verstorbenen in der Muschel am ehesten vergleichen oder das des Verstorbenen als Jonas in der Kürbislaube ruhend, nicht als Paradigmengebet auf Stein oder als Hoffnungsbild der Zukunft, sondern wohl zu Recht aufgefasst als Bild der Friedensruhe, in der der Verstorbene jetzt gesehen werden will.[30]

[29] Vgl. Verf., "Von der Christlichen Archäologie zur spätantiken und frühbyzantinischen Kunstwissenschaft und Archäologie", ThLZ (2006).
[30] This paper was delivered at the Österreichischer Historikertag, Innsbruck 2005.

Essentials of Justification by Faith. A Greek-Catholic Perspective

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ABSTRACT. The article presents the doctrine of justification from the perspective of Greek-Catholic theology. The author begins with some basic social, political and religious aspects which characterised the sixteenth century in order to offer a general framework for a better understanding of justification. Then he proceds with some key theological aspects of the doctrine, such as its origins in Judeo-Christian thought, the declarative essence of justification, the reality of human sin and the fundamental importance of Christ. A brief analysis of justification in the Old and New Testaments follows with a special accent being placed on the foundational element of faith. The author even insists that in order to have a correct view of justification, one has to consider the *sola fide* reality of God's declarative act whereby sinners are not considered as they are in reality but as they are not, namely they are reckoned just or righteous based solely on the sacrifice of Christ. The important discussion concerning the relationship between the theology of Paul and James is not forgotten and—even if the treatment is not exhaustive—the two biblical writers are seen as holding complementary views, not opposing theologies. The end of the article is concerned with an ecumenical urge in the sense that all Christians should proclaim the doctrine of justification if they want to serve God properly.

"Ecumenism is the unforeseeable foretaste,
which will lead the church of the third millennium."
Emilio Bromuri

At the beginning of the sixteenth century the situation of the European continent was marked by a strong crisis which had significant repercussions on the majority of the population. To

give just a few examples, one could easily mention the profound material embarrassment, the separation of capital from labour, new techniques of production, the progress in labour organisation, the explosion of prices coupled with the stagnation of wages. The predominant feeling seemed to be the fear of disorganisation, war, revolution or even of a more dangerous threat which was posed by the advance of the Ottoman Empire to the West. A significant part of this dramatic mosaic was of course the church. Its image of "perfect society" was unfortunately deformed way too often at that time which is universally known as the Reformation; a time when the fundamental doctrine of justification started to be seen from different angles.

When one looks at the Reformation there is always the tendency to approach it with certain feelings which are characterrised by a wide range of different perspectives. What exactly was the Reformation, what was its purpose, are we able to appreciate its implications and its message for the church nowadays are just some of the questions which arise before any study of the Reformation is actually initiated. These may well be too daring and provocative questions to start with but they can only force us to think deeper and more seriously about the whole issue of the Reformation. Any study of these tumultuous times should perhaps begin with the acknowledgment of the reality of church division which regrettably was no longer a *terra incognita* for the church of the sixteenth century. Thus, the noted German theologian Peter Neuner noticed that while the schism of the church between East and West was the result of a long process which was extended over a considerable period of time and cannot be restricted to concrete motives and exact dates, the Reformation of the West can be connected to concrete names and historical events. Having apparently forgotten the unpalatable reality of schism with the East, the church of the West was just about to face a new separation at the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries. Looking back, it is bewildering how this factual reality was disregarded and disdained. Nevertheless, if we want to gain any insight into

the Reformation, we have to consider this very brief excursion into the historical and social realities of those days.[1]

Before offering any details about one of the most fundamental teachings of Christian theology, one ought to explain why the doctrine of justification is so important. If we were to follow the suggestion of Erich Fromm, the reputed American psychologist and sociologist, the doctrine of justification is important because it takes into account the very depth of the essence of humanity.[2] In other words, is man wolf or sheep and, if so, which are the consequences of such a situation? Should we consider the problem in these terms, we will then have to deal with the basis of Western theological and philosophical assumptions. To rephrase the original question: is man essentially bad or is he essentially good and has the capacity to develop later on? As far as the Christian church is concerned, it has always admitted that Adam's sin had indeed colossal implications for the human being. As a matter of fact, Adam's sin was so serious that it debauched man's natural essence as well as that of all of his descendants. Sin is so grave that man will never be able to recover from it if he relies solely on his own efforts. Sin can be washed away only by the grace of God which is manifested in the incarnation of Christ and the reality of redemption given to all those who accept him. Even though some could argue that such a basic explanation does not do justice to the complexity of human existence, it still manages to encapsulate the core of what human plight is in reality. It is at this point that we come closer to the erudite definition of justification in Judeo-Christian theology. Thus, "to justify" (צדק in Hebrew, *δικαιόω* in Greek) is a legal concept which means to consider righteous, to find just and to set free. In other words, it is the opposite of the verb "to condemn". Justification is an act performed by a judge. To be justi-

[1] For more details, see P. Neuner, *Teologia ecumenica* (Brescia: Queriniana, 2000).

[2] In order to get a full grasp of Fromm's ideas, see E. Fromm, *Lidské srdce* (Praha: Český Klub, 2000).

fied means to receive judgment from the one who is in charge of the legal trial. This definition shows exactly which are the issues which concern the two parties involved. On the one hand, there is the reality of human sin which is under valid judgment—namely under God's judgment—and cannot do anything to change its condition by its own effort. On the other hand, there is the reality of God's righteousness which is able in fact to change the sentence uttered upon the first option. To put it simply: the aim of the intervention of grace, whereby God leads the sinful man, is to free man from sin, give him peace with God and peace with the rest of his fellow human beings. This aim is manifested through Christ, because God moves man to faith in Jesus Christ. This also happens when faith in Christ is not explicitly expressed. Christocentrism means that every turning to God *de facto* means implication in connecting Jesus Christ with God both in act and devotion as a durable status. This lasting status of unity with God (justification) is grace in the true meaning of the word.[3] However, for a better understanding of the Greek-Catholic perspective on justification, it is necessary to take a look at the origin of this teaching which is to be found in the books of the Old and the New Testament, especially in the letters of the apostle Paul.

In the Old Testament, God introduces himself and acts as a judge; actually, as the judge of all the earth (see Genesis 18:25), so he confronts and interacts with his people in terms which are closely related to the terminology of a court of law. God acts as the ideal king judge of Israel: he does not condemn the accused but he sets him free and by this favour he rehabilitates his reputation in public. The verb "to justify" can be related to any aspect of God's acting, so it is important not to forget that the verb "to justify" is used in the context of justice which is pronounced in a court of law.

[3] For a more elaborate view of grace, see S. Schmaus, *Život milosti a Milostiplná* (Rím: SÚSCM, 1982).

The documents of the New Testament present us with a more elaborate view of justification, primarily in the letters of Paul and James, which is also emphasized by Chrysostom, Augustine and the decisions of the Council of Trent. When Paul and James speak about instant justification, they refer to God who counts man just through the remission of sins and then makes him just by means of an inner revival. In addition to this, Paul often uses the verb "to justify" with the specific meaning of "to count as just", "to excuse falseness" or "not to count as sin(ful)" (see Romans 4:5-8). It is worth mentioning that the verb "to justify" can be found twenty-nine times in Paul's letters but not in the sense of any internal change; on the contrary, it refers to a legal status being conferred in order to defend amenability, namely to acknowledge a higher authority. Then, the logical conclusion is that justification refers to a legal judgment which is transferred to man but not executed upon him. This is why justification becomes the fundamental concept for the doctrine of redemption. In other words, for Paul justification is God's act whereby he remits the sins of all people, who were guilty, and consequently regards them as being just. This happens for free, out of God's grace, and through faith in Jesus Christ, not by deeds because Jesus Christ spilled his blood in order to justify people and redeem them whereby. The spilt blood of Jesus Christ is crucially important as it can be seen in close connection to other Old Testament symbols. For instance, Christ—crucified and full of blood—can be compared to the golden cover of the Arch of the Covenant—the *hylasterion*—which was sprinkled with blood in the day of reconciliation (see Romans 3:21-26): "So it becomes a new place where God's mercy is made manifest and sinners are definitively reconciled with God. Animal blood is spilt no more because Christ's blood does the purification and the reconciliation. It is in Christ and his death that sins are remitted and mankind starts to fulfill its eternal covenant with the Father."[4]

[4] V. Boublík, *Teologická antropologie* (Kostelní Vydří: Karmelitánske naklada-

The overemphasis of justification by faith without works—evident in Paul's epistles—can lead some to the impression that it is only an idealistic construction which, in Paul's case, was meant to function as a weapon against Judaic teachings. However, the following considerations unambiguously disannul such a view and poignantly underline the first-fiddle of faith, namely *sola fide*:[5]

- The Letter to Romans must necessarily be read as a systematic expression of Paul's gospel, namely as the very centre of his theology of justification.
- The apostle wrote three times that in spite of being found guilty of sin, he was made able to spread the faith based on the fact that he was justified (Galatians 2:15-21; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Philippians 3:4-14). In Romans 7:7, Paul emphasizes that the law brings condemnation so this is why it was necessary for Christ to die not only for him but for all people. This also explains why God judged the world in and through Christ.
- For Paul, justification is a demonstration of God's blessing because it was through this justification that he was saved from his sins and—at the same time—his future was made secure in God. A certain chronological issue may be raised here because Paul underlines both the sinfulness of man which is present, on the one hand, and God's justice through grace which is future, on the other hand. The apostle, however, clearly connects God's grace with the sinner's acceptance as son and heir. The justified man can be sure that nothing will separate him from God and his love (Romans 3:33-39) while—at the same time—his glorification is also secured (Romans 8:30). Moreover, the Final Judgment before God's heavenly

telství, 2001), 126.

[5] D. J. Douglas, *Nový biblický slovník* (Praha: Návrat domů, 1996), 707.

throne may deprive man of some merits (1 Corinthians 3:15) but not of his status as a justified human being.

- Paul's doctrine of justification is the landmark of the entire Christian theology. Christianity is a universal religion because Jews and Gentiles are equally important in the sight of God and this stems from Paul's understanding of justification. It is in light of God's grace (Romans 3:24) that Paul interprets the salvific meaning of Christ's obedience and death, as well as the meaning of God's love on the cross, redemption and reconciliation (Romans 5:5-9).
- Justification represents the key of Paul's interpretation of history. Thus, according to the apostle, God's fundamental and absolutely sovereign plan concerning human history since man's fall is to lead sinners to justifying faith.

In this particular context, Paul highlights that God deals with people by means of their two substitutes: the first Adam and the second Adam, who is Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:45). Although death ruled the entire world since the time of Adam's fall, people cannot and do not recognize sin clearly (Romans 5:12). This is why God sealed a covenant with Abraham and his kind when he justified him by faith and promised that he would become a blessing to all nations (through one of his descendants, Jesus Christ); in other words, justification will be available to all human beings by faith. The Law is then brought to the people of Israel, Abraham's descendents, through Moses. The Law, however, could not convey grace but it could only lead to the knowledge of sin so that Israelites may become aware of the necessity of justification by being confronted with the Law. This is the pedagogical role of the Law, which functions as a *paidagogos* (a home slave who guided children to and from school in ancient Greece). Likewise, the obligation of the Law is to guide people to Christ.

All these aspects are evident in Paul's theology. Thus, Christ tore apart the wall which separated Jews from Gentiles because

the wall had been built by Israel's exclusivity consciousness and their firm conviction that only they possessed the Law and God's promises. This prejudice—if one may call it like that—fell down in Paul's theology as he was commanded to preach justification by faith alone without any differences between Jews and Gentiles. This is clearly because, in Christ, all believers become Abraham's descendants and, even more so, they become children of God as well as heirs of his testament.

Based on the above-mentioned clarifications and on the insights we gained from the letters of the apostle Paul, the general picture of the doctrine of justification should be much clearer. It should be stressed, however, that the doctrine of justification in this particular essay is being explained mainly in connection to Catholic teachings, so the picture of the entire doctrine of justification is far from being complete. It does not lie within the purpose of this article to offer such an extended image of justification—and there is not enough space for such a claim either; the main purpose of my work is only to provide explanations for some of the most important aspects of justification.

When discussing justification within a Catholic context, it is suitable—or rather necessary—to begin with the tenets provided by the catechism of the Catholic church. Thus, its third chapter contains an elaborated formulation concerning grace and justification. It should be said here that it is not by accident that these two fundamental concepts are put together. As seen before, even the apostle Paul himself oftentimes links grace to justification and also frequently talks about the close relationship and interdependence between them. Lest we should drift away from our purpose, this is what the Catholic catechism has to say about the doctrine of justification as connected to the grace of God: "The grace of the Holy Spirit has the power to justify us, that is to cleanse us from our sins and to communicate to us the

righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ and through baptism."[6]

These very words show the evident connection between grace and justification; so it is all about grace through faith but not in the sense of doing something in order to get something. It is grace from one end to another. One can find a clear explanation of these doctrines in the teachings of Aurelius Augustinus, the *doctor gratiae*, and especially in what he has to say about man [it must be underlined at this point that his teaching was also a source for Martin Luther mainly because the German reformer was an Augustinian friar]. For Augustine, man finds his full meaning only in his Saviour, who created man for himself in order that man should find the perfection of divine image in his Creator. Only God himself can lift man up to heaven [compare John 3:13]. Man does not have any power to perform this action. When God calls man to himself, he does it only because of his great goodness to man; only because of his love for man, namely God calls man to himself based on his grace. Thus, grace is nothing but the action of lifting man up to God so that he could become a child of God. All these are done without any merit whatsoever, so they are fundamentally undeserved as far as man in concerned.

It is evident then that Augustine underlines the gratuity of grace, which means that grace is without any merit. Man does not merit the grace of God, so God gives him grace even if man does not deserve it. In Augustine's teaching, the essence of grace is the fact that it is given for free (*gratis*). If grace were a duty required from man, then it would be nothing but a reward, which means that it would no longer be grace. When man receives the grace of faith, he is justified and considered righteous by faith because, as Scripture itself acknowledges, the righteous will live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4 and Romans 1:17).[7]

[6] For more information about the Catechism of the Catholic church, cf. *Katechizmus katolíckej cirkvi* (Trnava: SSV, 1999).
[7] See also A. Litva, *Teológia sv. Augustína* (Trnava: Dobrá Kniha, 1993).

Resuming our main concern with justification, we have to notice that Augustine's theology at this point is a sort of a rereading of Paul's theology. Augustine is convinced that man cannot bring any good before God so that God should justify him. There is nothing but sins to be found in man. There is nothing in man but his own sinful nature but it is important to see that the sins of the human being have already been destroyed by God. The essence of grace, however, resides in the fact that it is not man who first comes to God but it is God who comes to man and gives him courage. The grace and mercy of God always go ahead of man. Before man has any chance to do any good, God's mercy is already there. It is more than clear that man's salvation is the exclusive activity of God because he is the sole initiator of man's redemption from sin. Salvation is not about man or his merits but about divine mercy which approaches man and makes justification real in the life of the believer who accepts God's justice through faith in Jesus Christ. It is precisely through faith that the encounter between God and man takes place; to be more specific, this is actually an encounter between God who reveals his justice and man who needs God's justification. This encounter objectively takes place in the person of Jesus Christ who is both God and man. This is exactly what we have already seen in Paul's theology, namely that the object of faith is the crucified Christ in whom faith meets divine justice. Regarding our faith in the crucified Christ, the Catechism offers a clear explanation which is also a helpful clarification: justification was gained or merited for us through the passion of Christ who offered himself on the cross as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, and whose blood became the instrument of atonement for the sins of all human beings. Justification is conferred and confirmed by baptism, which is the sacrament of faith. Justification conforms us to the righteousness of God, who makes us inwardly just through the power of his mercy.[8] The purpose of justification is the glory of God as well

[8] *Katechizmus katolíckej cirkvi* (Trnava: SSV, 1999).

as the glory of Christ and the gift of eternal life. This eschatological perspective is confirmed again by the theology of Augustine. Thus, the obvious conclusion to all these facts saliently points out that justification is God's gratuitous and undeserved initiative for the salvation of all men and women. This is a clear indication that justification is not the result of man's merit before God at all. It is at this point that it should be clearly stated that this fundamental thesis has always been the essential argument of the Catholic doctrine of justification.

We cannot put an end to our discussion about justification without mentioning the apparent biblical antagonism between the theology of Paul and James. This particular issue has caused many problems and raised innumerable questions in many theological circles. The problem concerning the relationship between Paul's understanding of justification and James' view of the same matter is still a subject of intense debate nowadays. The entire issue can be put into a nutshell: faith versus works. In other words, which is the essence of justification? Faith or works or both? The misunderstanding concerning the relationship between faith and works in justification stems from the fact that some theologians believe that—according to James and especially the text from James 2:14-26—God accepts man based on a twofold principle, namely faith *and* works. Therefore they imagine that James consciously opposes Paul's teaching about justification by faith alone without works simply because James supposedly saw it as antinomian. It is evident, however, that the supporters of this idea do not correctly understand what James had in mind and we shall explain why. To begin with, we should not forget that the apostle Paul is the only writer of the New Testament who uses the term justification in order to designate the divine act whereby God accepts all those who believe. When James speaks about justification, he uses the term in a broader sense, namely with an extended meaning. Thus, a person is vindicated before God only when his or her faithfulness is proved in the midst of trouble and doubt; only then it is possible to see whether a person is truly what he or she claims

to be. To be sure, James wants to say that when a person is justified, he or she must prove to be faithful and this can only be done when that person shows his or her faith in works. This is actually a clear demonstration of justification as described in the letters of the apostle Paul. This should be more than obvious because both Paul and James quote the text from Genesis 15:6 with the same purpose in mind, namely to prove that Abraham was accepted by God through faith. Moreover, Paul even says that the fact that Abraham was proclaimed or considered just was confirmed some thirty years later, when his justification was proved by his decision to bring his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice for God. Thus, his justification by faith was later confirmed by his works because Abraham's faith reached perfection by what he decided to do in order to obey God. In other words, the new state of the justified person must be accompanied by a new way of life. The state of grace always impels man to adapt his life according to the example of Jesus Christ as well as to offer the fruit of his justification to God.

Before we close the issue of justification and the role of faith, we should add some further considerations. Firstly, it is very important to understand that man's transcendent likeness to God—which is created by God in the justified person—drives man to perform an activity which is very similar to divine actions. This new activity of man should be characterized by a sincere desire to give his soul to God alone after his justification; in this sense, man's activity is a true *actio*. God reveals himself in the works of the justified person although in a hidden way; this, however, is always the case when God reveals himself to man. Nevertheless, this *actio* does not have a strict individual character but it rather transcends the person involved and reveals itself in the life of the community of believers, which is the church. It is utterly significant to realize that when the justified person lives as a member of the people of God he proves his loyalty to God by his deeds. In this particular sense, the church transcends the individual so it is transpersonal because the individual is incorporated in this society—the

church—which leads his entire life. This is why the individual lives the life of the church which he belongs to. The actions of a person influence the church both directly and indirectly as a mystical and spiritual force which is connected to God. To be sure, the deeds of all justified persons push humanity towards its absolute future because they consequently enforce God's plan of salvation in the world so that Christ becomes all in all (*Christus totus*).

This noble aim must compel all churches and ecclesiastic communities to seek the path of ecumenism, which should become a natural and living reality to the entire Christianity.[9] It could be argued on the one hand that the church has done many things in order to further ecumenism but, on the other hand, we should ask ourselves whether what we have done is really enough. For instance, in a speech which he delivered in Mainz on the 17th of November 1980, pope John Paul II clearly pointed out that we have to try everything and do what brings unity because we owe this to God and the world. This is why we should do whatever necessary in order to promote peace and mutual edification (Romans 14:19). Each Christian, namely each of us, must say together with the apostle Paul: "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" (1 Corinthians 9:17). We are all called to be witnesses of the gospel and witnesses of Christ. His entire teaching reveals to us that we should all give a common testimony. The will of Christ and the signs of the time demand from us a common testimony of truth and love. The task which lies ahead of us is great and difficult. If we were left alone to proclaim Christ in our own strength, we could easily despair. Thanks to God, however, the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness (Romans 8:26). If we trust him, we are able to continue to proclaim Christ and take all our actions—which are demanded from us—a step further. To conclude, all Christians should get involved in this very important dialogue, they must all act ac-

[9] For details about ecumenism, see J. Filo, *Ekumenický dialóg* (Prešov: Vydavateľstvo Michala Vaška, 1997).

cording to their faith in Christ and they must all pray. Being fully convinced of the power of the infallible grace of God, we should pray together with the apostle of the nations: "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! 'Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?' 'Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?' For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen" (Romans 11:33-36).[10]

[10] Although the Greek-Catholic perspective on justification, faith, baptism, and ecumenism is different from the confession of faith which is formally professed by Emanuel University, the Editors are truly grateful to Professor Marek Pribula for his informative academic contribution to our theological journal.

Reinterpreting Traditional Theology. An Interview with Edward Schillebeeckx

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ABSTRACT. This interview is a hermeneutical key to the entire thought of Edward Schillebeeckx. As it will rapidly become evident, he reinterprets traditional Christian theology to the point of drastically deconstructing it. The most important issues which he presents in a light which is not at all traditional are the role of experience for our daily life, the historically conditioned character of revelation, the power of human reason to deal with man's problems and the permanency of Christ's death. Schillebeeckx also talks about his indebtness to Judaism, the contingency of religion, the necessity that faith should be construed rationally, his personal view of ethics, the optional character of celibacy, the essential goodness of secularism and the spiritual nature of eschatology. One should bear in mind that although Schillebeeckx maintains the form of traditional Christian language, he nevertheless completely changes the meaning of classical Christian concepts. Thus, Christ is not alive but dead, revelation is not absolute but historically conditioned and Christian doctrines are not permanent but subject to human interpretation.

RAMONA SIMUȚ: What role do you think the universe of your childhood experiences played in your becoming a Christian thinker? I would include here the traditions of your family and the time of the Second World War.

EDWARD SCHILLEBEECKX: I have always said that the theology of experience is the foundation. Human experiences are the basis, not my own experience, all the experience of the Christian tradition, the religious experience which has been acumulated over time. We have to let this go through our lives

and reactualize everything—this is the norm, the norm of our actuality of the moment. The present time is a kind of criticism of tradition, but there is a mutual confrontation, a correlation between the past and the new experience of the present. We must always be very sensible with this proportionality of what comes from the past and our own experience. We cannot transform the Christian tradition into ecclectism. There is no such thing as a set of revelation placed in culture, in the times of the Scriptures, Hellenism, Patristics, the Middle Ages and so on. We must take these experiences and place them in our times by mutual criticism. We cannot absolutize either the past or the present. This revelation is embeded in culture, in historical situations. We must not replicate the past but reinterpret it. I am busy with hermeneutics. This means we can read the text of the Gospel, either the Old Testament or the New Testament. The meaning of words is always embeded in our image of the world and of ourselves. These experiences change and we must retranslate past experiences for our present experiences.

R.S.: How do you link your theological assertions made from phenomenological and existentialist perspectives?

E. S.: I was educated in the tradition of scholastic theology, I studied phenomenology, existentialist theology, then the critical School of Frankfurt, and now I study postmodern philosophy, because this is also an experience, a present experience. We cannot accept directly the revelation of God without translating the experience in the language of postmodernity.

R.S.: Taking into account that you said Jesus had acted merely as a prophet, would you agree that your theology and hermeneutics were mainly influenced by Jewish liberalism?

E. S.: I was influenced by Jewish thinking because the roots of Christendom are Jewish. Jesus was thinking as a Jew, but there cannot be any transcendent elements in what he said, because

one prophet criticized what another prophet said before him. As an eschatological prophet, Jesus was not transcendent, he was rather a messenger of the kingdom of God. The message was the salvation of humankind—this is the most important aspect of the Gospel; salvation of the poor, salvation for those who have no voice; it is a kind of liberal theology. There may be an absolute revelation through Jesus, but our interpretation of it is not absolute, as it goes through the filter of our experience and interpretation. We are restrained by language but this is not all. The New Testament was written by Jews who became Christians and spoke Greek. Their perspective on the world was different from what had been before, for instance, from those who translated the Septuagint. We must be true to the deepest meaning of the Gospel. In order to be faithful to this tradition we have to make the proper translation for our times. In this sense, the present time enters within our vision of the Gospel. It is not only that we know what the Gospel is; we are able to know the meaning of the Gospel for us today only through our experience of the present moment.

R.S.: Which of these doctrines, anthropology and theology, should be given special attention in today's theological debate (bearing in mind your definition of the *humanum* and God's intervention in view of participating in its "suffering")?

E. S.: I would say that theology is always the basis of anthropology. We are humans living in the world, in history. On the other hand, faith in revelation is transmitted by the mediation of all human traditions. We are faithful to tradition by making a rupture; there is no such thing as a smooth growth from revelation into theology. The content of revelation is always explained in human concepts, namely is historically conditioned. We always have the revelation of God which is absolute, but religion is not absolute. There is a difference between the living God and our answer to God. Our answer to God is religious and em-

bedded in culture. God is the basis of our faith; our answer is to trust God. According to Augustine, trust is the nucleus of faith, but what Jesus means for us today is the result of our thinking. Faith is trust in God *cum cogitatione*, with thinking, with reflection. Without reflection we are fundamentalists.

R.S.: What you mean then is that we can approach God only by means of human language?

E. S.: Reality is a mystery for us. We reflect the encounter with the world and history via our experiences and our sensibility. We do not create the world, we rethink the world which encounters us, and this is an act of interpretation. There is an ontological basis for our thinking. We do not create the meaning, we have to interpret the meaning which already exists. We have to be eschatologically transparent. We can approach finite concepts and the meaning of the world only by means of our human minds. We have human concepts about God, but the reality of God is unspeakable to us. God is the ultimate mystery, but parts of the mystery of God become transparent through our way of life and our experience. Christianity is a way of life, it is not theoretical speculation.

R.S.: How would you define contemporary ethics?

E. S.: There is no Christian ethics—I must say this; there is only human ethics, but we have to seek what is human and humane. To be a human being is the basis of all ethics, but when you are a believer with faith in God, this relationship with God is reflected in the community of the church. We have to take this ethics into our personal relationship with God. Belief, faith, hope, love, charity are our theological and ethical virtues. They are personal and communitary virtues. These are the immediate basis of our humanity. For a believer, however, this humanity, which is the basis of all ethics, is a gift of God. The deepest perception of ethics is God through the mediation of our feeling

and through the reflection of what ethics really is. I am in favour of autonomous ethics, but God is ultimately the foundation of ethics. It is only through our feelings that we are able to know what ethics is in reality. We know the will of God through our perceptions.

R. S.: If you were to leave a final message as heritage to contemporary people, what would that be?

E. S.: I believe rationality, human rationality, to be the way in which we think and reflect on human norms and values. I think that our rationality is under the critique of the history of suffering of the entire humanity. No religion can explain suffering or, even more, nobody can explain innocent suffering. Why do I believe in God if there is so much suffering in the world? Jesus had the message of the kingdom of God, which is that the good, not the evil, will be dominant in the world. Evil can be destroyed only eschatologically. Only goodness is eternal and transcendent to the death of human beings. This is the basis for the belief in the eternity of human life. There is no hell in which we are punished to suffer eternally. Evil is gone when eternal life outlives it. Certainty of belief—not rational certainty—must be accompanied by hope and love. You can have expectations without faith, but belief in eternal life must be accompanied by faith. You cannot prove that there will be any sort of reality after death. Surrending to the mystery of God is the hope of eternal life and salvation.

R. S.: Why do you think moral conflicts occur within the church?

E. S.: We are human beings; this is why evil exists in the church. But we believe in the forgiveness of God and we should surrender ourselves to God. Thus, the possibility to grow in sanctity exists for humans.

R. S.: What is your opinion about today's ethical debates concerning the depravity (namely paedophilia) of some Roman-Catholic priests?

E. S.: It is a shame that even some priests, the representatives of Christ, find themselves at the extreme of what they should be. You mentioned paedophilia. In this respect, I must say that celibacy is not the cause of this evil in the church. I guess that for some priests it has to be a second cause. Celibacy must be optional. Celibacy must not be bound on the ministers of the church. Celibacy is optional, one can choose it by its own option.

R. S. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in choosing the ministers of the church?

E. S.: The role of the Holy Spirit in choosing the ministers of the church is important. Nevertheless, the Spirit works everywhere, both in profane movements and in the church. Thus, the vocation of a priest, bishop, pope, is realized by the special intervention of the Holy Spirit. The whole history is ultimately in the hands of God, but we cannot identify the work of the Spirit in the ministry of every single bishop. I believe, however, in the work of the Spirit in the church and in history.

R. S.: What is the relevance of giving Christian biblical teaching to a church living in the 21st century?

E. S.: The church should not be so angry as if living as a Christian were only believing in orthodoxy or in right doctrine. Trusting God through the mediation of Christ is the essence. Doctrines are not permanent. Old doctrines are not relevant anymore. We are not Greeks, but rather Europeans, so—for example—the doctrine of the two natures of Christ, the hypostatic union, is not relevant any longer. Christ was a human person, but he had a unique relationship with God. I have said many times that in our times, in the 21st century, holding that Jesus

Christ had both a human nature and a divine nature is like saying that he was a mermaid. Christ was a human being, he was finite as we are. Jesus Christ is a human being with a personal and unique relationship with God—we must realize this. I am not against the formula of the divinity of Jesus, but we must translate it in order to have meaning for us today.

R. S.: What is the relationship between politics and theology or ethics in contemporary Dutch society?

E. S.: There is a distinction between state and church in terms of relations, but in Holland, for Protestants, there is a relationship between state and church. It is now accepted in Holland that, although traditionally Protestant, the king could also be a Catholic. I believe that a political situation like that of a king without any religion will be possible in the future. Catholics have more feelings for the autonomy of social and religious life. Nevertheless, this autonomy must be rooted in the belief in God and this can change our human understanding.

R. S.: What is the relationship between anthropology and eschatology or between anthropology and soteriology from an eschatological point of view?

E. S.: A reinterpretation of what we call dogmas is very important and must occur. We must not be busy with what we believe. There is no obligation to believe this or that. For me, the creed has always been the foundation of life, but we must always interpret the doctrines of the creed—the resurrection, for instance. I believe in bodily ressurection, but this has nothing to do with corpses coming to life. The corpse of Jesus Christ did not leave the tomb, and whoever holds this believes in a fairy tale. I believe in the bodily ressurection of Jesus but not as a dead body coming to life again. Here, however, I must mention that there are two major points of interpretation. Firstly, those who believe there will be a bodily ressurection in the sense that

life will be given to dead bodies. Secondly, Paul says we have a new body coming from heaven, a pneumatological vision; there is no such thing as a corpse coming out of the tomb. The corporality, the completeness, the wholeness of being a human with God eschatologically is something which cannot be expressed by a representation. We are not souls only; the ressurected body will be spiritual. I believe in the ressurection of the body, but it has nothing to do with a corpse coming to life from the tomb.

R. S.: Is the "salvation" of postmodern man still to be considered as facile as the "salvation" of the enlightened or modern man?

E. S.: I must begin by saying that secularism is not evil. Human beings are secular, but this does not mean they are evil. Secularization will go on forever. I do not believe in a new age which is to come and all these things. Humanity is one thing. Believing in the church, in love, doing good to others and being capable to stick to an ideal, which for a Christian is the kingdom of God, is the most important thing of all. Freedom for every human being, solidarity, and above all justice, are the most relevant aspects for humanity. When people do good things they have the kernell of the Gospel even if they do not believe in Christ. Many people see this reality as a fairy tale. Our judgement, however, will be on the basis of our facts, on the basis of doing the good (Matthew 25). Giving our lives for others (not suicidally) is what really counts. When somebody is a victim of evil, we must give our lives for the sake of the good. When we do this, we are Christians. If you do the will of God even if you deny the existence of God—then you are a Christian.

R. S.: To which aspects of your theology a special attention should be given and why?

E. S.: Hermeneutics is a more technical theology and this is good for theologians but not for ordinary people. For the faith-

ful, the solidarity of human beings, love and justice are the most important things. In heaven, we will see people who did not believe in God, but did the good to others. Heaven is the destination of human beings after death, when we are in the presence of God and this becomes transparent in our bodies, in all that we are. I cannot make a representation of heaven but I can see the difference between the face of an animal and the face of a human being. A human being is spiritual; he or she has personality. We are complete when we are in the presence of God.

R. S.: Which is the difference between the experience of the modern man and the daily experience of the postmodern man?

E. S.: I would only say that we should all be thankful to our parents, but we do not show this. Our way of life must show that we are thankful. We celebrate our parents and there are days of celebration for such an occasion. Agnostics may do good things, but they do not celebrate God. This is why prayer and liturgy are so important, as celebrations of God. We must all be thankful to God for our lives, for the fact that we are human and humane.[1]

[1] This interview was made possible through the courtesy of Dr. Carl Sterkens, the Director of Edward Shillebeeckx Foundation, and was taken on the 3rd of May 2002 at Edward Schillebeeckx's residence in Berg-en-Dal, the Netherlands.

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