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THE REASON FOR FOLLOWING: MORAL INTEGRITY AND THE CHRISTOLOGICAL SUMMONS

William Schweiker

This article offers a constructive argument in Christian moral philosophy by way of engaging and assessing Robert Scharlemann's recent and decidedly Protestant proposal to have isolated a unique form of reason manifest in Christ's call to follow him. Scharlemann relates "the reason of following" to other forms of human reason and also modes of thinking. In this way, he hopes to specify the unique contribution of Christian thought to philosophical inquiry about human being in the world, and also to clarify meaning and truth of Christian convictions. In assessing this novel proposal, the article situates the argument within historic options in Christian thought and then isolates a lacuna in Scharlemann's argument that threatens the entire project. The problem centers on the relation among forms of reason with respect to the human struggle for wholeness in life. In order to address this problem, the article introduces the idea of "moral integrity" as a concept needed to articulate the reason *for* following. By clarifying this idea and its relation to the reign of God, the article specifies the unique task and possibility of contemporary Christian moral philosophy.

Philosophical theology is enjoying renewed life. Developments in Anglo-American thought represented by such different thinkers as Alvin Plantinga, Philip Quinn, William P. Alston and others signal the vitality of current philosophical reflection on theological claims. A similar resurgence of interest in religious topics is found among Continental thinkers ranging from French post-structuralists like Jacques Derrida in his *The Gift of Death* to new trends within phenomenology led by figures as different as Jean-Luc Marion and the late Emmanuel Levinas. And as I argue throughout this essay, there are important, if often neglected, contributions to philosophical theology from the perspective of Protestant theology. New thought is afoot despite the predictions just a few decades ago of the death of philosophical theology. In this situation, one is reminded of Mark Twain's famous remark about news of his own demise. The reports of this death have been greatly exaggerated!

There are of course many reasons for the resurgence of philosophical reflection on religious topics and theological claims. And there were many reasons, some good and others not, why theologians critical of "natural theology" and cultural commentators assuming the triumph of secularization published reports of the death of philosophical theology. That being said, it is probably the case that the deepest reason for the current upsurge in philo-



sophical theology is a widespread cultural shift. The noted Polish poet and essayist Czeslaw Milosz has written that the dominance of materialistic philosophy in this age means that the "simplest religious ideas" are "as difficult to comprehend as the highest mathematics and that they had been transformed into a kind of gnosis."¹ Milosz wonders if only elites can understand profound religious ideas. The pervasive inarticulacy about religious matters in the cultures of high modernity has, ironically enough, made it possible and even necessary to think about religious topics and theological claims philosophically. Such thinking ought to counter the ignorance of the culture while (hopefully) avoiding an invidious elitism about religious convictions. One needs to use every source possible, including religious ones, to advance the project of understanding. And this is true, so it seems, both inside and outside religious communities. Who really imagines that inarticulacy about the meaning of basic ideas is any less profound within communities of faith than outside their boundaries?

My purpose in this essay is more focused than these widespread and all too amorphous cultural trends that seem to have provoked renewed labor in philosophical theology. In the following pages I intend to explore and then transform radically the recent proposal by Robert Scharlemann for isolating a distinct form of reason called *acoluthetic* or christological reason. Scharlemann's astonishing claim is that Christian faith reveals a hitherto unidentified form of human reason. Scharlemann lets the symbol of Christ's call to "follow me" give rise to thought, to borrow a well-known phrase from Paul Ricoeur. The structure and principles of thinking are manifest in linguistic and symbolic forms that must be analyzed in order to articulate that structure and those principles.

I intend to bring to light how indebted Scharlemann's argument about christological reason is to one strand of Christian thought, specifically traditional Lutheran theology. This will enable us to grasp the symbolic framework consistent with the structure and principles of reason Scharlemann strives to articulate. The exercise of isolating the theological lineage of the argument does not itself determine criteria for the assessment of his work. Yet it does provide context for understanding Scharlemann's argument. And in this way I also suggest that there are important, if forgotten, resources in Protestantism to aid work in philosophical theology.² But I intend to engage Scharlemann's work in order to serve my own constructive purposes. So, let me begin, then, by clarifying the central argument of this essay and also indicating the perspective from which I want to engage Scharlemann's work.

Reason And Wholeness

According to Robert Scharlemann's, *acoluthetic* reason, the reason of following, is given its simplest expression in Christ's summons "Follow me!" In responding obediently to that call, the I, finding itself ecstatically outside of itself in another, nevertheless comes to itself. "The acoluthetic summons," Scharlemann further contends, "is the call to be in the world freely; it is the call of the voice of freedom in finitude, of freedom to be in the world wholly."³ The reason *for* following, that is, the rationality of discipled-

ship, is that in the acoluthetic summons I am called to my own most authentic freedom and peace or wholeness. If I read Scharlemann correctly, we are not justified in adopting any specific summons to follow a person, project, or value scheme in our self-understanding unless in principle it contributes to freedom and wholeness. This freedom and wholeness is the meaning of what is good and right for the human self. The christological summons is defined by its capacity so to constitute life, and that is what differentiates it from all other claims to our trust and loyalty. A summons to follow is known as distinctly christological by its benefit for human life.

Scharlemann's claim, then, is that a unique form of reason is revealed in the summons of Christ to follow him. The reason of following is salvific and emancipatory. Reason, as Scharlemann defines it, is a way of relating self and other. And in this case, reason constitutes the self in its own peace and enables it to live in the world in freedom but in another, in Christ. In making this claim, Scharlemann further insists that the self has spatial and temporal location. Freedom in finitude is always somewhere; it is not worldless. Thus, it is necessary to examine not only "when" but also "where" the peace or wholeness of the self is located, the place of the good. The location of the ecstatic self is formulated by Scharlemann along traditional Protestant theological lines: the "place" of human wholeness is nothing less than the christological message. The peace or wholeness of the self is not of the world even though the self is free to be in the world wholly. The Christian exists in the Gospel.

While Scharlemann's argument centers on the freedom of the self, the idea of "wholeness" in fact remains oddly undeveloped in the text. More correctly put, Scharlemann seems to equate ideas of "wholeness" and "peace" and understand them to designate the unity of the self with pure subjectivity, the "I." In relating itself to the "I" presented in the christological summons as other than self, the living individual enacts the unity of its particular, actual existence with selfhood as such. Wholeness is then another way of affirming a principle of identity, that is, I am I. It is at this point that I intend to make a radical transformation in Scharlemann's argument, or, perhaps better, to chart new constructive directions in thinking about our lives as moral and religious creatures.

In my judgment, Scharlemann's account of "wholeness" needs clarification and expansion in order to avoid being self-refuting. Without clarifying the relation between christological reason and the other forms of reason in terms of what constitutes human wholeness, the position risks incoherence insofar as one would have to empty freedom of any substantive relation to our finite existence. Making this point will require that I explore in due course his account of the forms of reason. But my contention is that on purely systematic grounds the "wholeness" of the self cannot be adequately understood without reference to the goods entailed in the various other forms of reason, goods that Scharlemann sadly does not explore. To deny this claim is to court the possibility that the christological summons is self-mutilating. In the name of freedom it would enact the denial of the basic human goods of the other forms of reason rather than affirming and even transforming those goods. Put otherwise, is Scharlemann's argument any different, in principle, than the kinds of mid-twentieth century existential-

ist theology, found in (say) Rudolf Bultmann, which focused on the radical act of free choice to constitute the self in a crisis of decision? In that case, we have no reason *for* following, even on Scharlemann's terms. And this is so, since *per definition* christological reason is about being freely and wholly in the world. In the face of this problem, I hope to sustain the claim that the christological summons requires a commitment to the reign of God with respect to the complexity of goods that characterize finite life. That is the reason why we ought to heed the summons of Christ.

In order to conceptualize such a robust value-laden form of human wholeness, I will shortly develop the idea of moral integrity.⁴ The idea of moral integrity articulates the obvious meaning of "wholeness," which is Scharlemann's concern, since the person, or community, of integrity is at one with itself with respect to principles and commitments basic to what life is believed to be about. But the idea of moral integrity also forces us to consider the norm for what actually constitutes human wholeness with respect to our lives and commitments in this world. In developing the idea of moral integrity my intention is, then, to draw on Scharlemann's insights in the service of a quite different trajectory of ethical reflection and philosophical theology.⁵

Before turning to the idea of moral integrity and Scharlemann's text a further preliminary comment is now in order. From what perspective can one best engage Scharlemann's work? In my judgment the most salient and critical question to ask about Scharlemann's project arises from within ethics. Moral reflection is especially concerned with the problem of how we should live and thus with reasons *for* adopting any way of life. Any summons to "follow me!" can, and must, be met by the question "why?" And any valid answer to that question must be made in terms of what is good and right wherein "good" and "right" are ethically specified and validated. Of course, one could argue that that call of Christ confronts us as a radical demand for obedience rather than instigating as well the possibility of critical reflection. But that claim, surely dogmatic and not textual, is itself debatable and potentially dangerous.⁶ Thus, I am interested not simply in the reason *of* following, but, rather, the reason *for* following. Stated otherwise, responding to Scharlemann's work from the perspective of moral inquiry helpfully raises the question of what kind of "reason" is at stake in Christian philosophical theology. And we will see it opens reflection on a range of natural goods that a properly Christian account of reason must sustain and further.

Given Scharlemann's emphasis on freedom and wholeness, I must chart the connection between ethics and philosophical theology.⁷ This is a connection important for many recent "continental" voices interested in philosophical theology. Marion speaks of the God beyond being; Levinas insists on God as a "trace" within the encounter of self and other. Even within the Anglo-American discussion there is interest among philosophical theologians in such things as divine command ethics and virtue theory. But oddly enough, the ethical is a difficult point of view from which to engage Scharlemann's argument. It is not clear what the undertaking of ethics attentive to theological questions would entail from his perspective. For Scharlemann, Christian moral philosophy, it would seem, must be either a

form of ethics, and thus an exercise of pure practical reason, or if one insists on the theological dimension it becomes a mode of thinking, presumably about the divine good.⁸ Is Christian moral philosophy an oxymoron? Must it be defined either as a form of ethics, in which case it is a purely philosophical undertaking, or as a mode of theological thinking and thereby have its connection with moral philosophy severed? What concepts could Christian moral philosophy use and what would be its subject matter?

It is not my intention in this essay to work through these systematic and conceptual problems. I do judge that such an ethics is, at least in principle if not always in practice, both a mode of theological thinking and also a form of moral philosophy. It is one way to practice the labor of philosophical theology. And in fact the idea of moral integrity as I intend to develop it articulates the crossing point of theological thinking and practical reason. It helps to provide the conceptual means for interpreting faith in God with respect to the being of moral agents in a world of values and relations. In this respect, the idea of moral integrity specifies an account of human existence that remains unexplored in Scharlemann's work; it articulates *in nuce* the subject matter of Christian moral philosophy. Moral integrity articulates the meaning of Christian faith in the realm of the moral life and denotes the relation of human beings and the rest of the wide compass of life to God. It is from this standpoint, the standpoint of moral integrity as faithful and rational existence, that my argument is made.⁹

That said, I turn now to the idea of moral integrity since it is the conceptual core of my present argument. With conceptual clarity in hand, I will turn, second, to isolate historical differences within Christian theology on reason, freedom, and wholeness. These first two sections of this essay provide the conceptual and historical framework within which to engage Scharlemann's text. Exploring his work is the subject of the third section of the essay. We will see that it expresses in contemporary terms a theme of Protestant, especially Lutheran, theology. Christian righteousness is alien. The Christian exists *in* an other, in Christ. This is the forgotten insight of Protestant Christianity important for contemporary philosophical theology with all of its interest in the "other" and the "ethical." I conclude the essay by returning to the theme of moral integrity in order to specify its import for christological reason in conjunction with the other forms of reason. At that point I hope to show how the idea of moral integrity provides a needed concept for reflection on human life.¹⁰

The Idea Of Moral Integrity

A number of thinkers aside from Scharlemann have directed our attention to the unique spatiality of human existence. Charles Taylor, for instance, has recently argued that human beings exist in a moral space of life constituted by questions about how to live. What is more, we orient ourselves in life with respect to some implicit or explicit idea of the good.¹¹ We live within contexts in which things matter and judgments must be made about how to conduct life with respect to what matters. The commitments and values persons and communities hold provide a moral framework within which questions about how to live are assessed, criticized, revised,

and, finally, answered. Without those commitments and our interactions with others it is not clear that we would have any sense of who we are. The place of human existence, “where” I am, to use Scharlemann’s terms, is always a space defined by questions about how to live and commitments about what is and ought to be valued in human life. This is simply to say that human life transpires in regions of care, choice, and freedom with respect to relations, needs, and conditions that sustain and limit human action. Even the christological summons is an instance of this point: the summons “Follow me!” requires some response, some choice. The summons reveals the ground of freedom: Follow me!—if you will. The hearer is always free to do otherwise than follow. This freedom is not devoid of orienting values, however. If it were, life would be chaotic; we would make no graduations of value in deciding freely what to be and to do. But of course we make all kinds of decisions. And this is merely to say, again, that some explicit or implicit acknowledgement of values we want to orient our lives is basic to purposeful behavior. This fact tells us something essential about what it means to be a person.¹²

Given that the conditions of human freedom and choice are always bound to what we care about and so some orienting goods, it is not at all surprising that a strand of Western thought, a strand that feeds into Scharlemann’s work, is worried about the ways in which one become lost in the daily cares of life. People can become preoccupied with the needs of the day and virtually lose themselves in their demands. It is this loss of self into mundane cares and commitments that has troubled some thinkers. From Socrates to the Hebrew prophets, from Kierkegaard to Heidegger, some seek to call the self back to itself. As Scharlemann writes about christological reason, “The ‘Follow me!’ calls the hearers to disengage themselves from the cares of being in the world.”¹³ Does this negate the fact that we exist in a space of questions with respect to what we care about, some idea of the good? Is the freedom of christological reason an act of the pure “I” devoid of relation to the values and goods entailed in the other forms of reason that structure our being in the world? Actually, the longstanding criticism of the possible loss of self into the everyday world is not about the fact that we care, but, rather, those things about which we care. The criticism articulates an orienting good, namely, the care for authentic existence. Authenticity—truthfulness to self—becomes the orienting good for the line of thought Scharlemann represents.¹⁴ But this merely confirms that the coherence and meaning of various ways of life and projects is inseparable from a ground commitment to some idea of the good basic to a sense of what life is about. To borrow from Paul Tillich, a thinker who deeply influenced Scharlemann, all human beings have some concern, even ultimate concern, that is basic to the meaning and value of their lives.¹⁵ The point of the criticism of human care is to focus attention on what ought to be our ground projects, our basic concerns.

Attention to the moral space of life as a domain of ethics departs from Scharlemann’s work. For him, like Kant and many others, ethics is only about duties to others rooted in the demand of respect for persons; it is the work of (pure) practical reason. Given this, the ground projects, the orienting commitment and good of our lives is oddly enough not a matter of

moral reflection, unless, of course, the good will can itself be defined as an orienting good.¹⁶ Of course all of this doubt about what to call reflection on orienting goods may be quibbling over terms. The point, in my judgment, is that it is possible and necessary to articulate and criticize people's ground projects in order that those projects can be evaluated and revised with respect to the demands of life. Whether we call this enterprise "ethics" or not is of secondary importance, although, I judge, it is best to see these as basic moral questions. The reason for calling it "ethics" is that in doing so we warrant specific criteria for evaluating commitments; we are compelled to evaluate commitments about the good with respect to their validity for personal and social actions and relations. And we also can insist that our encounters with others and duties to them only make sense within some construal of what life is about, and that any construal entails, at least implicitly, some idea of goodness used to orient human personal and social life. By isolating the idea of "wholeness" basic to Scharlemann's account of christological reason as true freedom, I am, therefore, bringing to light the orienting good of his position. The question is how that good relates to the goods implied in the other forms of reason.

This relation between the coherence and meaning of human life with respect to some basic commitment or ground project is precisely what the idea of moral integrity conveys. As John Kekes notes, "[I]ntegrity is a complex notion. In one of its senses, it is principled action; in another, it is wholeness."¹⁷ Of course, a person or community can be committed to a wrong, distorted, destructive principle of action and still have some measure of "wholeness" in their lives. One can readily imagine the Nazi whose life was integrated through a principled commitment to fascist ideology. But this merely means that we must submit our commitments to criticism in terms of practical implications. In fact, any genuinely moral way of life "should include considerations as to what one thinks it important to do and in what ways; how to conduct one's relations with other people; and being aware and prepared to be critical of one's basic approvals and disapprovals."¹⁸ Moral integrity entails a commitment to self-criticism insofar as being a self is bound to ground projects and orienting goods.

On first blush this act of self-criticism might seem to be what Scharlemann, following Martin Heidegger and Paul Tillich, means by "conscience."¹⁹ On his account conscience testifies to the authenticity or inauthenticity of the self. In "conscience the self calls to itself; the self that is occupied with care calls to itself to be itself as *I* in the world (in Johannine language: to be in the world not of the world.)"²⁰ Conscience can expose the inauthenticity of existence; the "I" calls to the self and convicts it of being lost in the world. But Scharlemann's reading misses an essential component of the concept of moral integrity. It does not mean "conscience" in the narrow sense of a call and accusation of the "I." And that is because integrity is a synthetic concept that articulates the relation between the wholeness of life and principled action. The wholeness of life is not defined as self-identity as is the case with Scharlemann's account of conscience, that is, the unity of the actual self with the "I" in the world. Rather, it means the *integration* of a variety of goods that can and ought to characterize personal and social

life. Moral integrity is concerned with the integration of various goods with respect to some principle of responsible action.

As we will see later, this point about moral integrity must in fact be endorsed by Scharlemann. Although he is concerned about the unity of subjectivity, he is also interested in the relation between the forms of reason, forms of relating self and other. One can safely assume that those relations manifest a variety of goods, goods like knowledge, moral accountability and loyalty, taste and beauty to name just a few. And if this is so, then one needs something like the concept of moral integrity in order to have a robust account of conscience.²¹ While the self might stand convicted or appear in the call of conscience with respect to its principle of act, however that principle is formulated, that does not exhaust the meaning of moral integrity. In fact, moral integrity, we can now say, relates human wholeness, the integration of goods basic to human activity, to some principle for conduct and endorses a project of self-criticism, the work of conscience, as basic to one's identity and moral community.

The commitment to moral self-criticism, to the work of conscience, does not mean excessive scrupulosity; it does not require that a person or community be paralyzed by the demand to assess each and every intention and action. It does not deny the need for moral holidays, as William James called them. Self-criticism simply means that a person or community grasps that the examination of life is *partly* what makes life worth living; it endorses critical self-reflexivity as a genuine human good. Actually, Christian moral philosophy must link the Socratic demand for the examination of life with the works of love in order to give a full account of what kind of life is worth living. In any case, the point of moral criticism cannot be purely logical or transcendental in character. And this is because what we are concerned with is the effect of projects and commitments on the actual lives of agents, including those other than the person who is acting.

The idea of moral integrity warrants criteria for validating claims, specifically the requirement to assess and evaluate ground projects in actual human affairs. This does not require that the consequences of action alone validate the principle of self-criticism, as utilitarian forms of ethics argue. It does mean that the assessment of moral action is never devoid of attention to consequences. In exploring Scharlemann's work from this perspective, I am, then, asking about the principle of criticism basic to his account of human wholeness and the place for understanding and assessing that wholeness in actual life. We are exploring what validates the reason *for* following the christological summons.

The history of ethics could be written with respect to the debate about how the principle of criticism of orienting goods is grounded and validated. In order to do so thinkers have appealed to the divine or the gods, social conventions and practices, the nature of reality, the consequence of actions and policies, and the autonomous, self-legislating "I". My task in this essay is by no means to write that history! Nor is that undertaking necessary. In order to examine Scharlemann's work on this point, all one needs to do is to turn to Christian thought. One can explore how theologians have thought about the wholeness of life with respect to principles of action. This line of inquiry is possible because, as we will see, Scharlemann

is articulating one of the central options in Christian theology.

Thus far I have merely clarified the idea of moral integrity and the kind of ground project it endorses. That project is characterized by self-critical understanding with respect to the effects of human action on the integration of the variety of goods in personal and social life. And I have noted the analogy between moral integrity and the idea of conscience as Scharlemann develops it. With these matters in hand, I want now to situate Scharlemann's argument in the history of Christian reflection on freedom and human wholeness.

Christian Faith And Moral Integrity

Theologians have always been careful to argue that Christian faith does not fundamentally change the *content* of valid moral claims. Of course, some thinkers, notably Søren Kierkegaard whom Scharlemann cites on this point, contend that faith can entail a "teleological suspension" of the ethical. Faith is an end or good beyond the ethical. But that does not negate the point: the content of the ethical remains for the Christian even if there might be a good beyond the ethical. It would be rather odd, in other words, if one were to argue that Christian faith entails a less noble vision of human life than other belief systems. Even Kierkegaard, after all, argues that Christians are committed to works of love.

This point is affirmed throughout the Christian and Jewish traditions. For instance, the giving of the law at Sinai is simultaneous with the redemption or liberation of the Hebrews from Egypt (Ex 20: 19-20). Theologians have always argued that the intelligibility of the moral law, especially precepts and commands concerning human relations, is not dependent on the event of redemption or revelation. Similarly, the revelatory event or the redeemer might radicalize moral demands with respect to his followers. Virtually every known culture and certainly the world's major religious traditions affirm a principle of reciprocity in the moral life. This is articulated in the so-called "Golden Rule." Jesus radicalizes this rule in his injunction to love even the enemy, a command that culminates in the demand to be perfect as God is perfect (Mt 5: 43-48).

Granting these nuances, theologians have never argued that revelation alters the *content* of basic moral values and obligations. To deny this is to invite antinomianism: the belief that true believers are freed from the demands and obligations of the moral life. To forestall that conclusion, the contention has been that through grace the Christian is enabled and empowered to live out the moral life. Redemption and faith impinge on the moral life not in terms of the base requirements of morality, but, rather, in terms of a person's capacity and willingness to fulfill those requirements. And surely this is what Scharlemann means when he says that in following one is free to be in the world wholly. That statement cannot possibly mean that one is free to be in the world wholly without respect to the demands and possibilities of cognitive, moral, and aesthetic claims. Freedom and wholeness must be understood with respect to these other claims of reason. This is yet another clue that "wholeness," as Scharlemann intends it, must be defined in terms of the integration of a variety of goods in human life.

However, matters do not stop there. Were that the case, Christian faith would simply be morality's helpmeet. Faith would help us put our hearts in the moral project, but it would not, in principle, contribute to the ground or good of that project.²² The Christian would be free to be in the world wholly, but what "being in the world" means and what freedom requires would be specified without reference to the content of faith. One could reduce theological claims to ethical ones, or, more pointedly, completely forego theological matters in ethics. Theologians have rightly rejected this conclusion. The reason for not accepting it is quite simple. The good of human existence from a theological point of view must be understood in terms of the human relation to the divine. By exploring the human relation to the divine, the theologian is examining the totality of the moral life. In Scharlemann's terms, moral reflection in this tradition is also a mode of *thinking*. It is thinking the being of God as the highest good.²³

Theologians, historically speaking, have then agreed on at least two basic points. First, they have insisted that Christian faith does not violate the dictates of morality. Yet, second, theologians have also insisted that the demands of morality do not exhaust the meaning of Christian faith or its import for human life. The religious life exceeds the reach of morality insofar as God and the purposes of God rather than human actions and relations is the true focus of faith. Granting these two points, the agreement among theologians comes to an end. And it ends, interestingly enough, with respect to "where" human wholeness is located in relation to faith in the God of Jesus Christ. Let me explain this point because it is basic to Scharlemann's position.

In Western Christianity it is a safe generalization to say that two widely different conceptions of the human relation to the divine of have been used with respect to the moral life. First, traditional Roman Catholic theology (say, Thomas Aquinas) asserted that the human relation to the divine, and thus the human good, requires the infusion of specifically theological virtues (faith, hope, and love) and these virtues, especially love, animate the moral life of Christians. These virtues are required since without them human beings cannot attain the supreme good, the vision of God. To be sure, individuals seemingly can acquire natural virtues (justice, prudence, temperance, courage) without the infusion of grace, but from a Christian perspective, as both Augustine and Aquinas asserted, love, *caritas*, is actually the root of all of the virtues.²⁴ Through grace, Aquinas argued, the Christian has infused into her or his life a new law or principle of action, the law of love. Both the capacity to act (theological virtues) and the principle for action (the law of love) are given by grace. There is a unity of the virtues in *caritas* even as this infused love is a principle of action. The virtues must be "formed" by love.

In traditional Roman Catholic ethics, *caritas* as a theological virtue denotes the integrity of life, as I have developed this concept.²⁵ It specifies the wholeness of life, the integration of a diversity of goods and excellences, with respect to a principle of action. The believer's moral life, her or his being in the world as an agent, is dependent on grace and it yet also contributes to the ongoing perfection or sanctification of life. Through the infusion of virtue, the "place" of human wholeness is therefore *in* the self

even if the perfection of this is found only in the vision of God. As Aquinas puts it, "the created intellect sees the divine substance through the divine essence as through something other than itself."²⁶ Through grace the self, the "mind," is conformed to its ultimate object, to God. The virtues are part and parcel of that active process of conformity to the highest good who is God.

Classical Protestant thought offers a different account, a difference seen in Scharlemann's work. The Protestant contention is that through grace the believer is freed from the unending aspiration of human beings to make themselves acceptable to others and to God. Because of the merit of Christ communicated to believers in faith, the divine counts as righteous those who are still in sin. Freed from the demand to justify one's self, the believer is freed to love and to serve others. Faith is not a virtue infused into the soul of the believer enabling him or her to do meritorious works. It is, rather, trust in the promise of God in Christ that frees the believer for moral action in the world. But this means, as Luther usually put it, that through faith the Christian exists *in* Christ. Christian righteousness, the authentic existence of faith, is alien. As Luther wrote in the 1535 commentary on Galatians:

By faith alone, not by faith formed by love, are we justified. We must not attribute the power of justification to a "form" that makes a man pleasing to God; we must attribute it to faith, which takes hold of Christ the Savior Himself and possesses Him in the heart."²⁷

Contrary to virtue theory, "righteousness is *not in us in a formal sense*, as Aristotle maintains, but *is outside of us*, solely in the grace of God and in His imputation."²⁸

On this account, the Christian's existence is constituted in the time and place of the act of faith. The integrity of life is in another (in Christ) through faith. The Christian exists in this world as sinful and saved, but through grace is free servant of all within the specific demands of his or her earthly calling or vocation. One is free to be in the world wholly as mother, teacher, magistrate, or whatever. But this freedom contributes in no way to one's standing before God. That condition is only definable with respect to one's relation to Christ, to being in Christ through faith.

My task here, again, is not to explore the history of Christian thought on these matters. The idea to grasp is that the *place* of the wholeness of life is conceived and symbolized differently in various strands of the Christian tradition, formally in the self through the virtue of love to be perfected in the vision of God or, conversely, in Christ through faith. Scharlemann, I judge, seeks to articulate the claim about "alien" existence present in Protestant thought. The complexity of his work is that he aims to specify philosophically the locality, the place, of human wholeness in freedom. Since the self is always somewhere, this means that the whole self, human wholeness, must be located somewhere. Scharlemann insists that the christological call is the "confrontation of the I with the I in another place that is the self's own peace, its own being whole."²⁹ The confrontation of the "I" with itself outside of itself is the "place" of the self's own peace.

And this peace, Scharlemann argues, is what gives the self the freedom to be in the world wholly. The “place” of human wholeness is in the *message* announced in the acoluthetic summons, the message of peace. Human peace is not in the world even though it warrants us being wholly in the world. Seen historically, this is a traditional Lutheran theological claim about alien existence.

Beginning with an observation about the moral “space” of life and regions of care, I have argued that the idea of “integrity” helps us articulate the relation between the wholeness of life and the question of the criterion for judging any actual form of human wholeness as worthy of our following. The idea of moral integrity clarifies what is submerged in Scharlemann’s appeals to “wholeness” and being in the world wholly. It clarifies a hidden criterion in his argument that I have provisionally defined as being true to self in wholeness. Likewise, we have seen that there are divergent streams in the Christian tradition on the question of “place” of human wholeness. Scharlemann’s work, I have suggested, is an expression of the classical Protestant, Lutheran stream of Christian thought. I have, then, prepared the ground conceptually and historically for exploring Scharlemann’s argument. Let us turn now to that task. Only after examining his work in detail will it be possible to return to the theme of moral integrity and its place in Christian moral philosophy.

The Christological Summons And The Forms Of Reason

As noted before, Scharlemann seeks to isolate a form of reason that has hitherto been unidentified in Western thought. He calls this form of reason “acoluthetic” reason, the reason of following. As Scharlemann notes, the “christological relation, constituted by the self’s ‘following’ of another, is distinct from science, morality, and art; it is a rational form of its own.”³⁰ He begins the demonstration of this remarkable thesis by exploring the subjectivity of the self, the “I” as such.

As Scharlemann notes, the “I” can be examined in a number of ways. He explores three ways in particular: the project of radical doubt in knowing; in the attack of conscience and the possibility of trust; and in being-towards-death as authentic self-understanding. There are a couple of reasons why this way of beginning his inquiry is important. First, Scharlemann is seeking to isolate the ways in which the self appears for philosophical reflection. The self can appear in doubt and thus with respect to the grounds of cognitive claims. It can appear in the claim of conscience and so in the call of the self to itself. And the self appears with respect to the question of its authenticity before death. In each case, the question of the self is posed with respect to itself and what is other than self (truth, goodness, finitude). And this is essential to the systematic structure of Scharlemann’s work. Reason is simply a way of relating self and other. As he notes, the “principle that we are using here is that of the self relating itself to its other.” The “systematic structure should exhibit in a formal articulation all of the possible ways in which the self can be related to its other.”³¹ In a moment we will explore this structure with respect to the *forms* of reason. But what we must initially note is that the self appears

with respect to questioning—the question entailed in doubting, in the call of conscience, or the question of authenticity in the face of finitude. What has not been explored is whether the self appears not only in questioning, but also in a message, a summons. Scharlemann will argue that this is so and that it is basic to acoluthetic reason.

This brings us to the second important point about beginning the inquiry with the self. As we have already seen, Scharlemann argues that the self is always some “where”; it has spatial and also temporal location. The “place” of the self differs with respect to how the question of the self is raised. The self that appears in doubting is “located” within the domain of the world of cognition. The self that appears in the claim of conscience exists in a world of moral relations and norms. And the self that appears in the question of its authenticity is located in the world in being-towards-death. The problem of the location of the self is of central importance to Scharlemann’s argument for christological reason. For him, the “place” of the reason of following is defined not by a space of cognitive, moral, and aesthetic relations, but in the message it bears, the message of human wholeness. As he writes commenting on the sending of the Seventy in St. Luke’s Gospel,

The existence peculiar to those who are sent is *an existence in a message*. They are who they are only in the message they bring; they exist only as ones who speak and hear a peace in and with the words; they are who they are in the words in which they dwell by saying and hearing.³²

In a word, the “self” is examined by Scharlemann with respect to the unity of pure subjectivity (the “I”) and its location (the self exists somewhere).

We can say, then, that every act of reason is a configuration of the self’s relation to some other *in some place*. Insofar as we think at all, the self is related to its other. The ego, Scharlemann insists, “is always a thinking self, that is, a self relating itself to its other.”³³ Abstractly put, thinking “means the opening of the mind to what is other than the mind and the synthesizing of the opposite elements that constitute that other.”³⁴ This definition of thinking, we should note, raises a number of interesting philosophical questions.³⁵ What is meant by “mind?” How does the other remain other when the mind is synthesizing its constitutive elements? What are the constraints, if any, on the mind’s synthesizing act, and thus the relation of self and other? Sadly, we cannot pursue these questions. Suffice it to say that Scharlemann insists on the irreducibility and centrality of the thinking subject in all rational relations. The “I” might be constituted by its relation to its other, but insofar as that relation is rational the mind is active as well.

What is important for Scharlemann is not the question of the meaning of “mind,” but, rather, isolating the most fundamental *modes* of relating self to other. He argues that thinking can take either the mode of an *understanding* of being or that of *trusting* in God. These are irreducible modes of thinking since they specify the horizon for any specific act of reasoning (cognitive, moral, existential). The act of understanding unites the singular

and universal, percept and concept. In order to understand any "thing" we must unite it with some general concept. I understand some perceptible object as a "dog" by uniting a perception with a concept (dog). This also means that in every act of thinking we seek to understand something and therefore some claim about *being* is implied in all acts of understanding.³⁶ Understanding, as Scharlemann argues, always posits a ground, that upon which some specific thing or event is dependent. Every act of understanding something as meaningful is, at least implicitly, about being. That thing is a dog. What I am called to respect is a person.

What about the act of trusting, the mode of believing? Scharlemann argues that

to believe God is to unite a singular and a universal (or a counterpart to the singular and universal of being) by reference to "God." What then suggests itself as the mode of thinking called "faith" is the unity of a particular self with the universality of selfhood as such.³⁷

Understanding is about being. Trusting, the act of faith, refers to God and so the very self of myself, as Augustine might put it. This does not mean that "God" is a particular "self," since that would reduce God to a self among other selves and, what is more, never warrant my obedience. Yet "God" is also not the universality of selfhood. That is to say, God is not the mere *idea* of selfhood as such; such a god, maybe the god of the philosophers, could never be the object of my trust. Scharlemann's claim is a complex one. As he puts it, what "we notice, or acknowledge, is always an ego there-now; what we assent to is a form of community of selfhood; and the unity of the two in trust is the trust of the self in God."³⁸ In other words, trust in "God" is the unity of my acknowledgment of my own particularity (same said for others about themselves) and my assent to a community of selves. If thinking is a schematizing act of the self's openness to the other, then the mode of thinking called faith relates ego and community of selfhood as trust in God. To use biblical language, in faith I trust that I and all other persons are children of God.

In terms of the human subject, the two modes of thinking (understanding; faith) and thus being and selfhood implicate each other. And this has profound implications for philosophical theology. God as the one in whom I trust is only understood with respect to understanding being; understanding anything as existing is at least implicitly always open to the question of that in which the self trusts. This means, according to Scharlemann, that "faith in God is interpreted by the understanding of being. The converse is also true."³⁹ The "seeking" of faith for understanding, as Augustine put it, is an interpretive process between these two modes of thinking. Philosophical theology is defined by this interpretive process.

The primal modes of thinking (understanding and faith) as the self's relation to its other are configured in the forms of reason mentioned above (cognitive, moral, aesthetic). It is essential to grasp Scharlemann's argument at this point if we are to explore the connection between the christological reason and moral integrity. So, first, theoretical reason, Scharlemann argues, is the relation of self to natural being in which the self

is forgetful of itself and the other is posited as an "it." In the act of theoretical reason we posit claims about something objective to ourselves; this positing requires that we forget our self-interest. Theoretical reason necessarily effaces the self out of concern to posit and test claims about conceptual or empirical objects of knowledge. In this sense, the self only appears in theoretical acts of reasoning in the act of positing claims about what is not self. It is because of this that theoretical reason can and does aspire to objectivity with respect to its claims.

In aesthetic reason, Scharlemann argues that the *relata* enacted in thinking are personal beings, but the self identifies itself with the other that appeals to it. The self is ecstatic or outside of itself in aesthetic experience. When I encounter the work of art, read a text, behold the beauty of another or the starry heavens above, I am outside of myself. I experience an identification of myself with the other. My concern is not, as in theoretical reason, to posit claims about what is other than myself. Rather, I experience aesthetic non-differentiation, as Hans-Georg Gadamer has called it, between myself and the other.⁴⁰ The division of self and other, subject and object, is transcended, at least for a moment. The self is not effaced in the act of cognition through the act of positing, rather the self is united with its other. I do not understand myself in the other; I am ecstatically one with the other.

According to Scharlemann, in moral reason persons interact through respect in which they retain difference and freedom. The experience of respect discloses a relation of self and other in which the worth and difference of each is recognized and acknowledged. In moral reason I am not positing claims about something, whether that is an object of pure thinking or some empirical object in the world. In moral reason the self encounters what is other than itself and this encounter is characterized by respect. Scharlemann's point is essentially a Kantian one. What I respect in the other or myself is the humanity present in persons, a humanity defined by rational freedom. But the fact that what I respect in others is also the object of respect in myself does not efface the difference between self and other. For what I respect is precisely the humanity *in* the other person and not simply our shared commonality. This is important for understanding the difference Scharlemann draws between moral reason and aesthetic reason. In aesthetic reason there is an identification of self and other. In moral reason, self and other remain distinct but related through respect.

The question Scharlemann poses is whether or not these three exhaust the possible forms of reason. He argues that there is a distinctive form of reason unaccounted for in theoretic, aesthetic, and moral forms of reason. This form of reason must be specified in terms other than the act of positing, ecstatic identification, or respect. Scharlemann, we know, specifies a different form of reason through the act of following, a form of reason that appears in response to a call to follow another. This form of reason is manifest for Christians in the call of Jesus to discipleship.⁴¹ Scharlemann insists that the form of reason so disclosed is not exclusively Christian, since if that were so it could not be called a form of reason as such. In other words, there are other possible instances of a summons to follow (e.g., the Buddha). This form of reason must configure the modes of thinking and

thus be a form of understanding and a form of faith.

What is the character of christological reason? And how is it related to and yet distinct from the other forms of reason? Scharlemann argues that the reason of following is a personal relation in which the self finds itself authentically *in another*. The self loses itself to find itself in the act of following another. In this form of reason, the self is summoned to follow the appearance of the "I" (pure subjectivity) outside of itself. "Thus, the acoluthetic form of reason is the one in which the I in its most intimate selfhood is related to its own intimacy outside."⁴² Put differently, Scharlemann develops the idea of ecstatic reason, as found in the work of Paul Tillich, to its full christological and phenomenological implications. Christological reason is a distinct form for understanding being (the I outside itself) and also trusting in God (following) in which the identity of God and "I" appear.

Scharlemann's argument at this juncture is confusing. If not careful, he could be taken to assert the *unity* of God and the "I" such that any theological distinction is obliterated. While true of some other religions and also forms of mysticism, the identification of the "I" and God does not remain within the bounds of biblical faith. And if Scharlemann's argument is for a unity of God and I, then my own proposal for moral integrity radically negates his position. But it seems to me that Scharlemann, and certainly my argument, is making a different point that in fact insists on the theological difference. The self is constituted and defined in and through its relation to the divine, a relation defined by faith or unbelief. In faith the self is *in another*, but it never *becomes* the other. This is to argue, along with St. Augustine in the *Confessions*, that God is really nearer to me than I am to myself. The kind of reflexive thinking explored and advocated in this essay depends on that insight. Insofar as human subjectivity is constituted most radically in relation to or a denial of the divine, then it is correct, as Scharlemann contends, to say that the self authentically comes to itself in God. This fact in no way denies or qualifies the theological difference; the self can never be self-constituting. Only God is God. I take it that this is also the point of Scharlemann's attempt to isolate a distinctive form of reason in which the self is in another, in Christ. And this is the point, of course, of speaking about Christian moral philosophy. The enterprise of ethics is radically transformed once the very being of the moral agent is and must be conceived theologically, in relation to God. The moral life is not an end in itself; it is responsive to the being and activity of God who alone is the real integrity of life.

Now, based on the systematic structure of Scharlemann's work, it is rather simple to specify the difference between the reason of following and the other forms of reason. Unlike theoretical reason, the reason of following does not posit an object but is summoned to follow another; in following the self is lost but also finds its authentic identity. Unlike aesthetic reason, the *exstantial I*, as Scharlemann calls it, is indeed ecstatically outside of itself. But the self does not lose itself in aesthetic non-differentiation with other. The self is at one with its essential self. Unlike moral reason, the relation of the self to itself outside of itself in christological reason is not one of respect, since the relation of the self and the *exstantial I* is characterized by identity and not difference. Christological reason has analogies to

the other forms of reason but precisely because of this it is also differentiated from them. If I understand him rightly, the analogical relation among the forms of reason is crucial to Scharlemann's argument. Only by establishing the irreducibility of christological reason to any other form of reason is it possible to establish and justify *Christian* philosophical theology on rational grounds while remaining a form of faith.

One major contribution of Scharlemann's work is to press this point about validity and to attempt to answer it. The difficulty, of course, is not simply to show the logical possibility of this form of reason. That alone would not establish the argument, because, we should recall, thinking entails a relation of self to other. In order to establish this argument Scharlemann must specify how the "I" outside of myself is encountered in a way other than doubt, conscience, or being-towards-death. The conundrum Scharlemann faces in answering this question ought not to be overlooked. Since an encounter of the self with its other must take place somewhere, Scharlemann must specify the unique *locality* of the christological summons. Theoretical relations, as we have seen, take place in the space of pure cognition or the world of empirical objects. The moral relation takes place with respect to concrete other persons in the world. And the space of aesthetic reason is constituted by the work of art, the world projected by the text in which I might dwell, as Paul Ricoeur puts it.⁴³ If christological reason is characterized by the self's relation to itself outside of itself, *where* is that self? In what place does that encounter happen? How are we to show that this place, however designated, is not in fact definable in terms of the place of the other forms of reason and thus, again, reduce christological reason back into theoretical, moral, or aesthetic reason? And if that is true, is philosophical theology as Scharlemann defines it really possible?

Scharlemann acknowledges that we do in fact have experiences of others calling us to follow in the domain of mundane relations. But he argues that the reason of following is not in principle limited to personal encounters. It can also take place in the medium of "textuality". The written text, he contends, is a located self-understanding other than our own. A text gives "place" to a being that is with us in the world so that he, she, or it can be known, identified with, respected, or followed. If this is so, then in principle it is possible to constitute a rational relation, a relation of self to other, through the text. The "voice" who summons me to follow inscribed in the text can be encountered as a reality. The exstantial I, the I outside of the self in which the self finds itself, can be encountered not only in another person, or the representation of a person from the past, but in a text. The place of christological reason is the world of textuality.⁴⁴ The self encounters its wholeness, its peace, in the "place" of the acoluthetic message. But this message is simply the message of wholeness as the possibility of being in the world freely. The self *is* in the place of the message of wholeness and peace.

It is hard to imagine a stronger argument in contemporary philosophical theology for a version of the classical Protestant principle of *sola scriptura*. As noted, in traditional Lutheran theology the believing self has alien existence; it is in the Christ whom scripture bears. In faith the self exists in another, in Christ, and in so acting is counted righteous by God while remaining a sinner. This means, furthermore, that the "I" is in the world,

that is, the self is situated in the domain of relations specified by the other forms of reason, but is not *of* the world in that it is constituted in the christological relation. What defines these texts as scripture is, then, that they "bear" Christ ("was Christum treibt") and in faith the Christian's existence is constituted in the Christ presented in scripture. One's existence is alien in that what constitutes the identity of the self is not in the self but the exstantial I.

Scharlemann's argument is a philosophical expression of the classical Pauline dictum of being "in Christ." His important caveat is to insist that being in Christ, the reason of following, is actually the exstantial I. Why is that important to assert? It is important because only in showing that what calls the self to follow is the I itself is there any answer to the question noted above: why should I follow? I should follow the call of the exstantial I because in doing so I am constituted as a self. I am, we might say, born anew from above. The problem of the self's relation to itself is answered. I am free to be in the world wholly; the unity of subjectivity enables me to accept the fragmentariness and travail of finite life. To borrow again from Paul Tillich, one has the courage to be in the face of the threat of non-being.

What are we to make of this argument? I have tried to isolate the systematic structure of Scharlemann's position with respect to the forms of reason. And I have also tried to confirm several points made in the previous sections of this essay: (1) wholeness is the christological criterion; (2) this criterion entails some construal of the world with respect to an idea about how to orient our lives; (3) the "place" of human wholeness is the christological summons; and, (4) this warrants a specific life project, to be in the actual world wholly. If I am correct on these points, then I want to return to the discussion of moral integrity.

Moral Integrity And The Reason For Following

The question that Scharlemann's work poses is whether or not his conception of human wholeness makes sense. Put most boldly, if the self is abstracted from its constitutive cognitive, moral, and aesthetic relations and the values and commitments these entail in the relating of self and other, what is actually being made "whole?" How does the reason of following not entail a denial of the goods found in the other forms of reason? And if the peace of the self is a place other than that in which the problem of human wholeness arises, that is, the worlds of cognitive, moral, and aesthetic relations, how does this answer the dilemma of our being in the world, a world divided and in conflict? I judge that Scharlemann would answer this series of questions along the following lines.

The freedom of following is that "we come to be whole on our own in the world."⁴⁵ Freedom and being whole cannot be interpreted in individualistic terms even if their core meaning is the unity of subjectivity. On strictly systematic grounds, a worldless self-identity, an identity that does not entail relations of self and other, is problematic for understanding the peace or being whole entailed in following. In fact, such an identity is, strictly speaking, unthinkable since thinking, per definition, is on Scharlemann's

account the relation of self and other. Moreover, the self is always somewhere, it has location. But if that is so, then the event of the I outside itself is not simply a self-identical I at peace with itself, but, rather, an "I" bound to a condition or message in which the self and, in principle, all others may graciously exist. This can neither be the actual, empirical world of everyday life, Scharlemann would continue, which is hardly characterized by "peace," nor can it be the "world" disclosed by the other forms of reason, the worlds of pure cognition, respect for others, or being-towards-death marked, respectively, by doubt, the sting of conscience, and inauthentic existence. It can only be the "world" presented or displayed by Christ calling me to follow, the acoluthetic summons. The "I" is located in the world of the message and is then freed to exist wholly in the world of actual life. In faith one is freed to be active in the world in all the domains of reason since the world of actual relations is not the place for realizing authentic existence. Christian faith is not "formed" by love; it grasps Christ and exists in the imputation of grace freed to love others, and radically so.

I have constructed this Scharlemannian response to my queries in order to raise a problem. The imagined response requires, again on purely systematic grounds, that we explore not only the peace of the authentic self, but also the peace of the *world* announced in the summons to follow. Insofar as the self is always some *where*, then in exploring the peace of the self we must explore the "world" in which it exists. We have returned, in other words, to the theme of how the self orients itself in the world, the moral space of life. On Scharlemann's terms this point must be formulated as follows: how does the self orient itself in the world displayed by the acoluthetic summons? How does this world, this space, relate to the "worlds" disclosed by the other forms of reason?

Now, to answer that question, as Scharlemann does, by saying that one is free to be in the world wholly in the message of peace is actually to mistake the consequence of following for its ground. That is, to be in the world freely is the consequence of following. The ground of following, conversely, must be fidelity to the acoluthetic summons, a response of commitment, the consequence of which is the distinctive freedom to be in the world wholly. If this is so, then some principled act, some commitment to a ground project and orienting good, is intrinsic to very idea of human wholeness. And that means, as I noted at the outset of this inquiry, that the idea of integrity, not simple wholeness or identity, is required in this argument in order to avoid self-refutation. The wholeness of life is related to some principled action, some commitment or ground project; freedom to be in the world wholly is the consequence of that commitment. And that ground project, I contend, must endorse the integration of the complexity of goods that characterize finite, worldly existence displayed in the other forms of reason, the other ways of relating self and other *in the world*.

Granting this argument, as I judge we must, has important implications for understanding human existence. The reason for this is simple. By the term *moral integrity* we mean to designate a commitment to self-criticism insofar as being a self is bound to ground projects and orienting goods. Moral integrity endorses a project of self-criticism as basic to one's identity and the identity of any valid moral community. But what is the principle

of self-criticism for a form of life constituted by the acoluthetic summons?⁴⁶ Once we see the need for the idea of moral integrity because the acoluthetic summons is correlated to an orienting commitment, then the criterion cannot be simply the self's peace with itself nor even the peace of the world manifest in the christological summons. Insofar as we are interested in the integration of a variety of goods with respect to a ground project that defines a person's or community's sense of what life is about, then the criterion must in fact include the values endorsed in the other forms of reason. In the name of the integrity of reason, christological claims must be subject to theoretical, practical, and aesthetic criteria. And by the same token, christological reason must ground and even transform our commitment to the goods entailed in the other forms of reason. And of these is it not the case that the moral criterion (say, to respect and to enhance the integrity of life) is necessarily foremost? For what conceivable peace, freedom, or wholeness could violate that criterion and still provide us with valid reasons for following? How does the christological summons ground and transform the moral claim?

What I am arguing is that the idea of acoluthetic reason must endorse as the criteria for its own criticism the validity of claims and goods implicit in the other forms of reason or it fails to provide valid reasons *for* following. If this is the case, then one needs a concept to relate the idea of wholeness with principled action. That concept is moral integrity. This concept, I am suggesting, fills a gap in Scharlemann's argument about the self. Put in strictly systematic terms, the idea of moral integrity within theological thinking is the means to interpret the moral import of faith in God, a mode of thinking about trust in God open to the question of being, with respect to the being of the self. It designates the wholeness of human existence through faith in God with respect to the principles endorsed in our cognitive, moral, and aesthetic being in the world and the goods these forms of reason entail, goods like truth, beauty, and respect for persons. To use explicitly Christian talk, it is to grasp that Christ came so that one might have life and have it abundantly.

What then does Scharlemann's argument contribute to the development of an adequate understanding of moral integrity? The integrity of the self, we can now see, cannot be understood only in terms of the goods and claims entailed in the other forms of reason. The integrity of the self must be understood in terms of the right integration of those goods with respect to the well-being of the self and others. But this means that the "self" is not definable in terms of those goods; it cannot be defined as pure knower, willing and acting subject, or only in terms of aesthetic feeling alone. Rationalism, voluntarism, or aestheticism are inadequate pictures of human existence. The self must be defined by its commitment or lack of commitment to the ground project of respecting and enhancing the manifold goods of life. The self is defined by its faith, that is, an identity conferring commitment. That is *the* Protestant insight. And the "place" of the self must be within some encompassing community characterized by that project but not limited to selfhood as such. In undertaking that commitment the self is outside itself in fidelity to a community called the reign of God. Put differently, the integral self cannot be simply the self's unity with the "I" manifest

in the christological summons. It must be the self dedicated to the project Christ announces, the project of the reign of God in the wide compass of life. That form of existence is the subject of moral integrity from the perspective of Christian moral philosophy, an enterprise now redeemed through the idea of moral integrity within the structure of reason.

The act of fidelity that constitutes the self radically transforms attachment to the range of goods that define the space of human life by locating existence in a distinctive space of relations, a community of the integrity of life as the reign of God. Scharlemann's argument contributes to an inquiry into moral integrity by reminding us that the self is not reducible to the goods and relations it must endorse and evaluate. Conversely, his claims about subjectivity are given *content* through the idea of moral integrity with respect to those goods and relations of the forms of reason. In a word, the idea of moral integrity enables us to explore the being of the self with respect to its relation to others configured in the forms of reason. Insofar as this is the case, reflection on moral integrity is a mode of *thinking*—a thinking about the *being* of the self in terms of *faith* in, commitment to, the reign of God. Yet it is also an exercise of practical reason since our concern is how to orient ourselves in the world. Moral integrity is the synthetic concept at the crossing point of thinking and practical reasoning. It enables us to articulate a domain of existence and rationality uncharted by Scharlemann, and yet essential to his argument, in terms uniquely suited for the enterprise of Christian moral philosophy.

Conclusion

In this essay I have tried to develop the idea of moral integrity as important for the structure of reason and philosophical theology.⁴⁷ In the process of doing so, this has required a shift in "where" the wholeness of life is to be found. The place of that wholeness can be nowhere else than in the commitment to the reign of God in the world. For in that reign the complexity of goods of the created order are rightly respected and enhanced. The integrity of life is bound to ground projects, to what we care about. To care about the world, to save it, rather than to condemn it, is surely the acoluthetic summons. It was what the Christ came to do. It is the only valid reason *for* following.

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NOTES

1. Czeslaw Milosz, *To Begin Where I Am: Selected Essays*, edited with introduction by Bogdana Carpenter and Madeline G. Levine (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2001), p. 318.

2. For the most recent comprehensive discussion of the legacy of Protestant ethics see Dietz Lange, *Ethik in evangelischer Perspektive* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992).

3. Robert P. Scharlemann, *The Reason of Following: Christology and the Ecstatic I* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 35. An obvious

contrast here is with the work of Emmanuel Levinas who also focuses on the call of the other to the self. Levinas's point, however, is that the face of the other is not the "I" and in fact breaks the domination of the self, the same. On this see Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, translated by Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1969).

4. For a fuller discussion of this concept see William Schweiker, *Responsibility and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

5. While it cannot be addressed extensively in this essay, some readers might wonder about the eudaimonistic tenor of this argument in relation to traditional Protestant theology. Typically, Protestant thought is believed to entail the utter rejection of eudaimonism, although, one should note, thinkers from Melancthon onward have drawn on a host of classical moralists. Still, this is admittedly a complex question. Obviously, no Protestant thinker would argue that human well-being could be directly aimed at or achieved solely through human works. The justification of sinners, a gift of grace, is the necessary condition for genuine human flourishing. That said, it should be remembered that Luther argued, in the *Large Catechism*, that a "god" is that in which one trusts for one's highest good. Calvin, in the *Institutes*, insisted that piety is knowledge of God's *benefits* for us, both created benefits (life, created and sustained) and those that flow from Christ's redeeming work. Much later, John Wesley insisted that perfection, rooted in God's justifying grace, is the convergence of holiness and happiness. In a word, the idea of ultimate human well-being is not foreign to Protestant thought. The crucial point is that ultimate human well-being has its source and end in God, and, what is more, that "happiness" is only attained in and through a life dedicated to the love of others, to "holiness." Two issues remain, however. The first is the connection between God as the *source* of the good and God as the *guarantor* of our good. Traditionally, Protestants have made both claims and in fact linked them. God is God *for* us, as Karl Barth famously put it. But in the light of what we now know about the interdependence of patterns and processes of life, it is difficult, as James Gustafson argues in his *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective*, to claim that human well-being is the unique and single focus of divine intention. If God is the *source* of goodness and the God of all reality, then the purview of divine work is not solely human flourishing. Surely, the debate about the scope of value and God's care for life will remain a pressing issue in an age increasingly shaped by ecological and global consciousness. Second, Protestants have not always been clear about the range of natural, social, and reflective goods that must be integrated in order to speak of genuine human flourishing. This might be why many contemporary theologians are so fascinated with Aristotle; they see in him (despite massive problems in his ethics) a way to affirm basic natural goods. The point of my argument, then, is to overcome that shortcoming about kinds of goods through the idea of the integration of goods but to understand this with respect to a life constituted in and through a commitment to the divine purposes, a life of integrity. So defined, the ethics outlined here aims at the flourishing of life but does not restrict well-being narrowly to an anthropocentric focus. Stated otherwise, one is to respect and enhance the "integrity of life" before the living God, the source and end of all goodness.

6. I am aware that some theologians, notably Karl Barth in his *Church Dogmatics*, have made this argument and designated as "sin" all ethical reflection outside obedience to the command of God. His kind of position, while sounding radical and faithful, is itself fraught with problems and, in any case, should not be taken as the sole definitive stance in Christian moral thinking. The insight of these claims about "divine commands" is that a distinctly

Christian account of the moral life begins and ends with claims about God and God's actions and because of this transforms the usual domain of "ethics." But one can make that point without using the discourse of "divine commands." On this see William Schweiker, "Divine Command Ethics and the Otherness of God" in *The Otherness of God*, edited by Orrin F. Summerell (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1998), pp. 246-265.

7. See William Schweiker, *Mimetic Reflections: A Study in Hermeneutics, Theology and Ethics* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1990).

8. The idea of Christian moral philosophy is indebted to H. Richard Niebuhr in his *The Responsible Self: An Essay in Christian Moral Philosophy*, introduction by James M. Gustafson, forward by William Schweiker (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1999). For a recent discussion of the relation between theism and moral theory see Franklin I. Gamwell, *The Divine Good: Moral Theory and the Necessity of God* (San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 1990).

9. Two points should be noted. First, the constant worry about ethical reflection within the Protestant communions is that theological claims will be reduced to ethical ones. At the dawn of the Protestant era this worry centered on the problem of "works righteousness." In the modern West the worry took form in anxiety about an omnivorous Kantianism wherein the ethical is the ground of all valid theological postulates. The point of my argument is to show how the ethical is transformed once we grasp the integrity of life in and through its relation to the divine. And that is precisely the point of speaking about Christian moral philosophy. Just because philosophical theology can be carried out ethically, as I am advocating, does not mean that Kant or any other ethical position about "theism" has won the day nor does it mean the triumph of human powers. This is related to a second point. As we will see, I try to specify the way in which Scharlemann's account of the "reason of following" cannot articulate the "integration" of goods found in the other forms of reason and thus is self-refuting. This tends towards the historic problem in Protestant thought, namely, the complete separation of the moral from the spiritual life to the point of endangering the joy and seriousness of personal and social life. In this respect, my argument is made from the perspective of a form of reason—let us call it integral reason—that is presupposed yet unexplored in his argument. It is not the purpose of this essay to specify in detail this form of reason. My concern herein is to clarify its normative core and intention (the integrity of life) since without that my worries are unfounded. In making this argument I intend to retain the joy and seriousness of the moral life but within a vision of existence in relation to the divine.

10. It may be the case, although I will not argue it here, that my argument manifests the deepest impulses of the Methodist tradition and its concern for perfection in love against Scharlemann's more strictly Lutheran position. For the sake of the present inquiry and the task now facing philosophical theology those differences will have to remain in the background of this essay. That is to say, granting the force of traditions on thinking in Scharlemann's and my own argument, the validity of a position is not settled in terms of its appeals to tradition alone.

11. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1989). The issue here in terms of moral theory, an issue I cannot explore in this essay, is the relation between the "right" and the "good." Suffice it to say that I argue, in distinction to Scharlemann, that any claim of moral rightness requires for its justification some idea of the good that is to be respected and enhanced through right action.

12. For similar arguments see Harry Frankfurt, "Freedom of the Will and

the Concept of a Person," *Journal of Philosophy* 68 (1971): 5-20, Gary Watson, "Free Agency" in *Journal of Philosophy* 72 (1975): 205-220, Charles Taylor, "Responsibility for Self" in A.E. Rorty, *The Identity of Persons* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), pp. 281-299, and Susan Wolf "Sanity and the Metaphysics of Responsibility" in *Responsibility, Character, and the Emotions: New Essays in Moral Psychology*, edited by F. Schoeman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 46-62.

13. Scharlemann, *The Reason of Following*, p. 30.

14. For a discussion of authenticity as basic to contemporary culture see Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1992).

15. See Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* 3 volumes in 1 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967). Also see William Schweiker, "Hermeneutics, Ethics and the Theology of Culture: Concluding Reflections" in *Meanings in Texts and Actions: Questioning Paul Ricoeur*, edited by David E. Klemm and William Schweiker (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1993), pp. 292-313.

16. On strictly Kantian grounds this line of argument would not be possible. Insofar as the good will is defined by duty to duty, the rectitude of the will cannot be its own object. Any maxims that one would derive from seeking one's own moral rectitude could only be hypothetical in nature simply because one would desire that good.

17. John Kekes, "Constancy and Purity," in *Mind* 92 (1983): 449. On the idea of integrity also see Mark S. Halfon, *Integrity: A Philosophical Analysis* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989); James Gutman, "Integrity as a Standard of Evaluation" in *Journal of Philosophy* 42 (1945): 210-216; Lynne McFall, "Integrity" in *Ethics and Personality: Essays in Moral Psychology*, edited by John Deigh (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 79-94; and Gabriele Taylor, "Integrity" in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 55 (1981): 143-159.

18. Dorothy Emmet, *The Moral Prism* (London: MacMillan Press, 1979), p. 7.

19. The passages in Heidegger's *Being and Time* about conscience as the call of Dasein to itself are well known. Also see, Paul Tillich, *Morality and Beyond*, forward by William Schweiker (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991).

20. Scharlemann, *The Reason of Following*, p. 18.

21. On conscience and the diversity of goods see William Schweiker, *Power, Value and Conviction: Theological Ethics in the Postmodern Age* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 1998).

22. For a helpful statement of this problem see Paul Ramsey, "Kant's Moral Theology or a Religious Ethics?" in *Knowledge, Value and Belief*, edited by H. Tristran Engelhardt, Jr. and Daniel Callahan (New York: The Hastings Center, 1977), pp. 44-74. Also see Alan Donagan, "Common Morality and Kant's Enlightenment Project" in *Prospects for a Common Morality*, edited by Gene Outka and John P. Reeder, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 53-72.

23. Scharlemann relies here on a distinction between knowing and thinking made by Kant and Heidegger. More specifically, he likes to refer to "nachdenken" or thinking after the event of the christological summons. In this way, thinking exceeds the limits placed on strict knowing without being a flight of unfounded speculation.

24. On this see St. Augustine, "The Morals of the Catholic Church" in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* and Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II, qq. 62-63.

25. This idea of the unity of the virtues has been much debated in recent ethics. See for instance Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981). Also see Jean Porter, *The Recovery of Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990).

26. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* Book III, ch. 52.

27. Martin Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535) in *Luther's Works* vol. 26, edited by J. Pelikan (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing, 1963), p. 137. Luther's attack here is on the Thomistic principle that faith is formed by love (*fides caritate formata*). On this see Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 4, art. 3.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 234, emphasis mine.

29. Scharlemann, *The Reason of Following*, p. 33.

30. *Ibid.*, p. viii.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 31. Emphasis mine.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

35. It seems to me that this is one place, among many, where forms of philosophical theology, like Scharlemann's, that draw on "Continental" forms of thought would benefit from engaging the new work in Anglo-American philosophical theology, say the work of William P. Alston, Robert M. Adams, and others. I cannot make those connections in this essay.

36. I should note that a similar argument about the centrality (ontologically speaking) of judgment in human understanding was made much earlier in the mid-twentieth century by so-called "Transcendental Thomists" like Karl Rahner. Yet Scharlemann's point, I take it, is about matters of "meaning" rather than to the openness of consciousness to mystery manifest in all acts of judgment about "being" that characterized the discussion among Roman Catholic philosophers and theologians.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 79. It is clear that Scharlemann is revising Paul Tillich's method of correlation wherein a religious symbol ("God") is correlated to a philosophical concept ("Being") producing a fully theological statement, "God is being itself." Scharlemann seeks to show more closely the openness of each to the other, God to Being and Being to God. He made the point some years ago in an issue of the *Journal of Religion* dedicated to Tillich's work and to which Tillich responded. See Robert P. Scharlemann, "Tillich's Method of Correlation: Two Proposed Revisions" in *The Journal of Religion* XLVI no. 1, part II (1966): 92-103.

40. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, translated by Garret Barden and John Cumming (New York: Continuum, 1975).

41. Scharlemann does not seem to make any distinction between discipleship, obedience, imitation, walking in the ways of God, or covenant fidelity. A more finely grained analysis of "following" would require some attention to these conceptual differences and what they mean for human existence.

42. Scharlemann, *The Reason of Following*, p. 144.

43. Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian University, 1976).

44. See Robert P. Scharlemann, "The Textuality of Texts" in *Meanings in Texts and Actions: Questioning Paul Ricoeur*, edited by David E. Klemm and William Schweiker (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1993), pp. 13-25.

45. Scharlemann, *The Reason of Following*, p. 36.
46. Scharlemann could argue that this principle of criticism is the cross or the "Protestant Principle" itself. But in that case, it would still be necessary to show the relation between that idea of criticism and the goods it is meant to serve.