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ST512 - Course Notebook

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Recommended Citation

Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

Based on the lectures of
Ray S. Anderson, Ph.D.
Fuller Theological Seminary
School of Theology

Course Writing by Alison Houghton-Kral, M.A.
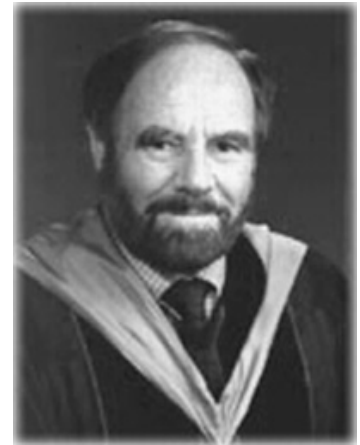Instructional Design by Sharon E. Carlson, M.A.

Ray S. Anderson, Ph.D.

Dr. Ray S. Anderson, Senior Professor of Theology and Ministry at Fuller Theological Seminary, has served on the faculty of the School of Theology since 1976.
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Biographical Information:
Before coming to Fuller, Dr. Anderson taught for four years as assistant professor at Westmont College in Santa Barbara. Prior to that, he pastored the Evangelical Free Church in Covina, California for eleven years. He also taught continuing education classes for the Veterans' Administration. Before pursuing his calling as a minister and theological educator, Ray Anderson began a career in agriculture on graduating from South Dakota State University in 1949 with a B.S. degree.

Dr. Anderson graduated from Fuller with a B.D. in 1959, and from the University of Edinburgh with a Ph.D. in 1972, and has been teaching at Fuller since 1976. He currently holds the position of senior professor of theology and ministry.
Anderson is ordained in the Evangelical Free Church of America and has over 45 years of pastoral and teaching experience. He believes that the practical side of theology should be emphasized and his lectures are informed by years of pastoral counseling. In addition to teaching courses in Systematic Theology, he also regularly teaches courses on Barth and Bonhoeffer. Anderson has published over 20 books, including *Judas and Jesus: Amazing Grace for the Wounded Soul* (2005), *The Soul of God--A Theological Memoir* (2004), *The Shape of Practical Theology--Empowering Ministry with Theological Praxis* (2001), *The Soul of Ministry: Forming Leaders for God's People* (1997), and *Self Care: A Theology of Personal Empowerment and Spiritual Healing* (1995). He is also a contributing editor for the *Journal of Psychology and Theology*.

Dr. Anderson lives in Huntington Beach, California, with his wife, Mildred. They have three daughters, Carol, Jollene, and Ruth, five grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Areas of Expertise, Research, Writing, and Teaching:
Theology, death and dying, contemporary ethical issues, theology and ministry concerns.

ST512: Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

Contents

This course notebook contains the following sections:

Course Planner
Syllabus
Study Guide
Lecture Outlines
Course Bibliographies
Supplemental Study Materials

For ease of use the beginning of each section is indicated by a notebook tab. Sections are internally paginated. All page references will contain both the page number and the section to which it belongs

ST512: Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

Course Planner

This section is intended to help you plan how you will proceed through the course. It will walk you through thinking in general about studying independently and then help you plan a specific course action that will enable you to complete all course requirements by your due date. These are suggestions that you should tailor to your own schedule and study methods.

Get Started
Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

Welcome to Fuller Theological Seminary's Individualized Distance Learning program. You are about to embark on what we believe will be a very rewarding educational experience. This section will give you guidance in how to begin your course.

Step One
- View the introductory video tape
- Check your course materials to ensure that you have received everything you need to start the course

Step Two
- Read the Student Handbook that you should have received with the first IDL course that you took. If you do not have a copy of this handbook please contact the Distance Learning office. In this guide you will find information pertaining to:
  - taking exams
  - library resources
  - important campus contacts numbers
  - turning in completed coursework
  - IDL policies

- Know and adhere to your course due date using the *Get Organized* section of the "Course Planner."

Step Three
- Examine the following sections in the course notebook:

Course Planner	Guidelines for getting the most out of your course
Syllabus	Details the course goals, required reading and assignments
Study Guide	Lesson by lesson guide for completing the course, including lesson objectives, assigned taped lecture, reading, study questions and discussion questions designed to personalize your learning

Lecture Outlines	Lecture outlines to help you follow the lecturer's taped lecture presentation
Lecture Resources	Contains any material distributed by the lecturer in class
Course Bibliographies	Contains references provided by the lecturer
Supplemental Study Material	Includes an answer key for study questions found in the study guide as well as articles you may find helpful in completing your course

- Start your IDL course

Thanks for participating and may God richly bless you in your studies.
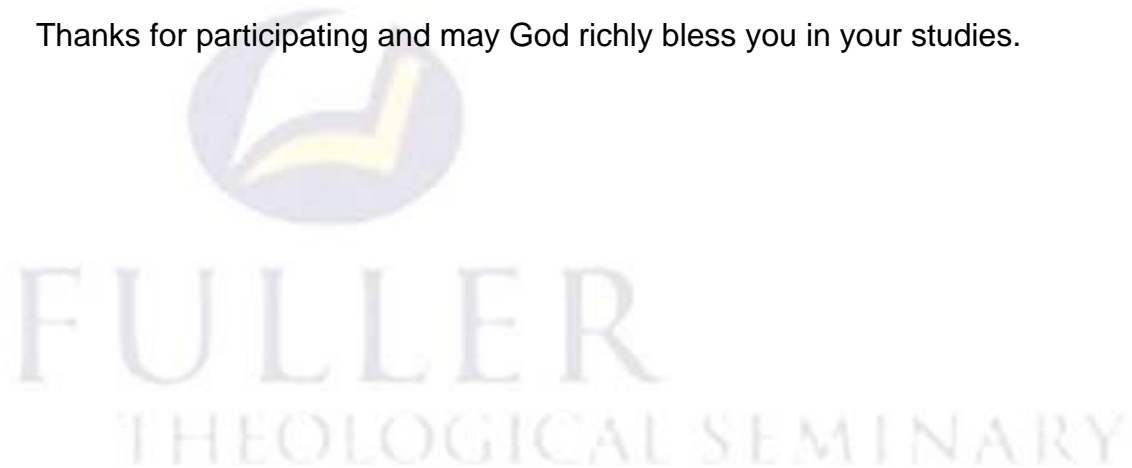
Get Organized

As a student studying at a distance you will face a number of unique challenges. This section is designed to help you address some of those challenges and to provide you with tools to structure your progress through the course. We hope that this will relieve any concerns you may have and greatly add to your enjoyment of the course.

Tips for successfully studying at a distance:

- **Understand how studying at a distance is different**

While you have much in common with the on campus student, your experience as a distance learning student will be unique. The most important difference is the absence of the "traditional classroom" environment. One of the challenges you will face early on is finding ways of juggling various demands of your life while working at home and not having the discipline of physically going to class to help you allocate your time. This section will provide you with guidelines for how you can do this.

- **Know that a bit of anxiety is normal**

Some of you will be returning to school after a long absence. It is normal to feel some anxiety about entering the world of "academia" again. You will need to reintegrate yourself both to the stimulation that comes from learning as well as to the adjustment of dealing with the new demands placed upon you mentally, physically, and spiritually. Returning to school can also bring a great sense of accomplishment as well as challenge your perspectives and provide opportunities for personal growth and change.

- **Pace yourself**

This is crucial to being successful in the distance learning environment. You must be realistic about how much time it will take to complete the course work. To assist you in thinking through the factors you need to take into account insetting a pace that is right for you we have provided some guidelines in the *Course Organizer*, which can be found on page 5 of this section of the course notebook. Once you have done that create a schedule that will allow you to complete the course within the registration period. We have provided you with a suggested schedule that shows you how the course can be completed in 20 weeks.

- **Schedule time every week to do course work**

Set aside a regular time every week to do the work you have allotted for yourself. Undoubtedly you are very busy and have many pressures on your time. It is important to build "class time" into your weekly schedule. It may be helpful to

choose a place where you can be quiet and will not be interrupted so that you can complete your work without being disturbed.

Course "To-Do" List

To help you keep track of all items you must submit we have compiled a check list of course requirements and forms for this course

❑ A or B Grade track form: this form can be submitted alon gwith our first paper to indicate whether you are pursuing an A or B grade for the course. If you change your mind after you submit this form please contact the Distance Learning Office.

For A-track (4 papers):
❑ Part 1, Paper 1
❑ Part 1, Paper 2
❑ Part 2, Paper 3
❑ Part 2, Paper 4

For B-track (2 papers):
❑ Part 1, Paper 1
❑ Part 2, Paper 2

❑ **Course Evaluation:** During the course of your studies you will receive a course evaluation from the Distance Learning office. Return this evaluation with your final assignment

❑ Include a **self-addressed and stamped** envelope if you want the Distance Learning office to return your graded coursework.

Course Organizer

The course organizer is designed to help you pace yourself as you work through the course material. Before you begin your studies it is important to set a schedule for yourself.

- Determine the number of weeks you have to complete your course work. To do this you need to know your course due date which you will find on the registration letter enclosed with these materials.

   Students studying in the US:
   The average length of time that you have to complete your course if you are studying within the US is 20 weeks. However, you may have more or less time than this depending on when you registered within the enrollment period for this quarter.

   Students studying outside the US:
   The average length of time that you have to complete your course if you are studying outside the US is 12 months. However, you may have more or less time than this depending on when you registered within the enrollment period for this quarter.

- Consider the suggested sequence for lessons and assignments provided in the *Course Organizer*. The organizer is based on the average 20 week registration period and will demonstrate that all the requirements for the course can be completed in that time if you pace yourself. Students studying outside of the US should make adjustments accordingly.

Evaluate your current commitments and determine your own due dates. You should base this evaluation on the tips provided in the *Get Started* section above and your own personal study habits.

	The Prolegomena to Theological Study	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
Lesson 1	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 1**			

	The Task of Theology	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
Lesson 2	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 2**			

	God's Revelation of Himself	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
Lesson 3	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 3**			

	The Knowledge of God as Actuality and Possibility	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
Lesson 4	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 4**			

	Scripture: Its Nature, Purpose, and Authority	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
Lesson 5	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 5**			

Lesson 6	**Revelation and the Inscripturation of the Word**	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 6**			

Lesson 7	**God's Creation**	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 7**			

Lesson 8	**Humanity: Created in the Image of God**	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 8**			

Lesson 9	**The Providence of God**	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 9**			

Lesson 10	**The Problem of Evil**	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
	•**Complete** reading & lesson •**Complete** assignment Part A and submit for grading	**Week 10**			

Lesson 11	**Theological Anthropology: An Introduction**	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 11**			

Lesson 12	**On Being Human: A Theological Paradigm of Personhood**	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 12**			

Lesson 13	**Human Life as Male and Female**	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 13**			

Lesson 14	**Issue of Human Sexuality: A Biblical/Theological Paradigm**	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 14**			

Lesson 15	**Gender Identity and Role Relationships**	*Suggested Sequence*	*Your due date*	*Notes on progress*	*Done*
	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 15**			

		Suggested Sequence	Your due date	Notes on progress	Done
Lesson 16	**Human Life as Contradiction and Hope**				
	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Weeks 16 & 17**			

		Suggested Sequence	Your due date	Notes on progress	Done
Lesson 17	**The Human Dilemma of Sin and Its Consequences**				
	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 18**			

		Suggested Sequence	Your due date	Notes on progress	Done
Lesson 18	**Human Life as Marginal and Meaningful**				
	•**Complete** reading & lesson	**Week 19**			

		Suggested Sequence	Your due date	Notes on progress	Done
Lesson 19	**Therapeutic Approaches to the Healing of Persons**				
	•**Complete** reading & lesson •**Complete** assignment Part B and submit for grading	**Week 20**			

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Get Connected

One of the challenges of studying at a distance is that you are physically separated from both your instructor and other students taking the same course. This can feel very disconcerting at first and it will be important for you to be aware of all the ways that you can get support while you study.
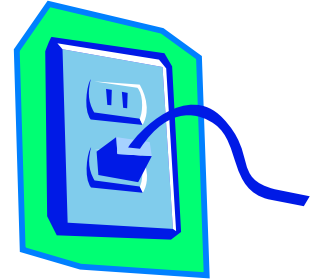
Find a mentor
We encourage you to find someone in your local area
that will be able to support and encourage you as you begin this new adventure. This could be your pastor, spiritual director, a covenant group, or a friend. It would be helpful for you to meet with this person during the time that you are studying both to help you be accountable to your schedule but also to have someone to talk over some of the issues that you are dealing with in the course. This is by no means required but we recommend that you get as much support and encouragement as you can to make this as an enjoyable experience as possible.

Contact the Distance Learning staff
In addition you will have the support of the Distance Learning staff. Do not hesitate to call, write or e-mail us with any questions concerning policy, procedures, elements of the course you are working on, or just to chat about various facets of the program. Our contact numbers are:

email:	dl@fuller.edu
phone:	(800) 999-9578 x 5266
	(626) 584-5266 (direct)
Fuller's homepage:	http://www.fuller.edu

ST512: Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

Syllabus

The course syllabus provides all the information you will need to complete the course for credit, including required textbooks, guidelines for written assignments, and the grading scale.

Syllabus
Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

Ray S. Anderson, Ph.D.
Fuller Theological Seminary
School of Theology

Course Description:
"Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God" is designed to be an introduction to the nature of theological study, developing a structure of divine revelation as fundamental to our knowledge of God as well as the human person. Central to the course will be a unit of theological anthropology, showing how the true order of humanity is determined by divine revelation, and then taking into consideration practical matters of human existence such as male and female role relationships, human sexuality, death and dying, and therapeutic approaches to pastoral care.

Course Goal:
As a result of this course the student will develop tools which will facilitate an understanding of the theological issues present in basic human questions about the reality of God, the authority of Scripture, human sexuality and the spiritual/psychical dynamics of the human person.

Required Reading:
Anderson, R. S. *Expanded Lecture Syllabus*
 This is the lecturer's complete lecture syllabus that covers in great depth all the topics under investigation. It is intended to be used in conjunction with lectures and serves to facilitate the learning process by enabling the lecturer to cover some issues in depth while still providing the student with all the relevant material and sources.

Anderson, R. S. *On Being Human: Essays in Theological Anthropology.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982. Fuller Seminary Reprint.
 A theological and philosophical examination of the nature of human personhood. Develops a paradigm of human personhood that is used as a basis for the examination of the myriad of issues that confront humanity such as human sexuality, death, hope and healing.

Becker, E. *The Denial of Death.* New York: Macmillan, Free Press, 1973.
 An existentialist examination of the fundamental problem of human existence and the means by which humanity seeks to escape the burden of life and death.

Bloesch, D. *Holy Scripture: Revelation, Inscripturation and Interpretation.* Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1994.
 Examines the implications of biblical authority for the twenty-first century, and surveys the role of the Bible as seen within the Bible itself. Explains and

critiques late-modern issues such as the value of biblical criticisms, the meaning of myth, hermeneutical options and the nature of truth.

Grenz, S. *Revisioning Evangelical Theology: A Fresh Agenda for the 21st Century.* Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1993.
Discusses the impact of the post-modern era on evangelical theology and seeks to establish a means by which the evangelical community can interface with the intellectual and cultural changes that are underway in our culture.

Pinnock, et al. *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God.* Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1994.
Develops and explores a new perspective by which we can understand God's nature and the relationship that he establishes with humanity. It presents a case for a more relational model of the biblical God and, in doing so, challenges the reader to reconsider some of the classical doctrines of God.

Recommended Texts:
Anderson, R. S. *Christians Who Counsel: The Vocation of Holistic Therapy.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990. Fuller Seminary Reprint.
Seeks to develop a foundation for Christian counseling, exploring the spiritual dynamics in counseling and the practice of counseling in a Christian mode.

Anderson, R. S *Self Care: A Theology of Personal Empowerment and Spiritual Healing.* Wheaton: Victor, 1995.
Explores how the self, endowed by God with the divine image, can experience self worth, emotional health and a strong vital faith in the midst of life's pain and suffering.

Jewett, P. K. *Who We Are: Our Dignity as Humans- A Neo-Evangelical Theology* Edited, completed and with sermons by M. Schuster. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.
Gives an evangelical and Reformed perspective on what it means for us to be created in the image of God and shows how this image relates to the contemporary problems of racism, sexuality and our relationship to the natural world.

The following articles on the issue of women in ministry are included in the "Supplemental Study Materials" section of the course notebook.
Anderson, R. S. "The Resurrection of Jesus as Hermeneutical Criterion (Part I)," *TSF Bulletin.* January/February (1986), 9-15.
Anderson, R. S. "The Resurrection of Jesus as Hermeneutical Criterion (Part II): A Case Study for Sexual Parity in Pastoral Ministry," *TSF Bulletin,* March/April (1986),15-20.

The following article on the issue of homosexuality is included in the "Supplemental Study Materials" section of the course notebook.
Anderson, R. S. "Homosexuality: Theological and Pastoral Considerations," *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, vol. 15 no. 4 (1996), 301-312.

A copy of the following book, which is now out of print, is to be found in the "Supplemental Study Materials" section of the course notebook. This will give you a basic introduction to theological terms and concepts that will be important as you begin your study of theology.

Davis, J. J. *Theology Primer: Resources for the Theological Student.* Grand
      Rapids: Baker, 1981.

Supplemental Videos:

Three supplemental videos dealing with various issues raised in the course have been integrated into the "Study Guide" exercises. The documentary *Through Joy and Beyond* is used in Lesson 4, *Shadowlands* is incorporated in Lesson 10 and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is used in Lesson 16. Use of these videos is optional. *Shadowlands* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* are available at most video stores or by contacting the IDL office, *Through Joy and Beyond* is available only by contacting the IDL office.

Course Requirements Overview:
1. Reading: 1500 pages for A-track or 1000 pages for B-track
2. Papers: Four 5-page papers for A-track or two 5-page papers for B-track

Course Requirements:
The written assignments are divided into Part One and Part Two. Students choosing to pursue an A-level grading track are required to answer TWO questions out of the five options in Part One, and TWO questions out of the five options in Part Two. Students choosing to pursue the B-level grading track are required to answer ONE question from Part One and ONE question from Part Two. The grading criteria for these two options is outlined below in the section entitled Grading.

All responses to questions should be typewritten, double spaced, and no longer than five pages each (including notes at the end).

PART ONE

For the A-track you must answer ONE of the first three questions (1,2, or 3) and ONE of the last two questions (4 or 5). For the B-track you may choose any one of the five questions.

1.   You have a friend who is doing graduate work in the social sciences at a nearby university. She/he is not sympathetic to the tenets of the Christian faith, and wants to engage you in a dialogue on the matter of the grounds for faith. From previous conversations you know that this discussion will center on the question of how one who is trained in the scientific method can possibly accept non-empirical evidence as valid for belief. In anticipating this discussion, you decide to write out an imaginary dialogue with this person in which you can test out your own thinking on the subject. You realize that you will have to deal with

the nature of revelation and decide to do this through the "paradigm" approach, using biblical events as sources.

2.   You have just come from a debate sponsored by the theology faculty in which two faculty members took quite opposite positions. One insisted that the truth of divine revelation is accessible to the human mind and can be established as truth without bringing faith in as an epistemological assumption. The other vehemently repudiated this position and insisted that the truth can only be known through faith, so that only a believer can know that a human word can become divine revelation. Words like "rationalism" and "fideism" are thrown around rather freely. You are constrained to write a response for the *OPINION*, a student publication which solicits contributions of this sort. You decide to begin with a theological exegesis of Genesis 3.1, "...has God said...", as a way of focusing on the matter of verification of the Word of God (then again, you may decide not to use that beginning... but you have to begin!).

3.   You teach an adult class in a large church as part of your intern assignment while completing your seminary degree. On one particular Sunday the class discussion focused on the implications of Paul's statement in Romans 8:28, " We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose." You explained the verse in terms of our confidence in God's providence, so that we know that God is always in control even over the power of evil. The following Sunday, Sara Smith, a member of the class handed you a note in which she wrote, "As you know, my husband and I had a child who was born with a severe microcephalic condition, and died 18 months later, after much suffering. I tried to understand this as part of God's plan and purpose, but have given up. I no longer believe that God is all-powerful and controls every event which takes place. I have found Rabbi Harold Kushner's book *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, to be more helpful. I think that he is right when he says, 'I can worship a God who hates suffering but cannot eliminate it more than I can worship a God who chooses to make children suffer and die.'" You decide to write a letter to her in response giving her what you consider to be the biblical teaching of God's sovereignty and the problem of human suffering.

4.   Pastor Don Smith was challenged in his use of scriptures as a divine authority by a young college student one morning after the sermon. "The Bible was written by men, right?" said the young woman, "then it is an imperfect book and only reveals the religious insights and feelings of the people who wrote it." "Yes, it was written by men", replied Pastor rising to the challenge, "but the authors were inspired by the Spirit of God, and therefore it is divine revelation. Inspiration protected the authors from their own imperfect knowledge and guarantees to us that the Bible is true. The Bible has the authority of God himself because he is the primary author through his Spirit; the human authors are only secondary authors. The authority of scripture is determined by its claim to be divinely inspired. You must accept that claim as being true before the Bible will have any authority for you. After all," he concluded, " the Bible clearly claims to be inspired by God himself, and thus if that claim is true it is the Word of God and

not of men, right?"   "Wrong," she replied, as she turned away, "but I don't know why." Is this incident another case of the "rich young ruler" who turns away from Jesus, leaving us with a feeling of sorrow? You feel that with some time to think about it you could give her a better response, so you decide to write a letter to her giving your considered response which you feel would be more convincing.

5.   You have accepted an invitation to speak on a university campus to a student group on the theme: "Good News for Modern People." The leaders of the group have told you that the topic came out of a discussion with some non-Christians who were majors in cultural anthropology, and that the subject of translating the Word of God into modern thought forms, relevant to different cultural and ethnic traditions, was a source of lively debate. Some asserted that the Bible was written from one cultural and ethnic perspective, but that in translating it into a modern culture, the ideas as well as the words must be changed. In preparation you decide to write out a brief statement which expresses your own view upon which you can enlarge when you actually give the talk. You want to be sure that you are able to explain what the Word of God actually is in a non-technical way, and yet deal with the critical problems of cross-cultural communication.

PART TWO

For the A-track you must answer ONE of the first three questions (6,7 or 8) and ONE of the last three questions (9, 10 or 11). For the B-track you may choose any one of the six questions.

6.   An adult Sunday School class of a church in your city is beginning a series entitled "Relationships of Men and Women in the Bible," and they have asked you to be a guest speaker for the first session. Of course, they want you to talk about Adam and Eve! Your next-door neighbor began attending that church a year ago, and you have noticed some problems developing in their relationship. The wife has become more passive and even depressed, while the husband seems to be caught up with the challenge to be the "godly leader" of "his home." They have shown interest in this series and you expect that they will attend. In considering the needs of this group, you realize that your first talk could have major implications for their evaluation of subsequent sessions. Taking this opportunity seriously, you decide to write out your view of male/female relationships based upon the biblical account of creation, also relevant texts from the New Testament. Don't worry that reading your paper to the class may only consume six or seven minutes... you know that the nature of its content will generate lively discussion!

7.   The family of Emma Smith, a 68-year-old grandmother who has had two operations for cancer and prolonged chemotherapy treatment following her last surgery, ask you, their pastor, to meet with them at the hospital. Joe, the eldest son, speaks first. "Pastor, the doctor has informed us that mother's condition is apparently terminal. She may be able to live for six months with proper care. The problem is that she can no longer ingest food. The doctor said that they would

have to provide nutrition through a tube directly into her stomach. This means that she will have to stay in the hospital in order to be kept alive. She told us that she does not want to go on living like this. The doctor told us that he wanted our consent to perform the procedure, but that once the tube was installed, it could not be removed. Mother is being medicated for pain, but has no capacity to do anything other than to lie on her bed. "You discover that Emma's husband, Carl, does not want any further medical procedures to be done. "She has always told me", Carl reported, "Don't let me lie around like a vegetable. Let me die with dignity." Joe has two sisters, both of whom have agreed to respect her wishes and not resort to the forced feeding. They are willing to bring their mother home and care for her until she dies, which would only be a matter of a couple of weeks without nourishment. Joe, however, disagrees. He has a strong conviction that allowing his mother to die by not feeding her would be the same as killing her. "I have faith in God," Carl told the pastor, "and I believe that he could still heal her and raise her up if we just continued to keep her alive." The husband and the three children are at an impasse, with Joe, the eldest son, arguing with his father and his two sisters. "We only have until tomorrow morning," Carl reports, "and then we have to inform the doctor of our decision. But we need help and want you to meet with us tomorrow morning to give us guidance as to what we should do. We have never faced anything like this before and want to do with God would have us do." You agree to come back in the morning, and on the way out, you check with the doctor to verify the medical situation. It is precisely as Joe has reported it. That night you write out your thoughts in preparing to meet with the family, first making an outline of the issues as you understand them, and then putting your response in a letter to Joe that you can read aloud to the family.

8.   Betty is single, a college graduate, works as an appraiser in an insurance office, and attends the social functions of the young adult group in your church, but only infrequently the worship services. She has had several short, but intense relationships with men over the past few months, and recently moved to an apartment complex that advertises itself as an "adult community for singles," and is popularly known as a place for "swingers." In a candid moment, she revealed to you the fact that she has adopted a life style that includes sexual freedom. "My father is a minister," she said, "and I was brought up to feel that sexual desire outside marriage is sinful. However," she went on, "I discovered that sexual desire is part of my physical nature and if it is wrong, then it is my nature that is sinful, and not a particular act. If what the church calls sin is part of my human creatureliness, then I will do what comes naturally and let the church go to hell." Despite the vehemence of her statement, you sensed that she was seeking a better alternative. You decide to write her a letter in which you attempt to make clear the relation between sin and human creatureliness, focusing on the image of God and male/female relationships.

9.   At an inter-church conference of lay leaders for your denomination, a discussion of human sexuality leads to the public acknowledgment of a homosexual life style by a staff member from a church in another city. You were impressed by the mature and thoughtful way in which the group handled this

revelation, but could not hold back your own opinion that homosexuality was a fundamental disorder when considered from the perspective of God's creation of humanity as male and female. The response was gentle but firm: "I have no other nature than an orientation to members of my own sex. I think that you are reflecting typical cultural patterns of hostility toward the homosexual person, which even the Bible contains, rather than truth based upon divine revelation." You had no immediate response to this, but could not shake the discussion from your mind. After returning home, you decide to write this person a letter and explain more fully what your views are on the subject after studying more thoroughly the issue from a theological perspective.

10.   On a plane trip home you are seated on a full flight. As the flight progresses, you strike up a conversation with a pleasant looking man who occupies the center seat next to you. You take note that he seems very intelligent, and he subsequently identifies himself as the Chairperson of the Department of Comparative Studies at a large state university. As your conversation progresses, and you begin to discuss Christianity, he identifies himself as a gay Christian. You have just discussed issues of Christianity and homosexuality in class the previous week, so you pursue the issue of homosexuality and biblical authority. Your new friend is very polite, and very well prepared for this discussion. One of his main objections is quite thought provoking. "Some Christians only obey the Bible when it says what they want it to. The ordination of gays is prohibited by most churches because they say that the Bible condemns homosexual behavior. To me, it seems that Paul prohibits women's ordination also. When it comes to ordaining women, however, many Christians are willing to ignore what Paul says completely. How can they be so inconsistent?" You fumble for a quick and inadequate response that he does not challenge. Thankfully, you are saved by the announcement that the plane is about to land! The gentleman had given you his card when you parted and suggested that you continue some correspondence on this issue. Later, you realize that your home Presbytery is struggling with this same issue, and you decide to write a paper which can be presented to your local church board of elders as a basis for discussion of the issue of the ordination of homosexuals. You write a paper for your board of elders dealing with the issue raised by your flight companion. You will send him a copy of your paper, so you will want to include some discussion of the issue he raised.

11.   Peggy Smith, an active member of Christ the King Church and President of the singles organization in the church, called the Ambassadors, felt on the threshold of a nervous breakdown. She had been divorced from her husband of 10 years for two years now, and with two children in school, worked full-time to support herself and to help make up for the times when child support payments did not come from her former husband. When she confided in her Pastor and shared with him the periods of depression which came with increasing frequency, she was told that her problem was not emotional but spiritual. "If you really were obedient to the teachings of Scripture," the Pastor said, "you would experience the comfort and strength of Christ and would not need any other crutch to lean on." You are a part-time intern on the church's staff, and when she related to you

her conversation with the Pastor, your advice was to seek professional counseling, as her problem was probably one that required therapy and not spiritual platitudes. This was apparently reported back to the Pastor, who has sent you a note demanding an explanation! Because you had spoken rather impulsively, you decide to prepare for your discussion with the Pastor by thinking through the matter more carefully and writing out a statement expressing your understanding of the emotional and spiritual dynamics as related to Christian faith. You decide to write this out and send it to the Pastor ahead of time so that your position will be made clearer prior to the encounter.

Guidelines

a. In preparing the assignment, material should be integrated from both class lectures as well as reading assignments. The case situation approach attempts to create an integration and practical focus for basic theological themes, demonstrating competence in approaching life situations from a theological and biblical perspective. Your work will be evaluated on the basis of the precision and coherence achieved in dealing with the topic, depth of theological insight which goes beyond mere paraphrasing of other material, and the overall helpfulness of your responses for those to whom they are directed.

b. The responses should be typed and no longer than five pages each (including the notes at the end). They must be comprised of two sections: the main body of the question (for details see section c below) and the endnotes (see section d below).

c. The <u>main body</u> of the question (four pages, double spaced) should be directed specifically to the situation that confronts you in the case question and therefore should be written in language that is relevant to those concerned. Do not use theological jargon. Do not assume that the person has any specific knowledge of theology unless it is obvious from the question that the individual does. This section is designed to demonstrate your ability to translate technical theological concepts into language that a lay person can understand**.** For an example of the required format for the main body of the assignment read the sample paper included on page 23 of the "Supplemental Study Materials" section of the course notebook.

d. Use the <u>endnotes</u> (one page, single spaced) for critical interaction and technical discussion, as well as for source documentation. It is here that you can demonstrate that you have mastered the more technical aspects of the question and provides a place in which you can reflect on the issues that it has raised for you. For an example of the required format for the endnotes read the sample paper included in the "Supplemental Study Materials" section of the course notebook.

e. It is important to keep to the four-page limit for the body of the question. This limitation tests your ability to communicate difficult theological

concepts succinctly. In doing this you will learn to discern and focus on what the essence of a question is rather than looking at all the possibilities that any one question could present. This will help you when you are dealing with people in ministry, and enable you to understand the nature of the question you are being asked.

f. Take time to read the questions carefully. Each question draws you into a specific situation and your response must be tailored to the issues and concerns of the individuals that you are addressing. Each question gives you clues as to the concerns that are at the heart of the question, read carefully for those clues. Do not try to cover all the issues. Try to stay focused on what is central to the situation and the theological issues that it raises.

g. Do not feel that you have to come up with the definitive answer to the problem you are tackling. Many of the questions have no easy answers. It is important for you to demonstrate that you know what the issue is and offer whatever ideas you think are most helpful, even if you are not certain that your response is what you will finally settle on. An important part of the learning process is the dialogue that you enter into with the class materials and the readings.

h. It is not important for you to agree with the professor or the readings. However, it is essential that in your endnotes you dialogue critically with the position that is presented in the lectures and ensure that you can defend the position that you have taken. This should involve more than proof-texting, but rather encompass the reading that you have done and a critical examination of what you have read and heard in the lectures.

i. Choose your questions relatively early in the course so that you can think about the questions as you listen to the lectures and do your readings. It may be helpful to keep a separate notebook page for each question and take notes as you come across relevant material. As you read, look out for issues that you may want to deal with in a deeper and more technical way in the endnotes.

j. Research beyond the lecture materials, required readings and the Expanded Lecture Syllabus is not essential but will broaden your understanding of the issues involved and your competency in dealing with the question. An extended bibliography that is grouped according to topic is included to assist you in finding further reading in given areas.

k. Be creative in your answers. There is no "right" way of dealing with the question, however, it is important to ensure that you don't get too far off track.

l. See "Basic Guidelines for Writing School of Theology Term Papers" found at the end of this section on page 12. This resource will give you help in formatting your papers.

There is no required order for the submission of assignments. All assignments are due by the course due date. However, it is recommended that Part One of the required assignments be completed by the third month of the course registration period. This will allow you to receive back graded work with comments that may be helpful for the completion of Part Two.

Grading: Your final grade for the course will be computed on the following basis:

> Students wishing to work towards an A level grade will be required to read 1,500 pages, including the assigned reading, and complete four exam questions. Grades will be assigned as follows: A grade = superior work; A- grade = above average; B+ grade = average; B grade = below average.

> Students wishing to work towards a B level grade will be required to read 1,000 pages of reading from the assigned reading list, and complete two exam questions. Grades will be assigned as follows: B+ grade = superior work; B grade = average work; B- or below = below average work.

Both grade levels require that a reading list of books and pages read be turned in upon completion of the final assignment. Completion of required readings is expected as a matter of personal maturity and responsibility.

Basic Guidelines for Writing
School of Theology Papers
4/11/00

   These guidelines are meant to be a starting place for help in constructing both the content and format of your papers. <u>The course notebook indicates if there are any specific guidelines to be followed in writing papers for that course. Be sure to check those instructions.</u> These guidelines are only meant as a general introduction and are not meant to replace or alter instructions given in your course notebook. These guidelines are not the only way to format a paper but we strongly urge you to use them. A paper's format will never compensate for any lack of content but a well-formatted paper will help you to express your learning and thoughts to the professor.

   Before writing your papers or completing assignments it is expected that you comply with Fuller's non-discriminatory language policy as well as abide by Fuller's Statement on Academic Integrity. Both of these are found in the provided Guide for Students Studying At a Distance. It is also found in the Fuller Student Handbook.

<u>Size</u>
- Paper dimensions should be 8.5 x 11 inches. (Students submitting papers from outside the United States may use a standard paper size for your country.)

<u>Margins</u>
- Paper margins should be between 1 and 1.25 inches.
- Margins should be aligned on the left.

<u>Indentation</u>
- All paragraphs should be indented consistently, usually one-half inch.
- Large blocks of quoted material should be indented from the left consistently. (Note: Professors discourage the use of large quotations. They prefer that you state the material yourself to show your understanding.)

<u>Spacing</u>
- Papers should be double-spaced.
- Long quotations, notes, headings and the bibliography should be single-spaced with a single line between entries.

<u>Pagination</u>
- All pages except the title page should have a page number. The page requirements for assignments refer to the pages in the body of the paper and do not include footnotes.
- Page numbers should appear either in the center bottom of the page or in the upper right hand corner.
- It is not necessary and can be a distraction to include information in a running header or footer other than the page number. This information can be included on a title page.

<u>Footnotes / Endnotes</u>
Either footnotes or endnotes may be used to cite works you have directly quoted or from which you have drawn ideas. (Note: Professors discourage the use of large quotations. They prefer that you state the material yourself to show your understanding.)
3. See following pages for examples.

<u>Font</u>
▪ Times New Roman, Times and Helvetica are standard fonts. Do not use large fonts such Avant Garde.
▪ Body text size should be 12 point. Footnote size should be 10 point.
▪ Do not **bold** or *italicize* the entire text of a paper.
▪ It is obvious when font size or typeface is altered in order to meet the page limits. It is better to develop the content of the paper instead of making up for lack of content with interesting formatting.

<u>Title Page</u>
Information on the title page should include the following:
▪ Your name
▪ The course number and title of the course
▪ The quarter in which you are registered (remember that the quarter in which you submit the paper may not be the quarter in which you registered).
▪ The name of the assignment as indicated in the course notebook (e.g., final paper, paper #2, practicum reflection). This information is very helpful to the Distance Learning Staff in accurately recording the assignments you have submitted.
▪ Title of the paper.
▪ The professor's name <u>correctly spelled</u>.

<u>Bibliography</u>
This is an alphabetized list of sources used and cited. It should be the last page of your paper.
▪ Font size should be 12 point.
▪ See following pages for examples of how to write bibliographic entries.

<u>Miscellaneous</u>
▪ Handwritten papers are NOT acceptable unless strictly noted so in the course notebook.
▪ Always keep a copy of your papers.
▪ Staple or clip your paper together.
▪ Do not use report covers or special bindings such as sheet protectors. These make it difficult for professors to write comments and make the paper unwieldy. They increase postage and are often larger than standard envelopes.

Examples: How to Write
Footnotes/Endnotes and Bibliographies

Different kinds of sources require different formats for citation. Footnotes and endnotes are formatted differently from bibliographic entries. We have given you examples of both formats for the most common sources used. For more examples we suggest looking at a manual for writing papers such as Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*.

Single Author Book
Footnote/Endnote:[1] Nicholas Thomas Wright, *Who Was Jesus?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Press, 1993), 9.

Bibliography: Wright, Nicholas Thomas. *Who Was Jesus?* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Press, 1993.

Two-Author Book
Footnote/Endnote:[2] Sherwood Lingenfelter and Marvin Mayers, Ministering Cross-culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1987), 79.

Bibliography: Lingenfelter, Sherwood, and Marvin Mayers. *Ministering Cross-culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1986.

Edited or Translated Work
Footnote/Endnote:[3] John Calvin, The Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 230.

Bibliography: Calvin, John. *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Translated by Henry Beveridge. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989.

Journal Article
Footnote/Endnote:[4] Jerry Muller, "Coming Out Ahead: The Homosexual Moment in the Academy," First Things 35 (August/September 1993): 18.

Bibliography: Muller, Jerry. "Coming Out Ahead: The Homosexual Moment in the Academy," *First Things* 35 (August/September 1993): 17-24.

Volume in Set with General Title and Editor
Footnote/Endnote:[5] Wayne A. Meeks, ed. Library of Early Christianity, vol. 8, The New Testament in Its Literary Environment, by David Aune (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987), 107.

Bibliography: Meeks, Wayne A., ed. *Library of Early Christianity*, vol. 8, *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment*, by David Aune Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987.

<u>Revised Edition of a Work</u>

Footnote/Endnote:[6] Luke Timothy Johnson, The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation, rev. ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 303.

Bibliography: Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*. rev. ed. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999.

In footnotes or endnotes when a work is cited a second time the following is appropriate:

[7] Luke Timothy Johnson, 305.

However, if you are using two works by the same author be sure to differentiate them by including the title of the book or an abbreviation:

[8] Luke Timothy Johnson, Reading Romans, 34.

ST512: Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

Study Guide

The **GOAL** of the study guide is to lead you through the content of the course in an organized, deliberate way. Each lesson is presented in four sections:

*G*et Focused
Each lesson begins with an introductory paragraph that gives an overview of the material covered in the lesson.

*O*bjectives
Highlighted objectives and goals for each lesson will help you organize the material in both the readings and the lecture presentations.

*A*ction Plan
The required reading assignment and appropriate lecture tape for the lesson are listed, and study questions which relate directly to the lecture material are provided.

*L*ife Application
Complete the personal reflection, Bible study, and case study exercises to help you integrate the lesson material into your life and ministry.

All study guide questions and exercises are for your own personal use in understanding the lesson material. You will not turn in, nor will you be graded on any of these questions or exercises.

The Prolegomena to Theological Study

Get Focused

In this lesson you will be given a general introduction to the purpose, presuppositions and objectives of the course. As you begin your study of theology it is important for you to understand the theological enterprise as one of response to the Word of God rather than the product of the human capacity to study and analyze abstract concepts. It is a task which must be entered into cautiously and humbly, acknowledging the necessity of the revelation of God's self to humanity in order that there be any possibility of knowledge of God. This lesson will introduce you to some of the issues which lay the foundation for the theological endeavor and will enable you to develop an appropriate framework for your own theological reflection and development.

Objectives Set

Introduce the purpose, presuppositions, and objectives of the course.

Consider the appropriateness of entering into the theological enterprise.

Reflect on the nature of the relationship between the human and divine logos, and how it is that humanity has the possibility of knowing God.

> **"Theology stands or falls with the Word of God, for the Word of God precedes all theological words by creating, arousing and challenging them."**
>
> **Karl Barth,** *Evangelical Theology*

Lesson 1	Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

The Prolegomena to Theological Study

Action Plan

Read: Pinnock, et al., *The Openness of God*, pp. 11-58; Bloesch, *Holy Scripture*, pp. 11-44

Listen to: Lesson 1

Ask:

1. In what ways does the theological enterprise differ from that of other academic disciplines?

2. What role does Jesus Christ play in interpreting the knowledge of God?

3. What is the biblical paradigm of how God is known to humanity? How does this contrast to the view taken by some theologians?

Life Application

1. Reflect further on the nature of the theological task and the differing perspectives that were presented in the lecture concerning the relationship between the human and divine logos. In particular, focus on the issues raised in the lecture concerning the centrality of the person of Christ in the interpretation of the knowledge of God. Think about how your own tradition has understood the way in which humanity comes into relationship with God. How has this impacted the way in which you have understood your own faith?

2. Read Exodus 3. What does this passage reveal about the way God is known by human persons. How does this reflect your experience of coming into relationship with God? Using a Bible dictionary, and commentaries research the significance of the giving of God's name in verse 14. What was the importance of names in Ancient Near Eastern societies and what does this reveal about God's nature in terms of his preparedness to give his name?

The Task of Theology

Get Focused

The task of theology is one that requires humility and openness on the part of the one seeking to engage in it. It is both creative and dangerous, requiring the development of theological insight, instinct and courage. In this lesson you will learn about the different ways in which the task can be approached and the importance that it has for the church in terms of its place and ministry in the world. You will also learn some important methodological tools which will assist you as you embark upon the journey of theological reflection and study, enabling you to more effectively communicate such that people are drawn into an encounter with God.

Objectives Set

Outline the different types of theology which are utilized as part of the process by which theology holds the community of faith accountable.

Consider the nature of the theological task and the role it plays in the church.

Identify the factors that shape theological methodology.

Reflect upon the necessity of God's self-revelation to the knowledge of God.

> **"We may apprehend God, but never comprehend him."**
> **Thomas F. Torrance**

The Task of Theology

Action Plan

Read: Grenz, S., *Revisioning*   **Listen to:**   Lesson 2
Evangelical Theology, pp. 13-85

Ask:
1.   What are the three types of theology? How do they differ and in what ways do they intersect with each other?

2.   The theological task involves both hermeneutics and exegesis, to what do these terms refer and how are they involved in the task of theology?

3.   What are the differences between empiricism and science? To what extent are both or either of these involved in the theological endeavor?

Life Application

1.   One of the difficulties in the task of theology is that there is an act of communication involved in experiencing and knowing God. Reflect on the problems that this raises for the modern person in terms of the thought forms and language difficulties that are encountered in Scripture. How have you dealt with this problem in the past? What issues has it raised for you?

2.   Your church is involved in evangelistic outreach to a local university and you are asked to head up the team. As your first project you decide to have an open forum in which the audience can ask the panel questions concerning Christianity. In preparation for this event you consider it important to train the panel to deal with some of the questions which are likely to arise. What sort of issues will you deal with in order to facilitate more effective communication of what it is to be in relationship with God?

God's Revelation of Himself

Get Focused

In attempting to know God we are immediately confronted with the problem of God's "otherness" and our own inability to comprehend or conceive of him. While science moves from the known to the unknown the theological task of apprehending God is qualitatively different. In his/her endeavor the scientist continues to move within the realm of the conceivable but the theologian must at first acknowledge that God is both inconceivable and incomprehensible in nature. In this lesson we will explore why revelation, God's self revelation, is necessary in order that humanity may have any possibility of knowing God. We will also begin to construct a paradigm that will allow us to interpret and know the being of God as one who acts in our history.

Objectives Set

Reflect upon the centrality of God's revelation of himself as the only possibility for the knowledge of God.

Construct an appropriate paradigm for understanding the being of God.

Identify the essential differences between the traditional approach of systematic theology to the doctrine of God and the paradigm grounded in the acts of God.

Outline the structure of revelation and the importance of human participation in the revelation of God.

> **"The God of the Scriptures is not a God defined by abstract thought but the God who defines himself through personal encounter."**
>
> **Paul Jewett,** *God, Revelation and Creation*

God's Revelation of Himself

Action Plan

Read: Pinnock, et. al., pp. 59-100;   ***Listen to:***   Lesson 3
Bloesch, pp. 46-84

Ask:
1.   How does Matthew 11:27 contribute to our understanding of the necessity
      for revelation of God's self to humanity? What role does the Holy Spirit
      play in this process?

2.   In what way does the concept of horizon enable us to understand the
      nature of revelation? How does the act of God enable us to interpret and
      know the being of God? How does this paradigm differ from that of
      traditional systematics?

3.   Define the terms ontological and ontic. How do they differ and what role
      does this difference play in our understanding of revelation?

Life Application

Reflect upon an important relationship in your life. How did you get to know who
this person is in terms of their personality and character? When describing this
person to someone else how would you explain their nature and character? How
do their actions reveal who they are? Consider the paradigm constructed in the
lecture in which it was posited that the knowledge of God is grounded in
reflection upon the acts of God. How does your own experience of personal
relationships enable you to understand this paradigm? Select a favorite biblical
story and use this paradigm to examine what this act of God tells us of the
character of God.

The Knowledge of God as Actuality and Possibility

Get Focused

Revelation is a gracious act of God in which he reaches into the course of history and reveals himself to human persons. It is through this act of self-revelation that humanity has any possibility of true encounter and relationship with the Living God. In this lesson we continue to develop the model which posits that reflection upon the being of God is grounded in the actions of God within the bounds of human history. Using this paradigm we will construct a new model for the doctrine of God based on the biblical witness to the acts of God. In this lesson we will also begin to explore the role of the human person in the knowledge of God and how God accommodates himself to the human person in order that he may be known.

Objectives Set

Develop a new doctrine of God that is grounded upon the proposition that the acts of God reveal his being in personal encounter.

Examine the role of the human person in the knowledge of God.

Construct a Christological model for understanding the process by which humanity is given the possibility of participating in the self-knowledge of God.

> **"Jesus is Himself both the Word of God as spoken by God to man and that same Word as heard and received by man, Himself both the Truth of God given to man and that very Truth understood and actualized in man."**
>
> **Thomas F. Torrance, *Theological Science***

The Knowledge of God as Actuality and Possibility

Action Plan

Read: Grenz, pp. 87-108; Bloesch, pp.   ***Listen to:***   Lesson 4
85-140

Ask:
1.   Define and explain the terms accommodation and election with reference
       to how the knowledge of God becomes a possibility for human persons.

2.   Outline the differences between rationalism and fideism? In what way can
       we understand them to both be Cartesian?

3.   In the Christological paradigm presented what role does the Holy Spirit
       play in the knowledge of God?

Life Application

1.   Reflect on the model for the doctrine of God that has been presented in
       the lecture. In what ways does this enrich and enhance your walk of faith
       and give you tools to talk to others about your relationship with God?
       What questions does the model raise for you? In the past how have you
       had the doctrine of God presented to you?

2.   View the documentary *Through Joy and Beyond* (Available by contacting
       the IDL office) which looks at the spiritual journey of C. S. Lewis and how
       he, as an atheist, became one of the most influential spokesmen for
       Christianity in the English speaking world. Coming from a position of
       intellectual unbelief what factors were crucial in his becoming a Christian
       and what was the role of personal encounter with God in this process?
       How does his story reflect the model of how person's come into
       relationship with God? Consider question 2 of the written assignments,
       how does the story of C. S. Lewis better equip you to deal with the issue
       of the role of faith and reason in the knowledge of God?

Scripture: Its Nature, Purpose and Authority

Get Focused

At the very heart of God is his love for humanity and his desire to be in relationship with them. In order that humanity has the possibility of relationship with God he has chosen to reveal himself within human history. As such revelation does not occur within a vacuum but rather comes to human persons in their own language and culture. In this lesson we will explore further the personal nature of divine self-disclosure and how the human person becomes bound up in God's act of self communication. This concept will form the foundation for our understanding of Scripture and the human element that it encompasses. This will enable us to deal more thoroughly with important issues concerning the nature and purpose of Scripture.
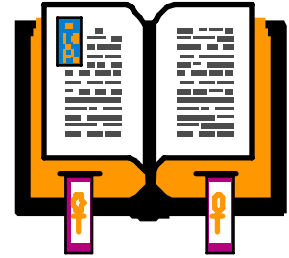
Objectives Set

Examine the ontic and noetic dimensions of revelation as they apply to Scripture and how this impacts upon our understanding of the purpose of Scripture.

Discuss issues concerning the authority of Scripture, in particular the question of the inerrancy of Scripture

Consider the means by which divine disclosure occurs within human history and the impact that this has upon how Scripture is translated.

Action Plan

> **"God had adapted Israel to His purpose in such a way as to form within it a womb for the Incarnation of the Word and a matrix of appropriate forms of human thought and speech for the reception of the incarnational revelation."**
> **Thomas F. Torrance, *God and Rationality***

Scripture: Its Nature, Purpose and Authority

Read: Pinnock, pp. 101-125; Bloesch,   ***Listen to:***   Lesson 5
pp. 141-222

Ask:

1.   In the lecture Scripture was described as being both ontic and noetic revelation. Define these terms and apply them to the story of the woman at the well as a paradigm of revelation.

2.   How do the tasks of translation and communication differ in their objectives and content? What are the dangers of utilizing communication theory for the translation of the Scripture?

3.   What does it mean to say that revelation precedes and creates Scripture?

Life Application

During the last few months you have become increasingly friendly with a colleague at work. In that time she has often seen you reading your Bible and knows that you do so on a regular basis. On a few occasion you have suggested that you read it together so that if she has any questions she can talk to you about them. She has seemed reluctant, so you let the idea drop. One day while you are having lunch together she confesses, "I have tried reading the Bible in the past but I found that there were a lot of inconsistencies and errors. I have heard Christians say that the Bible is perfect and has no errors... they must have their eyes closed and their minds shut!" You are immediately tempted to jump in and defend the authority of the Bible but manage to restrain yourself because your realize that she is genuinely struggling to understand how Scripture can be authoritative for her. How would you respond to your friend in terms of discussing with her the purpose of Scripture and the authority that it has for you?

Revelation and the
Inscripturation of the Word

Get Focused

In his desire to be in relationship with humanity God accommodates himself to the historical place and circumstances of the human person. He reaches out and encounters them in the midst of their history. It is this story, this testimony to the encounter with the Living God that forms the foundation of the biblical witness. For centuries the stories were told of the God who had reached into and involved himself with his people in order that they may be reconciled with him. In this lesson we examine the process by which God's revelation of himself in personal encounter became the written Word of God and how this impacts upon our contemporary experience of God and remains authoritative for us today.
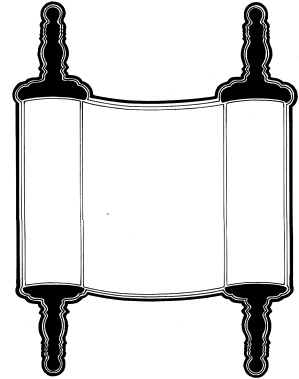
Objectives Set

Outline the process by which divine revelation becomes Scripture and the role of the human person in this process.

Discuss Barth's concept of the three-fold form of the Word of God.

Reflect upon the analogy between the incarnation and the process of inscripturation.

> **"From Moses to the prophets men have rebelled against this human proclamation of the Word of God... This proclamation is a treasure in earthen vessels, and the treasure does not fade and disappear in the fragility of the human instrument."**
>
> **G. C. Berkouwer,** *Holy Scripture*

Revelation and the
Inscripturation of the Word

Action Plan

Read: Grenz, pp. 109 - 136, Bloesch,   **Listen to:**   Lesson 6
pp. 223-302

Ask:
1.   Outline the process by which revelation becomes Scripture. How does the
      human person become bound up in the act of revelation?

2.   What is Barth's concept of the three-fold form of the Word of God?

3.   How does an understanding of the servant form of Scripture enable us to
      deal with the tension between the human authorship, words and context,
   and the divine Word itself?

Life Application

1.   The issue of the relationship between the Holy Spirit and Scripture is one
      that can cause a great deal of tension in the Christian community. Reflect
      on occasions when this has caused friction in the ministry context of which
      you are a part and how the issue was resolved. How does the use of the
      Body metaphor facilitate the creation of a church that is both spiritually
      open and continually testing the Spirit in the light of Scripture? What
      criteria could you establish in your own ministry that would enable you to
      resolve an issue such as this?

2.   Consider question 4 on the written assignments. Does the struggle of the
      young woman to understand the role of human authors in the Bible reflect
      struggles that you have had? How have you resolved these issues
      concerning the human authorship of Scripture? How would you respond
      to her? If you have chosen to write an exam response to this question take
      time to make notes based on your consideration of the issues raised in the
      lecture. Note specific points that will facilitate your appropriate response.
      Don't forget to respond to the situation that is presented in the case study.

God's Creation

Get Focused

This lesson examines the relationship that the created universe has to its creator. However, in order to understand creation we must first look to the redemptive event of Exodus that forms the basis for reflection of the creation "ex nihilo." It is suggested that knowledge of God as creator is preceded by the knowledge of God as redeemer. In this lesson we establish that the redemptive structure of covenant forms the inner meaning and purpose of creation. It is in the doctrine of creation that we first catch a glimpse of God's desire to liberate humanity from the tyranny of their creatureliness and draw them into close and abiding relationship with himself.
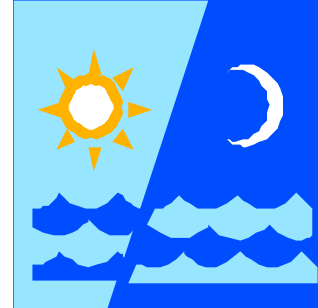
Objectives Set

Consider the significance of covenant in revealing the eternal and internal meaning of creation.

Examine the relationship existing between God, humanity and the rest of creation.

Reflect upon the Fall and the impact it had upon humanity and its relationship with God.

Discuss the eschatological aspect of creation.

Action Plan

> **"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."**
> **Genesis 1:1**

Read: Pinnock, et. al., pp. 126-154   **Listen to:**   Lesson 7

God's Creation

Ask:

1.   How does the structure of covenant act as a hermeneutic of creation?

2.   What is the essential difference between the destiny of humans and that of non-humans?

3.   What is the lecturer's assumption regarding the nature of existence prior to the Fall?

Life Application

1.   Reflect upon the eschatological aspect of creation. In particular, reflect on the concept of the "seventh day" as being the Word of God coming to us from the future bringing freedom, liberation, hope and healing. The lecturer has used the example of Jesus healing on the Sabbath as an illustration of the purpose of the Sabbath to restore and free humanity from all that destroys and binds it. In your own context how can you use this principle to bring hope and healing to those who are broken and suffering. How does the reality of the future become a criterion for us in our practice of ministry?

2.   You are teaching a Sunday School class series on creation and you describe the world that God created as dangerous, one in which death was part of the natural cycle of life but that God sustained and upheld humanity keeping them from the fate of disease and death. Your suggestions create an uproar and you are called in by the Pastor to discuss the class. How would you defend what you discussed in the class and, in particular, the impact that the Fall had upon the human person?

Humanity: Created in the Image of God

Get Focused

This lesson continues the discussion of God's creation and the relationship that he has to it. We begin now to focus on the Biblical account of the creation of human persons and the impact that this has on our understanding of the nature and value of human personhood. While the biblical texts which deal specifically with the origins of human personhood are few in number and ambiguous in their intent this doctrine is perhaps one of the most important in the Christian church. The doctrine of the *imago Dei* crucially shapes and determines how we understand the nature of the relationship between God and humanity, the impact that the Fall had upon it and the kind of redemptive action that God took in the person of Jesus Christ to restore humanity to its proper relation with him.

Objectives Set

Survey the major views, both traditional and contemporary, regarding the nature of the image of God residing in humanity.

Conduct a historical overview of the differing views of the effects of the Fall on the image of God.

Consider Barth's relational model of co-humanity as determinative of the image of God.

> **"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."**
>
> **Genesis 1:1**

Humanity: Created in the
Image of God

Action Plan

Read: Grenz, pp. 137- 162; Anderson,   ***Listen to:***   Lesson 8
On Being Human, pp. 69-87; 215-226

Ask:
1.   What is the fundamental difference between traditional and contemporary
        views of the image of God?

2.   In Barth's view, what is the essential component of the divine image
        residing in humanity?

3.   Define the terms co-humanity and differentiation.

Life Application

1.   Reflect upon your understanding of what it means to talk of humanity as
        existing in the image of God. How does your church tradition understand
        this fundamental doctrine and how does it impact your view of the
        redemptive work of Jesus Christ?

2.   A close friend of yours has raised a child on her own since the death of
        her husband not long after the child was born eight years ago. She is
        struggling on her own and is considering sending the child, a girl, to a well
        respected single sex boarding school because she believes that girls have
        a better opportunity to develop academically when they are taught in
        classes apart from boys. She comes to you to discuss the issue. What
        concerns would you raise with her regarding the importance of
        differentiation to the determination of human personhood?

The Providence of God

Get Focused

Traditionally there have been a number of ways of conceiving of the relationship between God and the world. The conceptual model which has most significantly impacted the Christian church has been one in which God stands apart from his creation, episodically intervening in the course of human history to bring about his will and purpose. In this model God is understood as immutable and impassive with regard to his relationship to his creation, bringing about his will through his complete control over earthly affairs. In this lesson we will revisit this model, comparing and contrasting it with other views. We will explore a model that is grounded in Christ as the knowledge of God as redeemer uniting the doctrine of God as creator and the doctrine of creation.
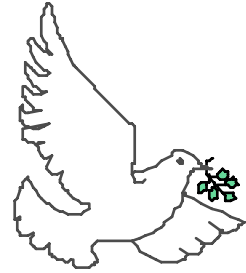
Objectives Set

Identify the three traditional views of God's relation to the created world.

Critique process theology as a modern alternative to theism.

Consider a Christological model as the means of uniting the doctrine of God as creator and the doctrine of creation.

Explore different ways in which we can understand the providence of God.

Action Plan

> **"God is One whose ways are marked by flexibility and dynamism, who acts and reacts on behalf of his people, who does not exist in splendid isolation from a world of change, but relates to his creatures and shares his life with them."**
>
> **Clark Pinnock,** *The Openness of God*

The Providence of God

Read: Pinnock, et. al., pp. 155-176   **Listen to:**   Lesson 9

Ask:

1.   Define and identify the differences between deism, theism and pantheism.

2.   In what ways does process theology react and respond to traditional theism? Identify some of the criticisms of process theology. How does a Christological perspective answer these criticisms?

3.   What does it mean to talk of providence and the Kingdom of God as the promise and presence of God?

Life Application

You have recently gone through a period of depression and you are talking with a friend who is also going through a difficult time. During the conversation you tell your friend that one of the most significant things you have learned is that God suffers and endures pain with us and is with us throughout all that we experience. He responds, "I don't want to believe that God is down here in the mess of this world with me. In order for me to be able to deal with this I have to believe that he is above all of this." He goes on to say that for him to believe that God is responding to what is happening in the world means having to surrender any concept of a transcendent, powerful God. He concludes, "How can God really be part of this world without suffering the loss of his 'otherness'."   How would you respond to this? Does the Christological model prove helpful in resolving this issue?

The Problem of Evil

Get Focused

The problem of evil is one that has confronted humanity for centuries. It is a problem that reveals the fragility and vulnerability of the human person called to live in a world fraught with danger. In the asking of the question we search for relief from the uninterpretability of events. In this lesson we examine and critique a broad spectrum of theological responses to this problem and attempt to provide a Christological response to the issue of suffering and pain. The process will involve exploring the issue of what it means to talk about the sovereignty of God. In the lesson we will look to the Cross in order to discover a biblical concept of power and sovereignty.

Objectives Set

Identify the philosophical problem of evil.

Evaluate various theological responses to the problem of evil and the relationship between God and human suffering.

Examine how God's providence is expressed in the face of evil.

Consider pastoral responses to pain and human suffering.

> **"Love is the mode in which God's power is exercised. God neither surrenders his power in order to love nor denies love in the need to rule, but combines love and power perfectly."**
> **Clark Pinnock,** *The Openness of God*

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The Problem of Evil

Action Plan

Read: Grenz, pp. 163-189.   ***Listen to:***   Lesson 10

Ask:
1.   What is the philosophical problem of evil?

2.   Outline a number of the different views presented in the lecture
         concerning the relationship of God to pain and suffering? What is the
         response of process theology to the problem of evil?

3.   Define the term "specific sovereignty." How does the cross and
         resurrection offer a different concept of sovereignty?

Life Application

View the film *Shadowlands*, (Available through most video stores and by
contacting the IDL office) which documents a period in the life of C. S. Lewis.
The film traces how the famous Christian academic deals with the problem of
suffering and evil in his own life and how he seeks to find meaning within this
terrible tragedy. Early in the film he delivers his now famous line "Pain is God's
megaphone for a deaf world." How do you think his understanding of God and
the role of pain and suffering in God's plan changed as he himself journeyed into
the dark vale of suffering? What does his wife Joy teach him about living life in
the midst of the suffering and the pain?

Theological Anthropology:
An Introduction

Get Focused

In this lesson we begin to contemplate the nature of human personhood. This task is essential because our view of humanity crucially impacts the entire spectrum of Christian doctrine and thus vitally determines how we minister to a hurt and broken world. As we begin to construct a theological paradigm of human personhood it is necessary to ground ourselves firmly in the biblical categories which will shape and determine the direction of our inquiry. In this lesson we will begin to investigate the uniqueness of the human person and to discuss more thoroughly the concept of differentiation as being an indispensable part of what it means to be created in the image of God.

Objectives Set

Introduce the study of theological anthropology and its importance within Christian doctrine.

Examine biblical categories of human personhood.

Discuss what constitutes the distinction between human and non-human life.

Examine the centrality of differentiation of our humanity in terms of the image of God.

> **"The human spirit is unique in its orientation of the body/soul unity toward God in a special relationship determined by God."**
> **Ray S. Anderson, *On Being Human***

Theological Anthropology:
An Introduction

Action Plan

Read: Anderson, pp. 3-32; 207-214   **Listen to:**   Lesson 11

Ask:

1.   On what basis can we make the distinction between human life and non-human life?

2.   Discuss the relationship between Genesis 1 and Genesis 2.

3.   What is differentiation and in what way is it indispensable to the image of God?

Life Application

1.   You are a pastor and you are asked to join a panel that will discuss the issue of the transplantation of animal organs into human patients. There has been some controversy within the church as to the biblical basis for such procedures and you realize that you will be required to establish a theological basis upon which a distinction can be made between animals and humans. How will you prepare for your participation on the panel? What issues will be pertinent to your discussion?

2.   In the lecture the statement was made "we can't hold people accountable for their motives but we can hold them accountable for their intentions." Reflect upon the biblical concept of intention. Is there a situation in your life where this distinction would be helpful in dealing with the actions of someone towards you? Does this distinction enable you to be more precise in holding people accountable?

On Being Human: A Theological Paradigm of Personhood

Get Focused

In this lesson we will continue to develop our discussion of human personhood by focusing on humanity as determined by the Word of God and by personal encounter with the another person. Humanity is not defined by its creaturely nature but rather is vitally dependent upon God to sustain and uphold it. We will examine the nature of this relationship with God and how this vitally determines what it means to be human. As a part of this process we will revisit the concepts of differentiation and co-humanity as fundamental structures of humanity. The lesson will also discuss the nature of humanity as being with and for the other, and the centrality of significant encounter with another human person as determinative of human personhood.

Objectives Set

Discuss the human self as determined by the Word of God.

Consider the nature of human freedom as grounded in relationship to and dependence upon God.

Assess the importance of "response-ability" as determinative of humanity.

Examine the ontological structure of humanity as co-humanity.

Action Plan

> "I need you to be myself. This need is for a fully positive relation, in which, because we can trust one another, we can think and feel together. Only in such a relation can we be really ourselves."
> **John Macmurray,** *Persons in Relation*

On Being Human: A Theological Paradigm of Personhood

Read: Anderson, pp. 33 - 65   **Listen to:**   Lesson 12

Ask:

1.   What is the ontological structure of human personhood?

2.   Discuss the five aspects of the self and how they are integrated. According to this model how do we respond to God spiritually, and what criteria can we use to assess a person's spirituality?

3.   Macmurray develops the concept of resistance as essential to the development and growth of the self. What do you understand by the term resistance and how can this be integrated with the theological concept of differentiation?

Life Application

There is a young man in your church who is being sent to the mission field in the next year. He has spent the last three years attending Seminary and during that time has been very active in the church's ministries. As you are on the missions committee you have been able to get to know him at a level deeper than most others in the church have had the opportunity. However, as you get to know him you realize that he has some significant problems dealing with relationships, in fact you are sure that while everyone in the church knows him, he is not intimate with anyone. In addition he suffers from periods of severe depression which he has managed to hide from the congregation. You are becoming increasingly concerned about whether he is ready to go to the mission field but there is a general perception within the church that this person is very spiritually mature, and many look up to him as the perfect Christian leader. You have decided that you must talk to the head of the missions committee about the issue. How would you begin to discuss what constitutes spiritual maturity and what issues are of concern for you?

Human Life as Male and Female

Get Focused

In previous lessons we have discovered the centrality of the concept of *imago Dei* to a biblical understanding of what it means to be human. We have also discovered that the content of the *imago* is experienced as differentiation within unity. In this lesson we will delve more deeply into the nature of this differentiation. It will be posited that the sexual differentiation between humans is a unique one and that it constitutes the sole differentiation of personhood. It is this polarity or modality of being, where differentiation is experienced as complementarity, correspondence and encounter, which forms the basis for a theology of human sexuality.

Objectives Set

Identify issues crucial to the discussion of human sexuality.

Outline the debate between Brunner and Barth concerning the nature of the relationship between males and females.

Define and discuss the concept of co-humanity as it relates to the divinely determined order of human sexuality.

Action Plan

> **"Human personhood is not a self-contained faculty expressed as abstract individuality, but an openness of being which stands out of itself towards the other as the source of our being."**
> **Ray S. Anderson,** *On Being Human*

Human Life as Male and Female

Read: Anderson, pp. 104 - 129   **Listen to:**   Lesson 13

Ask:

1.   How does Genesis 1:27 enable us to more fully understand what it means to talk about humanity being created in the image of God?

2.   In what way does co-humanity - the polarity and complementarity of human personhood - reflect what is essential within the being of God?

3.   What is the nature of the disagreement between Brunner and Barth on the existence of male and female traits?

Life Application

Consider question 8 of the written assignments. Despite the concern for the spread of AIDS in our society there are still many people who are leading a sexually promiscuous lifestyle. Betty's story is by no means unique. How would your respond to her? In what way would you begin to discuss with her the importance of true encounter, of meeting rather than merely mating, to the core of what it means to be human? If you have chosen to write an exam response to this question take time to make notes based on your consideration of the issues raised in the lecture. Note specific points that will facilitate your appropriate response. Don't forget to respond to the situation that is presented in the case study..

Issues of Human Sexuality:
A Biblical/Theological Paradigm

Get Focused

Issues of human sexuality are perhaps the most explosive of our time. In the midst of rapid and substantial changes to cultural norms and practices the Christian church has often reacted defensively, calling for the maintenance of the status quo without carefully and thoughtfully assessing the stance that they have taken. In this lesson we will continue to develop our understanding of human sexuality by discussing two approaches to the issue and assessing the implications that each has for the way in which our sexuality is experienced and lived out.

Objectives Set

Review the paradigm of human personhood as both male and female.

Compare two major approaches to human sexuality and discuss the implications of these models.

Discuss the issue of homosexuality within the framework of the traditional theological model.

Assess the pastoral implications of the traditional theological model in dealing with issues of human sexuality.

> **"It is a violation of human personhood to treat people as less than human on any grounds, including sexual orientation and behavior. At the same time... it is a violation of personhood and thus the essential humanity of persons to confuse their essential sexual differentiation as male and female, male or female."**
>
> **Ray S. Anderson,** *Expanded Lecture Syllabus*

Issues of Human Sexuality: A Biblical/Theological Paradigm

Action Plan

Read: Expanded Lecture Syllabus, pp.   ***Listen to:***   Lesson 14
61-66

Ask:

1.   What is the sexual ethic espoused by Brunner? How does this compare
        to the ethic of sexuality in Barth's model?

2.   In order that a person uphold the dignity, worth and value of a sexual
        partner what factors must be present?

3.   What is God's preference for human sexuality? How does the concept of
        God's presence apply to this? What is the mandate of the church?

Life Application

1.   For the last few years you have been in charge of a youth program at your
        local church. In the last few months two of the older teenagers in your
        program have become involved with each other. They come to you
        because they want to embark on a sexual relationship. They are
        committed Christians and appear to be very much in love with each other.
        Thankfully they called ahead of time to make an appointment with you
        giving you time to gather your thoughts. What would you say to them
        about what marriage entails and why you might recommend that they wait
        to consummate their relationship?

2.   Consider questions 9 and 10 of the written assignments. Both these
        assignments deal with a different aspect of the issue of homosexuality and
        the church's response to it. If you have chosen to write an exam response
        to this question take time to make notes based on your consideration of
        the issues raised in the lecture. Note specific points that will facilitate your
        appropriate response. Don't forget to respond to the situation that is
        presented in the case study.

Gender Identity and Role Relationships

Get Focused

The questions of gender and role relationships have long been the subject of much dissension with the Christian community. As norms and societal roles have altered over the years the church has struggled to determine what is God's design and purpose for human persons. In particular the issue of the role of women in the church continues to be one that causes a great deal of pain and tension. In this lesson we will build on the paradigm of humanity being ground in the image of God as both male and female to assess the importance of gender and role relationships in the created order.

Objectives Set

Define the term adjunctive and understand how it applies to the discussion of the role relationships of males and females.

Review the discussion between Barth and Brunner on the nature of gender characteristics and attributes.

Examine aspects of the creation of man and woman with respect to sexual equality and role relationships.

Action Plan

> "In our escape from freedom we pervert our sexuality, fearfully hiding behind the fig leaves of domination and submission. In our new freedom in Christ we are able to claim afresh our co-humanity"
> **Marianne Micks, *Our Search for Identity***

Gender Identity and Role Relationships

Read: Expanded Lecture Syllabus, pp. 66 - 71; Anderson, "The Resurrection of Jesus as Hermeneutical Criterion," *TSF Bulletin*

Listen to: Lesson 15

Ask:

1.   Why are roles considered to be adjunctive in nature?

2.   How does an examination of the Hebrew use of language in the creation story contribute to our understanding of co-humanity?

3.   In what way are gender characteristics and attributes relative?

Life Application

1.   Reflect on the issues raised in your reading of the article "The Resurrection of Jesus as Hermeneutical Criterion". How has your church tradition dealt with the issue of the ordination of women in the church? What factors were decisive in its decision? Upon what basis would you argue for/against the ordination of women in ministry? How would you minister to a woman who is in a denomination in which the role of women in ministry is limited?

2.   Consider question 7 of the written assignments. This question focuses on what the biblical account of the creation of humanity tells us about the God's intention regarding the relationship between men and women. Given what you know about the relationships the people attending the class how would you proceed? What biblical verses would be central to your discussion? If you have chosen to write an exam response to this question take time to make notes based on your consideration of the issues raised in the lecture. Note specific points that will facilitate your appropriate response. Don't forget to respond to the situation that is presented in the case study.

Human Life as Contradiction and Hope

Get Focused

Humanity is totally dependent upon the gracious act of God to sustain and uphold it in its fragile creaturely existence. We were created to exist with God in a relationship love and obedience but in our desire to be self-determining we pulled ourselves away from the focal point of our existence, into the shadowlands of our own possibilities. Rather than being bound up into the destiny of God, frail humanity launched out on its own and found itself thrust back upon its own meager resources, resources that are unable to sustain and support us. This lesson explores the fundamental questions confronting humanity in its creaturely existence. We will utilize the work of Kierkegaard and Becker to explore the depths of the existential dilemma and discuss what it means to have faith in the midst of the uncertainty and despair of human existence.
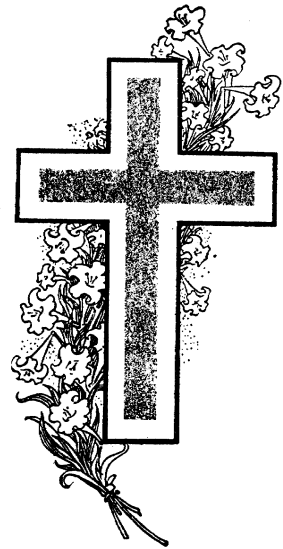
Objectives Set

Discuss human life as contingent, creaturely being.

Examine human life in terms of destiny, history and freedom.

Consider the existential anthropology of Kierkegaard and the impact it has had upon the existential analysis of Becker.

Discuss the integration of psychology and theology.

> "Man is always playing with reality either to create himself through illusory anticipation, to sustain himself through illusory reshaping of what does not seem bearable, or simply to fool himself through illusory distortion of what he does not like."
>
> Ana-Marie Rizzuto, *The Birth of the Living God: A Psychoanalytic Study*

Human Life as Contradiction and Hope

Action Plan

Read: Anderson, pp. 88 -103; Becker   ***Listen to:***   Lesson 16
The Denial of Death , pp. 1 -124

Ask:
1.   Define contingency and what it means in terms of the nature of human existence.

2.   What are the three fundamental questions of human existence? How are they answered by a) a non-theological model, and b) a theological model?

3.   For Kierkegaard what are the competing realities that shape and determine the existential dilemma of human persons? What are the two ways in humans can attempt to deny this dilemma?

Life Application

1.   View the film *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, the 1945 version of Oscar Wilde's classic novel. How does the inability of the central character to accept his own mortality reflect the analysis offered by Kierkegaard? Reflect upon the damage that is created personally and socially when we are unable to resolve the existential crisis of our creatureliness. Consider how your faith empowers you to stand in the face of the existential dilemma of human existence. (Available at most video stores.)

2.   Becker provides a penetrating analysis of modern culture and the mechanisms which society has developed in order to gain a sense of immortality. Can you think of examples of what Becker is referring to in the culture around you? What roles do cultural heroes play in our lives and to what extent do we live our lives through them?

The Human Dilemma of Sin
and Its Consequences

Get Focused

Humanity was created to exist with their Creator in a relationship of intimacy and trust. He called them into being and breathed his life into them, summoning them into the depths of his being. But the impossible happened, sin entered in and severed the relationship that had been ordained by God. Under the condition of sin humanity is in a state of rebellion and alienation from God, a state which has broken them free from their truest destiny with God, thrusting them into the brokenness of self-determination. This lesson examines the capacity of sin to distort humanity, to violate and destroy that which God deemed to be good. We will explore the role that Christ plays in restoring persons to authentic existence.

Objectives Set

Examine the phenomena of sin as a form of human experience.

Reflect upon the centrality of Christ in the restoration of persons.

Discuss the need to be "bilingual" in the approach to the healing of human persons.

Investigate the relationship between human persons and sin.

> "Sin resists grace; it affronts it and betrays it. It has no basis in grace. It is in fact so terrible and infamous because it can have no basis in the grace in which God acts as Creator and in which man has his being in His creature. But its inconceivable reality can be grasped only when we see it as rebellion against grace."
>
> **Karl Barth,** *Church Dogmatics*

The Human Dilemma of Sin
and Its Consequences

Action Plan

Read: Becker, pp. 127 -285   ***Listen to:***   Lesson 17

Ask:
1. What relationship does sin have to human personhood?

2. What impact does sin have upon human destiny, history and freedom?

3. Barth describes sin as the "impossible possibility," what does he mean by this?

Life Application

1. Reflect upon the discussion of the relationship between good and evil. How do you understand this relationship? You may want to refer back to lecture 12 and reread the outline and your own lecture notes to think more deeply on this issue. How would you deal with sin in a world in which it is no longer considered an issue of individual responsibility?

2. John is a friend of yours that you met in the gym. One day completely out of the blue he tells you that he was brought up in a Christian home but has since walked away from any involvement with Christianity in any form. He tells you over coffee after your work out "I left the church because I felt like I was constantly been beaten down and told that because I have a sinful nature I am disgusting in the sight of God. It seems that to be a human is a terrible thing in the eyes of the church and yet I see a real beauty." You can relate to his experience and you want to tell him that despite the sin and rebellion that we are still created in the image of God. How would you discuss this issue with him? What sort of issues would you raise in terms of the relationship of sin to the human person and Christ's role in the healing of humanity?

Human Life as Marginal and Meaningful

Get Focused

At the margins of life there is disorder and distortion, disease and death, a brokenness that has entered into the experience of human life. So often human life is experienced under the conditions of marginality, conditions that push the human person to the limits of their endurance. In the midst of pain and suffering humanity must struggle to find meaning and hope. In this lesson we being to grapple with issues of human life under the conditions of marginality and the impact that technological advances have had upon the difficult issues of life and death. We will discuss what it means to talk of the value of human life and what role the community of God should play in the determination and support of human persons in their struggle to find meaning.

Objectives Set

Construct an ecological model of human life.

Reflect upon the value and meaning of human life.

Discuss the concept of marginality as it applies to human life.

Consider a case study and discuss the issues which it raises concerning the value of life.

> **"It is unlikely that many of us will die in our bed with the steady hand of a loved one to monitor the last heart beat. No matter. At the center there is a body and a belief: the body is the body of Christ and the belief is a community of persons who will have the last look, the last touch and the last word. I do not need to speak in my own death, I am spoken for."**
>
> **Ray S. Anderson, *Theology, Death and Dying***

Human Life as Marginal
and Meaningful

Action Plan

Read: Anderson, pp. 130 - 158   ***Listen to:***   Lesson 18

Ask:
1.   What are the three ecological spheres of human life? How do they
        intersect and what relationship do human emotions have to them?

2.   How would you describe life as marginal?

3.   What are some of the factors which determine the value and quality of
        human life?

Life Application

1.   Reread and reflect upon the case study, *The Dance of Life.* If you were
        Tracy how would you respond to your sister's request to stop treatment
        and go home knowing that it will lead to her death? What are the issues
        that are of concern to you? How did the class discussion effect or
        influence your response? What factors were decisive in coming to your
        decision?

2.   Consider question 7 on the written assignment. The family that you are
        meeting with are experiencing great trauma and are faced with a difficult
        and painful decision. In writing to Joe what issues would you raise and
        how would you raise them in such a way as to be pastorally sensitive to
        his feelings for his mother? What advice would you give him and upon
        what theological basis is this advice grounded. If you have chosen to
        write an exam response to this question take time to make notes based on
        your consideration of the issues raised in the lecture. Note specific points
        that will facilitate your appropriate response. Don't forget to respond to
        the situation that is presented in the case study.

Therapeutic Approaches to the Healing of Persons

Get Focused

The Christian church is called to mediate the healing presence of Christ in a world which has been torn from relationship with the Living God. We are called to be an advocate for the other in their concrete experience of reality, to stand beside them as one who is committed to the healing of their personhood. Any ministry that we undertake must ultimately be grounded upon our concept of what it means to be a human created in the image of God. In this lesson we will apply the theological paradigms which we have developed throughout the course and focus more specifically on the process by which human persons experience transforming change.

Objectives Set

Review the ecological model and utilize it to develop an appropriate approach to healing.

Evaluate the importance of story to the development and healing of the human self.

Define and discuss the importance of hermeneutic and agogic moments in the process of healing.

Develop a paradigm of pastoral care.

"**The way back to authentic humanity is through a personal encounter in which the grace of God is experienced as an integrative core, opening the emotional, social and spiritual aspects of the self to new dimensions of life.**"

Ray S. Anderson, *Christians Who Counsel*

Therapeutic Approaches to the
Healing of Persons

Action Plan

Read: Anderson, pp. 161 -206   **Listen to:**   Lesson 19

Ask:
1.   What is the difference between a hermeneutic moment and an agogic moment? How does the agogic moment come about and in what way does it contribute to the health and healing of persons?

2.   What are the hermeneutical and narrative tasks associated with the agogic goals of human growth and development?

3.   Outline the three aspects of pastoral care presented in the lecture.

Life Application

1.   You are a pastor who has just moved to a new church and have begun counseling a young man who has for many years been physically abused by his father, an elder of the church for over 25 years. The young man has come to you because the evening before a fight with his wife resulted in his beating her. As you talk with him you realize that no one has believed him concerning the abuse he suffered and, as a result, he has never dealt with the issues of anger and powerlessness. Using the pastoral model presented in the lecture how would you minister to this man?

2.   Consider question 11 on the written assignment. How would the circumstances of Peggy's life be affecting her experience of life? What sort of remedial actions could you suggest that she take in terms of the ecological spheres discussed in the lecture? If you have chosen to write an exam response to this question take time to make notes based on your consideration of the issues raised in the lecture. Note specific points that will facilitate your appropriate response. Don't forget to respond to the situation that is presented in the case study.

ST512: Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

Lecture Outlines

The lecture outlines will supplement your own lecture notes and help you follow the lecturer's presentation.

Lecture Outlines
Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

Lesson 1
The Prolegomena to Theological Study

I. **Introduction to the study of theology**
   A. *Logos* is the expression of an idea
   B. The human *logos* is centered in the mind
      1. It is the power of analysis and thinking
      2. It involves the process of abstraction
      3. It results in the development of bodies of knowledge
   C. Is theology an appropriate human endeavor?
      1. How can the creature with its own *logos* interpret and have access to God?
      2. God is not accessible to us in the same way that other phenomena are, God is inconceivable
      3. It is improper for us to put theology alongside other academic disciplines, as though we could abstract from God in the same way that we can about other subjects

II. **The *logos* of God becomes flesh**
   A. Jesus is the divine logos, he is the *logos* of *theos*
      1. In Jesus we have the only access to the inner being of God
      2. Prior to Jesus access to God is only through the Word
      3. From the beginning there is divine initiated dialogue, in which God is involved in human history
      4. The Word is given to Israel, and becomes the provisional embodiment of the Word of God
   B. The *logos* of Christ is the key to interpreting the knowledge of God
      1. The assumption of the course is that there is a knowledge of God given to us through Jesus that the Holy Spirit enables us to know personally
      2. The knowledge of God that is gained through the person of Christ enables us to understand the Old Testament
   C. The study of theology through Christ requires:
      1. Submission to Christ
      2. Humility
      3. Openness
      4. Preparedness to be judged and transformed

III. **Theological reflection as encounter with God**
   A. Theological reflection begins with God's nearest encounter to us
   B. There is no neutral position in the study of theology, God encounters us as a personal being
      1. The burning bush is the entry point into the Old Testament

2. There was revelation of the name of God that had never been known before
3. The theological beginning is in God's self revelation to Moses
4. The redeemer God becomes the interpretation of the creator God
5. Moses is a theologian because he takes the stories of the patriarchs and builds it into the theological construct of God as redeemer/creator

B. The Name bears the self revelation of God as personal being
1. Moses finds the bush burning and hears a voice
2. He is already standing on holy ground, it is too late to back away; all he can do is remove his shoes
3. The proper study of theology is not something we can make a decision to do, we are on holy ground
4. The study of theology is never neutral, we are summoned to believe

C. The reality of God is experienced through encounter

IV. **The relationship between the human and divine logos: A different perspective**
A. There is a univocal relationship between the human and divine logos not an analogical relationship - Carl Henry
1. Definitions:
a. Univocal means two things are identical
b. Analogical means while there are similarities there are differences
c. Equivocal means that there is no relationship at all between two things
2. These terms are being utilized in order to attempt to explain the relationship between humanity and God

B. We must know truth about God before we have faith and relation with God
1. Christian faith rests upon objective metaphysical propositions
2. Argues for a neutrality concerning our decision as to what is true
3. Contends that God doesn't reveal personal being, God reveals truth

C. After we know what is true, through faith we experience a personal relationship with God

D. Lecturer contends that this is not faithful to the biblical paradigm as to how God is known to us
1. He summons people into relationship through personal encounter
2. The Word of God is self-authenticating for the Hebrews
3. There is no objective point by which the Word of God can be judged as to be true or false
4. Biblical theology as narrative

V. **The act of God reveals the being of God**
A. Theology begins with what God has done

B. For the Old Testament the redemptive work of God becomes the hermeneutical criterion for the creative work of God
C. The act of God is the hermeneutical criterion for the being of God
   1. Hermeneutics is the act of interpreting and explaining what something means
   2. It is conducted in order to know how we should respond to God
   3. The Holy Spirit guides us in this task
D. Jesus' action to heal on the Sabbath reveals the meaning of the Sabbath
   1. The purpose of the Sabbath is to restore health and wholeness
   2. The actions of Jesus are as authoritative as the words of Jesus
   3. The work of Jesus reveals who God is
E. The application of the principle to ministry situations

Lesson 2
The Task of Theology

I. **Three types of theology**
   A. Exegetical theology
      1. It is comprised of two elements - exegesis and hermeneutics
      2. The task of exegesis is to understand what the text says
      3. The task of hermeneutics is to interpret what the text means
         a. Answers the question of what the text meant when it was written
         b. Answers the question of what the text means for us today
      4. Exegetical theology is the process by which we determine what the text says and how we are to interpret it in its original context and also today
   B. Biblical theology
      1. Examples of different theologies within the Bible
      2. Biblical theology attempts to trace out different theological structures evident within the Bible
         a. Covenant
         b. Kingdom of God
   C. Systematic or dogmatic theology
      1. The traditional definition of systematic theology is the systematic organization of theological topics
      2. In reality it is the task of theology to determine what the church must believe, teach and practice in the concrete situation of its place in the world
   D. The task of theology is to build on exegetical and biblical theology in the context of the church and its place and ministry in the world
II. **Requirements of the task**
   A. The task requires humility and openness
   B. There is a need to be aware that it is both creative and dangerous
   C. The task requires the development of theological insight, instinct and courage
III. **The apologetic nature of the task**
   A The task of theology is to give an account of what faith means
   B. Theology is an apologetic task
   C. Note: take home exams refers to the written assignments
IV. **Suggestions on theological methodology**
   A. The nature of the object to be known determines the method of knowing
      1. The empirical method is not identical to the scientific method
         a. The Christian faith is not totally empirically verified but it is scientifically verified
         b. Science is the exploration of phenomena in terms of their own nature

      c. In order to bring about paradigm shifts the Christian must invite people into their laboratory and have instruments which will access and reveal the reality of God
- [1] The burning bush is the Holy Spirit
- [2] The unbeliever will not be convinced on his or her own terms

  2. For the Hebrew tradition stories are the means by which theology is taught
- a. The absolute is known in the personal
- b. The story and the event carry theology along

B. There is a tension between the known and the unknown
1. The story of Nicodemus
2. We start with what we know and we must be prepared to integrate the unknown into what we know

C. There is reflection upon the experience of God as part of the act of knowing God

(As the lecturer speaks he draws a small bush beside which there is a human figure, representing Moses. As Moses moves closer he is confronted by the objective reality of the Word of God.)

1. There is no independent criterion of truth or reality by which verification of God's being and reality can be proven
2. The Word of God is contemporary through the hearing, obeying and confessing that the "I am" is present
3. The self-revelation of God in the present interprets what has been revealed of God in the past
4. We may apprehend God but not comprehend him
   - a. To comprehend means that we are able to totally understand something, there is no mystery
   - b. To apprehend is to only touch one part of something
5. What is known with "full assurance" cannot be established objectively on the basis of certainty
6. Three ways of knowing - Carnell
   - a. Empirical data
   - b. Logic and inference
   - c. Conviction
     - [1] Our participation in the moral and spiritual environment in which we have trust and commitment
     - [2] Faith is the release of the whole self on the basis of sufficient evidence
     - [3] Sufficiency of evidence rather than the kind of evidence is the crucial factor
7. Assurance does not remove all the risk

D. There is an act of communication involved in experiencing and knowing God
1. There is a built-in obsolescence in our thought forms and language which needs to be overcome

5

2. The solution of Bultman is to "demythologize"
   a. There is a separation between our worldview and that of the first century
   b. The New Testament needs to be "demythologized"
   c. We must interpret statements existentially and in light of our own existential situation
   d. Biblical statements need to be judged according to what we know about reality today
3. Problems with Bultman's view
   a. Severs the connection between the objective historical event and the inward assurance of faith
   b. Takes a purely existential view of faith over and against a more objective relation of faith to events
E. Student questions (Note: The questions are not included on the tape but are repeated by the lecturer.)
   1. If in fact God is speaking to us today do we still need Scripture?
      a. Scripture is the witness to and report of the self-authenticating presence of the resurrected Christ
      b. Oral tradition becomes the bearer of the immediate contemporary self-revelation
      c. The contemporary self-revelation is the criterion upon which we reflect back, interpret and ground our faith with full assurance that this is the same Jesus who was crucified
      d. Scripture reassures us that the Spirit which speaks to us today is the Spirit of Christ and is the same Jesus who was crucified
      e. The Holy Spirit interprets and authenticates Scripture
   2. Is the distinction between apprehend and comprehend merely one of semantics?
      a. In modern Western culture we have tended to follow the scientific mindset in the pursuit of absolute certainty
      b. It is a mistake to think we have personal relationships based upon comprehending with the sense of believing that absolute certainty has been gained
      c. We must somehow have a relationship with God that does not depend on an absolute knowledge of God
F. Statement of Dorothy Sayers

Lesson 3
God's Revelation of Himself

I. **Introduction: The necessity of revelation**
   A. God is both inconceivable and incomprehensible in nature
   B. Science moves within the realm of the conceivable
   C. The theological task is therefore qualitatively different
      1. What we cannot conceive of has been revealed to us
      2. Despite the revelation of God yet he remains incomprehensible
      3. Matthew 11:27 - Has John's theology of the enfleshed divine logos been based on the historical statement of Jesus?
         a. There is an inner relationship between the Father and the Son
         b. We have no possibility of knowledge of this relationship except through the Holy Spirit
      4. We can apprehend God, but we cannot comprehend him
II. **The act of God as the hermeneutical horizon for the being of God**
    (The diagram which is being drawn is that of an arc spreading across the page like a horizon as is seen when you look out to sea. The horizon is one of time and space. The word God is written above the horizon to represent that God is beyond the human horizon and, therefore, inaccessible to us. Along the horizon are different events of history, beginning on the left hand side with creation, followed by the flood, the Exodus, the fall of Jericho etc. until at the end of the arc on the right hand side there is the cross. All of these events represent an occasion in which God acted within the horizon of human history to reveal himself.)
   A. The concept of horizon
      1. The horizon is a limiting factor from one's own perspective as to what can be seen or thought
      2. God is beyond the horizon
   B. Revelation must occur from God's side
      1. God's act must occur within our horizon
      2. The acts of God constitute the horizon on which the being of God confronts us within the world of time and space
      3. The burning bush is the basic paradigm for understanding revelation
         a. Moses experienced God within the horizon of his own human limitation
         b. An act of revelation occurred - Moses saw fire, felt fear, heard a voice
   C. The act of God is the hermeneutical clue to the being of God
      1. We interpret and know the being of God through the act of God which appears in our horizon
      2. The Hebrew people were not permitted to go beyond the horizon of the acts of God to have a concept of God

        a. Their God was not an abstract mental concept but was one who acted within their history

        b. The name Yahweh therapeutically recovered the concept of a God in whom they could love and trust and find mercy

    3. Any doctrine of God must begin with what God has done

    4. Student question: How do we apply this principle to other biblical stories? Where are the acts of God?

        a. Isaac and Ishmael

            [1] Isaac is God's action

            [2] Ishmael is a product of faith but not revelation

            [3] Isaac is revelation because he came from a barren womb

        b. Jacob and Esau

            [1] God reveals to Rebekkah that Jacob is the chosen one

            [2] Jacob becomes the act of God

        c. Noah, Adam and Eve

  D. Student questions regarding the act of God as the hermeneutical horizon for the being of God

    1. Aren't there instances when the Word precedes the act?

        a. There is no necessary chronology between the act and word, but they must be held together

        b. There is a hermeneutical inner logic between the act and word

        c. Without the act the word has no meaning

        d. The task of revelation is to relate the act and the word

    2. What is the role of faith in this paradigm?

        a. Without faith the act has no meaning

        b. Faith is not our work but a disposition of readiness to hear the Word of God grounded in the image of God, the empty hand offered to God

        c. The corruption of the Fall led to the replacement of the openness and readiness towards the Word of God with the self-determination of the human heart

        d. The Spirit as the act of God can be frustrated by the lack of faith

III. The nature of revelation

  A. Revelation is more than objectifiable statements

    1. It is more than just information

    2. God's self is also present

  B. Revelation is also propositional

  C. The purpose of revelation is to produce a response, until it becomes revelation for the person it has not had its effect

  D. The three-fold way that God reveals himself - Karl Barth

    1. God is revealer - Father

    2. God is revelation - Son

    3. God is revealedness - Holy Spirit

  E. The act of God reveals the virtues of God which become the basis for understanding God's nature - refers back to diagram

IV. Traditional systematic theology

A. Traditional systematics begins with the nature of God
B. Out of the determination of the nature of God the virtues of God are defined
C. The problem with this methodology is that certain attributes of God define God out of action
    1. God as immutable and immovable
        a. God cannot enter into human history because it necessarily involves change
        b. How do we explain the God who weeps at the tomb of Lazarus?
    2. God as all powerful
        a. This concept leaves us with the problem of evil
        b. In assuming this we put God above and outside the whole process
        c. The Hebrew concept of God's power was not an abstract one but a power within their history to accomplish its purpose
D. The traditional division of attributes is divided between the communicable and the incommunicable in an abstract conceptual way
    1. Communicable are those attributes that humanity, created in the image of God, should have
        a. Justice
        b. Love
        c. Mercy
        d. Righteousness
    2. Incommunicable are those attributes that properly belong only to God's self
        a. Divine perfection
        b. Holiness
E. Critique
    1. When we start from the infinity of God and attempt to reach his particular reality we destroy the decisive character of the encounters of God in a concrete sense
    2. This results in theological ambivalence
F. Biblical witness to the nature of God
    1. He is infinite - Psalm 86:5f, Psalm 103:8ff
    2. He is omnipotent - Genesis 18:14, Jeremiah 32:17-27, 36-41
    3. He is omnipresent - Psalm1:6, Psalm 139:14f

V. The structure of revelation
A. We cannot penetrate the historical event of the act of God to reach an abstract aspect of God's being
    1. There is an important distinction between the ontological and the ontic
        a. The ontological is the study of being in the abstract
        b. The ontic is the personal encounter with being in the moment
    2. Through ontic encounter there is the revelation of being and therefore the ontic has priority over the ontological

3. Revelation must not stop with the ontological but proceed to the ontic
   a. Scripture is ontological at the point that it reveals truth to us
   b. When the Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to confront us with the person of Jesus an ontic event has taken place
B. The act of God which reveals calls for a corresponding act of hearing, obedience and confession
C. Revelation is not first of all a mental apperception which is received as an object of thought
   1. The Hebraic response to revelation is to hear, obey and to confess rather than to think
   2. The Greek response to revelation is observation and the drawing of conclusions without the intimacy of being known
D. In the sequence of hearing, obeying and confession there is a re-enactment of revelation
   1. The sequence is act, virtue, and then nature of God
   2. Moses has hearing, obedience and confession
   3. The community is the re-enactment of the revelation
E. Student questions regarding the structure of revelation
   1. What is the role of reason in this model?
      a. Reason in Hebraic thought was not directed to developing abstract constructs but sought explanation for their experience to abstract meaning from the acts of God
      b. Reason in Western, Greek oriented thought was to abstract away from concrete reality and to engage in the formulation of abstract concepts
      c. We need to enable people to think out for themselves the reality of God in their existence
   2. Can the lecturer further explicate the repeated cycle that occurs within the structure of revelation?
      a. It is the continuing presence of God which attends our own hearing, obedience and confession
      b. In the Old Testament it is not clear as to how the "I am" can be present in every contemporary situation - the name of Yahweh is meant to convey this
      c. In the New Testament the presence of the "I am" is captured in the presence of the Holy Spirit

Lesson 4
The Knowledge of God as Actuality and Possibility

I. **Primary and secondary knowledge of God**
   A. Primary knowledge of God is God's self-knowledge
      1. This knowledge exists between the Father and the Son
      2. It is revealed to us through the person of Jesus Christ
   B. Secondary knowledge of God is given to us through the action of the Holy Spirit bringing us into the primary knowledge of God
   C. Knowledge of God is first of all God's knowledge of himself

II. **The doctrine of God : A new model**
   A. The being of God as the one who lives and creates life
      1. He is known as the living God
      2. God is the event in which life takes place
      3. There is an irreversible relation between the being of God as living being and living beings
      4. The deity of God lies not in God's being far from us, but in God's being with us
   B. The being of God as one who loves and makes us free to love
      1. Our concepts of love must be derived out of the actuality of God's love
      2. God exists in fellowship and thus seeks to create and will that fellowship between himself and us
      3. God's love is not just a functional relationship to be added to his being but God's love is a verb before it is a noun
   C. The being of God as the one who is free and gives the freedom to be
      1. The freedom of God to be for us in speaking to us indicates that within God there is freedom
      2. The equivalent of this concept in classical systematics is the aseity of God
      3. God is not dependent upon us, there is no codependency within God
      4. God is free to be for us without losing anything of God's own being
      5. How can God love and grieve for us without losing part of himself and therefore his freedom when we reject him?
         a. It is important to understand this in terms of a relationship between parent and child, the parent must perceive the needs of the child and respond to them
         b. The nature of love is to respond, to change and to adapt for the good of the other
         c. Calvin's solution was the doctrine of double predestination, that is, God is not free to have compassion for the reprobate, those in hell create no grief for God because God created them to be there
         d. What emotions does God have towards those in hell? Does God punish people eternally?

D. The being of God as the one who is holy and produces holiness
   1. Holiness is a synonym for God's presence
   2. Holiness is the core aspect of God's being
   3. What is attached to God's being becomes holy by virtue of its relationship with God
   4. What is serviceable to God becomes holy
   5. Jesus is recognized as holy because he is the very being of God
   6. Holiness is not, in its most primary sense, moral and ethical purity

III. **Knowledge of God is a real knowledge of God for humanity**
   A. There are two terms which are helpful in understanding the role of the human subject in the knowledge of God - accommodation and election
      1. Accommodation means that God becomes one of us to the point that there is virtually no difference between God and us - incarnation
      2. Election means that God has designated and chosen one person - "This is my son"
   B. God accommodates to the frailty of human persons as they tell the story and witness to God
      1. The Bible is the Word of God because God accommodated to humanity and spoke through human people
      2. God elects some persons to be his witnesses
      3. These two principles - accommodation and election - must be held together
   C. Revelation precedes Scripture - the doctrine of Scripture rests on the doctrine of revelation
   D. The role of faith in the knowledge of God is grounded in the ability of humans to respond to God
   E. There is a continuum between rationalism and fideism (A diagram is drawn in which there is a straight line representing a continuum. At one end the word "rationalism" is written, and at the other end the word "fideism" is written.)
      1. Fideism posits that what ever the human self holds to be true is in fact truth
      2. Rationalism posits that the concept of truth must be established as the basis for belief - e.g. Carl Henry
         a. Before we believe anything about God we must have access to truth about God
         b. Truth must be objective and not subjective, subjective experience as a basis for belief is existential
         c. Objective truth comes in the form of propositions, that is, truth statements that can be verified
         d. Contends that between the human logos and the divine logos there is an exact identity at a certain point, that is, there is a univocal relationship
         e. The revelation of God is discerned by the human mind in the same way that we discern all truth

f. Personal, subjective knowledge of God follows the impersonal rational faith

F. Rationalism and fideism are both Cartesian - Thielicke
1. Both of these positions posit that the thinking self is the source of reality
2. It is the subjective self which determines truth
3. I, as the existing subject, am the criterion for what is true
4. Cartesian theology appropriates the Word of God to the human self either by fideism or rationalism

G. It is the Holy Spirit that appropriates humanity to the Word of God, and summons humanity into Word of God. (The lecturer continues to work with the diagram already drawn by placing the word "Holy Spirit" above the center of the continuum between rationalism and fideism. Arrows are drawn coming from both ends of the spectrum, illustrating that in its work the Holy Spirit takes both our rationalism and our existential experience of God and encompasses them in the true knowledge of God, and in doing so both our minds and our subjective experience are made subject to the Word of God.)
1. The Holy Spirit awakens in us the knowledge of God
2. The subjective, rational and ethical selves must be brought into the knowledge of the Word of God
3. The subjective aspect of our experience and the mental constructs of our mind are made subject to the Word of God
4. Conversion involves our mind, emotions and will
5. Faith is not two movements but is a single movement involving both an informed mind and a consenting will, both are necessary for there to be a true knowledge of God

H. The Holy Spirit is the objective reality of the person of God through Jesus Christ confronting us

I. The Holy Spirit brings us into the inner relationship of the self knowledge of God (A diagram is drawn in which it is illustrated that there is a circular relationship between the Father and the Son that humanity has no possibility of entering - "No-one knows the Son except the Father, and no-one knows the Father except the Son."   The role of the Holy Spirit is to draw us into this inner relationship "and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." [Matthew 11:27] The diagram illustrates humanity been drawn into this relationship by the action of the Holy Spirit.)

J. Faith as true knowledge has both objective and subjective reality
1. God has both objectively spoken to and through Christ and subjectively responded as a true human being
2. The subjective and objective poles are not a continuum of fideism and rationalism
3. The subjective and objective poles of faith and knowledge of God are the relation between the Father and the Son
4. Jesus stands with us in our subjective response

5. All worship, prayer, ministry is the continuing worship, prayer and ministry of the Son to the Father into which the Holy Spirit incorporates us

Lesson 5
Scripture: Its Nature, Authority and Purpose

I.   **Scripture as ontic and noetic revelation**
   A. There are two dimensions of revelation - ontic and noetic
      1. Ontic revelation
         a. Ontic means the encounter with being
         b. Revelation must have an ontic dimension, and is not merely abstract knowledge
      2   Noetic Revelation
         a. There is a real encounter but also real content is given
         b. It is an objectified form of revelation as a phenomenon of historical and public witness
   B. The woman at the well - a paradigm of revelation
      1. She has a personal encounter with Jesus - ontic
      2. She attempts to divert him by talking ontologically but Jesus perseveres to the ontic encounter and self-disclosure takes place
      3. She returns to town to tell of her encounter, and tells the people in town where she met him - noetic
      4. Her information is not precise, but they see a well with a man standing nearby, they go to him and have an encounter with Jesus
      5. The noetic story, information and directions, leads them to their own ontic encounter with Christ
      6. Her directions had to be "good enough" to get them into the proximity of Christ

II. **Issues concerning the authority of Scripture**
   A. The inerrancy of Scripture
      1. How do we deal with the contradictions in Scripture?
      2. The modern use of the word "error" has the connotation of being that which can not be trusted
      3. If there is one mistake of a historical or geographical nature, does this mean that the entire Bible cannot be believed?
   B. The infallibility of Scripture
      1. The Bible does not claim absolute, technical precision in all of its reporting
      2. Scripture will not fail to lead persons to the truth, it is incapable of deceiving us and leading us into error
   C. The purpose of Scripture
      1. To lead us to Christ
      2. That we should encounter the Living Christ
      3. Directions need to be good, we need to be put in the right direction
   D. Inerrancy is only a hypothesis
      1. There are primary and secondary levels of authority in the Bible
      2. Don't be mislead by the argument over inerrancy as though the authority of the Bible rests on it

      3. The concept of inerrancy leads to a hot-air balloon theory of Scripture, if there is one error then the Bible loses its authority

III. **Translation of the Word of God**
  A. The antecedent to the incarnation is the presence of the Word within the inner structure of Israel's society
  B. The Word clothed itself in the form of Israel
  C. Language and culture are not normative but the vehicle through which the Word of God is present and manifested
  D. A modern day analogy
    1. The Word of God is the hard drive of a computer
    2. Our lives are the memory
    3. We need to "back up", ground our lives, in the Word of God
    4. All that we take as the absolute reality is just in memory, when the power is off only that which is grounded in the Word will survive
    5. Bible in its language is like a computer translating one program to another and yet it is all still only in the memory
    6. The original Hebrew language is just in memory, not on the hard drive, it is the operating system
    7. Biblical translation takes the Hebrew and Greek language to our language
  E. We should not enshrine any particular language to make it identical with the Word of God.
  F. The value of the original Greek and Hebrew is that it places us back in the original event and gives us contact with the original people
  G. The original language is not as important as the original people are. We study the original language to get an access to the culture, times, people and the context in which the Word of God appeared
  H. There is an important distinction to be made between translation and communication

IV. **The task of translation**
  A. Translation must reproduce as much as possible the content of the original event
  B. The task of translation is <u>not</u> to write the Bible in such a vernacular that it communicates, the role of communication is a task which must be taken up by the communicator
  C. The degree to which the translation serves the purpose of communication makes it obsolete
  D. The danger is the more that you make a translation contemporary the quicker it becomes obsolete
  E. Must be sufficiently contemporary that it works in a modern language

V. **The task of communication**
  A. Communication must not be confused with the task of translation
  B. The aim is to take a good translation in a modern language and communicate it with the use of analogies and metaphors
  C. Communication is the task of the expositor not the translator

VI. **The structure of revelation**

A. Prior to the writing of the Old Testament there were years of oral tradition
B. These stories were as much revelation as the words that were written
C. Revelation does not begin with Scripture, but with God's encounter with people
D. Humanity has always had divine revelation
E. Revelation is the reality of God's presence in revealing God's self to the people in such a way that the people themselves get bound up in the act of revelation
   1. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are more than story tellers
   2. Their own lives become Word of God because they obey
   3. In their frailty they become bearers of the Word of God
   4. Problem of human authorship of Scripture is initially the reality of the human role in revelation prior to Scripture
   5. They become Word of God because God has encountered them, spoken through them and continues to speak through them
F. Revelation precedes and creates Scripture
G. The truth of Scripture lies in whether it is the Word of God, not that it is historically accurate in every detail
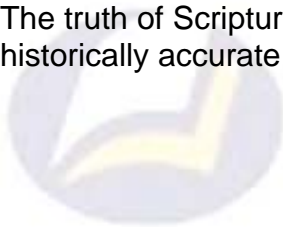
Lesson 6
Revelation and the Inscripturation of the Word

I. **The process by which divine revelation becomes Holy Scripture**
   A. Revelation is an act of self-communication on the part of God as subject who is identical with himself in his self-disclosure, and who objectifies himself through Word and deed
      1. Revelation is never only information
      2. Revelation is always divine self-disclosure
   B. Revelation, as God's act of self-communication, becomes concrete in its historical objectivity without becoming merely an object of the human subject's reflective act
      1. The importance of Abraham and Isaac is that their stories ground the Word of God in a series of events that took place within human history
      2. Historical character of revelation is grounded in the lives of the people that God encountered
      3. It is through these people that we have testimony to God
      4. Word of God comes to us not only as that which is waiting to be heard but also as those who have heard it
   C. Revelation is progressive in its historical concretion
      1. The stories continue to unfold deeper truths of revelation
      2. This progressive aspect stops with the act of God which concludes it, with Jesus Christ
      3. Jesus Christ reveals to us the inner meaning and dimension of Word of God
II. **Overview and elaboration of the preceding points regarding the task of translation and the structure of revelation**
   A. Problem with the utilization of communication theory for the translation of Scripture
      1. Communication theory is receptor oriented
      2. If we assume that the Word of God continues to be "hanging in the air" waiting to be received by us it implies that the same Word of God that Jesus heard and interpreted now awaits our interpretation
      3. This equation is missing the acknowledgment that the Word that we now hear is a Word that has been heard
      4. The Word that comes to us is a Word already embodied and clothed in Jesus
      5. The Gospel that comes to us is that the Word which we receive is a Word that has already been heard, obeyed and received
   B. The human person becomes part of revelation prior to the writing of Scripture
      1. Stories told are as authoritative as the written word
      2. The Bible is not the beginning of revelation, it is inscripturated revelation, that is, revelation embodied in text and language to be passed on to us

C. The progressive nature of revelation is tied to the redemptive events within Scripture
   1. Scripture is clustered around pivotal points of redemptive revelation
   2. Revelatory books are understood to be very closely attached to the historical act of God by which an act of redemption took place
   3. The process by which the New Testament canon is selected involved self-consciousness about what constituted revelation in written form and what did not
   4. Scripture is a human response and recognition of God's act of revelation within human history

III. **Three fold form of Word of God - Barth**
   A. The first form of the Word of God is Jesus Christ
      1. This is the actual Word of God
      2. Jesus is the enfleshed Word of God
   B. The second form of the Word of God is the Word of Scripture which is the written record of this Word of God
      1. This has the possibility of Word of God
      2. The relationship of the living Jesus Christ with the words of Scripture is what determines Scripture being Word of God
   C. The third form of the Word of God is the Word proclaimed
      1. In the preaching of the Word of God, the Word of God becomes actual again
      2. In hearing the Word preached we make contact with the actual Word of God, Jesus Christ
      3. Scripture serves as the mediation of the Word, only Scripture has the power of mediating Word of God to us - this is the uniqueness of Scripture
      4. Scripture without it being preached only has the possibility of the Word of God
   D. Summary
      1. Theologically - the Word of God proceeds first from God through Christ, through Scripture, to proclamation
      2. Practically - the first form of God is that which is preached, Scripture is that which we look for to authenticate this Word of God
   E. Student questions
      1. Does the word of Scripture have the possibility of being the Word of God for me?
         a. If through the words of Scripture Jesus Christ has been encountered then the Bible is the Word of God
         b. Scripture only has the possibility of being Word of God
         c. Scripture must be bracketed by the reality of the living Word that we meet in Scripture and our own encounter with the Living Word
         d. Revelation must be ontic, actual encounter and knowledge of Jesus Christ, not just information based upon Scripture

2. Can the Word of God proclaimed be only a possibility and the Scripture the actual Word of God?
   a. From the side of our own faith response the Bible raises the possibility, when we encounter Jesus it actually becomes Word of God
   b. There is a difference between the ideas of early Barth and later Barth
      [1] The early Barth contended that the Scripture can become the Word of God
      [2] The later Barth contended that the only reason why Scripture can become Word of God is because it is Word of God, God has invested God's Spirit and purpose in that Word
   c. The development of Brunner
      [1] He contended that anything that leads a person to meet Jesus Christ becomes Word of God
      [2] Barth was scandalized by this because it places Scripture among all other possible documents
3. Isn't it objectively true that the Bible is the Word of God? How can it become the Word of God?
   a. Barth asks the question: if we acknowledge that the Bible has the character of the Word of God, how is that important or relevant?
   b. Humanity has the ability to harden their hearts and not see what is really true
   c. We need to put Scripture within its purpose
   d. The effect of the Word of God is as much a part of its authority as its source

IV. **The process by which divine revelation becomes Holy Scripture: Continued**
   A. Revelation is propositional in its personal concretion as well as historical event
      1. The Bible must contain true propositions rather than false ones
      2. We cannot have revelation without the concept of propositions
      3. Proposition takes place within a historical event
   B. Revelation confronts the human person historically, rationally and spiritually.
      1. Historically - it must be grounded in an actual event
      2. Rationally - it must have propositions
      3. Spiritually - there must be a spiritual encounter
   C. There is a necessary ambiguity between the living Word and the written Word.
      1. The Bible is not divine, but the divine Word of God through Jesus Christ encounters us in the Bible
      2. This results in an ambiguity between the Word that we meet in the Bible and the words that we read

3. The line between revelation and the record of revelation in Scripture should not become so <u>thin</u> that the being of God in self-disclosure is subsumed totally under the objective word
4. The line should not become so <u>thick</u> that the being of Word is separated from the form of Word, or so that truthfulness (external verification) is separated from meaningfulness (inward verification)
   D. The "inward testimony" of the Holy Spirit is superior to any human judgment and equal to that of an intuitive perception of God himself in Scripture - Calvin
V. The resurrection of Christ as a hermeneutical criterion
VI. The relationship between Scripture and the Holy Spirit
   A. There is a danger in using the text against the Spirit
   B. We must be open to the continuing ministry of the Spirit, e.g. the ordination of women into ministry
   C. What if there is conflict between the words of Scripture and the leading of the Spirit? How do we resolve the problem?
      1. There must be an authority of Scripture for saying that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus Christ
      2. We cannot set aside a text of Scripture on the basis of a subjective principle
      3. An examination of texts concerning the role of women in ministry
         a. We must examine the cultural context within which the text was written
            [1] The problems at Corinth and Ephesus with regard to women
            [2] In writing to the churches at Philippi and Macedonia does not warn them against the ministry of Lydia
            [3] In Rome Paul freely acknowledges Phoebe as a deacon and Junia as an apostle
         b. By taking the texts out of 1 Timothy and Corinthians and making them normative we are using Paul's texts against himself
         c. Paul's practice in ministry was to acknowledge that the Spirit calls both men and women into ministry
         d. When it was expedient in the particular context Paul recommended against women being in ministry but this can not be understood to be normative
   D. There is no clear answer to safeguard against a movement either towards pressing passages of Scripture too far, or towards stressing complete freedom of the Spirit over and against Scripture
   E. In every age the church needs to be focused on the center, not allowing itself to be subverted by false teaching nor being "lead by the Spirit" away from the center
   F. The church must be both spiritually directed and open to the Holy Spirit but also dealing with Scripture to see that what the Spirit teaches is according to the Scripture

G. It is the responsibility of the church of Christ to keep testing itself by these criteria
H. The Body as an important metaphor for the church in dealing with keeping this tension of being open and testing the Spirit

VII. **The servant form of Scripture**
   A. Analogy between the incarnation and the process of inscripturation
      1. Just as God became human in Jesus of Nazareth and became constrained and limited by the finitude of a human context, the Word of God in Scripture can be understood as "incarnated" in a human form
      2. This illustration has its limits, Scripture is not the incarnation of God
   B. The problem of the human boundary in Scripture has always been an issue
   C. The tension between the human authorship, words and context and the divine Word itself can be expressed as "treasure in earthen vessels"
   D. Positive gains result from a doctrine of Scripture as the Word of God in servant form
      1. A genuine science of theology is made possible; the historical and human character of revelation can be taken seriously
      2. Normative revelation is placed at the center of the church, not above it and there is a historical connection between the believing community and its source
      3. The life of the Spirit has grounds which lie outside of the human subject's historical existence
         a. The humanity of revelation, and of the Spirit's humanity, is objective to our humanity by virtue of the humanity of Christ as living Word
         b. When we encounter Christ in Scripture we meet a fully human Christ and our humanity is not measured by the Word of God in abstract form but by the humanity of Jesus Christ
         c. Jesus is the litmus test of true humanity, spirituality is dependent upon authentic humanity

VIII. **Issues concerning the inspiration and authority of Scripture**
   A. Inspiration
      1. The word inspiration has traditionally been used to designate the "God-breathed" character of Scripture
      2. The Greek word *theopneustos* means "God-breathed"
      3. Inspiration means to be taking in something while *theopneustos* means to breathe out something
      4. The Spirit breathed out through the Biblical authors
   B. Infallibility and inerrancy
      1. Inerrancy as a technical concept that the Bible must be absolutely precise or it is not true
      2. Infallibility is the character of truthfulness; even though there are minor inconsistencies, there is genuine infallibility

Lesson 7
God's Creation

I. **The redeemer God is also the God of creation**
II. **The covenant as the eternal and internal meaning of creation**
III. **Creation as external form of the covenant**
(As the lecturer is talking he is drawing a line below which is written the word "Creation" and above which the word "God" is written. Beside the word "God" he places the word "covenant." This diagram is meant to suggest that covenant existed within the heart of God from all eternity and, as such, preceded creation. Creation, then, is understood as the external form of the covenant.)
   A. Creation as external form of the covenant
      1. Covenant is the hermeneutic of creation
      2. Covenant is the inner being of God's purpose and love for humanity
      3. It exists first and then creation because God exists first and then creation
   B. Creation is temporary but the Word of God abides for ever, it is a Word of covenant love, mercy and purpose
   C. Genesis 2 interprets Genesis 1 in terms of the eternal meaning and purpose
   D. Covenant is the eschatological meaning of history
IV. **Covenant as the internal form and meaning of creation**
   A. The destiny of humanity is determined by the seventh day
      1. Humanity is called to live with God and share God's love forever
      2. The destiny of the creatures of the sixth day is determined by their nature
      3. Our eternal destiny is contingent upon our life with God, that is, we are dependent upon something other than our nature
         a. Being human is a contingent reality
         b. It is contingent upon our life always being drawn from God
         c. Animals are subject to the relentless determinism of creation
   B. The image of God is contingent upon relation with God
      1. In the eating of the fruit Adam and Eve took upon themselves the destiny of their own lives
      2. By acting in a self-determining way they broke the relationship with God and fell back into the determinism of the sixth day
      3. Humanity was created as part of the life cycle but God made an intervention by calling us into the seventh day, into relationship with him
      4. If we break the relationship with God we fall back into the situation in which our created nature determines our destiny
      5. The real human dilemma is not just sin it is death
      6. God provides salvation through his Son
         a. The resurrection is the hermeneutic for the Cross
         b. God frees us from the determinism of our death nature

       c. Death has no power to separate us from the love of God
   7. Human desire for self-preservation makes us very dangerous
   8. *After the Fall*, by Arthur Miller - a theological analysis of sin
C. Creation is contingent upon God as Creator for its own existence
   1. *Ex nihilo* is at the very core of the relationship of creation to God
       a. *Ex nihilo* is at the center of a theology of redemption
       b. God is the only antecedent of everything that is
   2. Now that God has created life, it is contingent upon God's life
D. Creation has no intrinsic purpose of its own
   1. There is no teleology within creation apart from the divine purpose given to it
   2. There is no natural theology within the created world that stands by itself
E. The biblical perspective is directly opposed to that of the mythical, where the gods and human creature have a common nexus, or connection
 (As the lecturer is speaking he is drawing a diagram which is designed to represent the fact that classical myth is detached from history. In the classical myth the world is divided into two hemispheres, which is represented by a line drawn across the page. Below the line is the realm of human activity in which all kinds of conflicts occur. For the classical myth, however, this sphere is determined by that which lies above the line, behind the scene of the flow of human life. It is the activity of the gods in this realm which determine and explain human outcomes.)
   1. The structure of classical myth sought to explain human tragedy
       a. Myths contained anthropological, cosmological and theological statements
       b. Language of mythology has the kerygma of mythology
   2. In the story of creation there is mythological language but the kerygma of myth has been disarmed and replaced with the kerygma of God
F. Student questions
   1. How can we understand existence prior to the Fall?
       a. Death is a natural part of the life cycle
       b. There is a healing source available to humanity before the Fall, God constantly kept humanity from the fate of disease and death
       c. In the Fall humanity lost the safety net of God, and creaturely nature became the destiny of humanity except that God reaches back in and re-establishes relationship
   2. What does Genesis mean by the word good?
       a. We tend to associate good with perfect
       b. Good includes the natural world the way God created it
       c. The world as God created it is dangerous for humans

d. What happened at the Fall was <u>not</u> that disease was created but that humanity became subject to it

e. This assumes that the natural world before the Fall is similar to how it is now

G. The polarity of God as both the creator God, who stands above and beyond history, and the God who is with Israel

1. The concept of the oneness of God is not mathematical
2. Oneness refers to the sameness of God
3. It is the same God who is with them as redeemer who is the creator
4. Metaphysical problems of how God could be both "up there" and "down here" was not a problem for the Hebrews
5. The Hebrews did not think in abstract conceptual, spatial terms but rather in terms of relationship
6. They understood that the same God who created the heavens and the earth was their God, and he was with them

H. The more fully developed doctrine of the Trinity also reflects the doctrine of God's polarity

1. There are difficulties with the analogies used to explain the Trinity
2. Most of these analogies are a product of our own concepts, a geometric and mathematical projection
3. The God of Israel is a God that stands above them as the creator and the God who is with them as the redeemer
4. In the New Testament, Jesus is the fulfillment as one who stands as one of us and with us, the God who reveals the God who is the creator as the Father, and the God who reconciles
5. Jesus is the God who is for humans and the human who is for God - the God who speaks and the God who hears, the God who commands and the God who obeys
6. Within the being of God there is this polarity, this reciprocity of perfect unity
7. The role of the Spirit is to bring us into this relationship of polarity of God, to declare the being of God to us
8. Within God's eternal being there is a dialogical relationship, God is not an abstract static entity

V. **Eschatological perspective**

A. In a biblical view of reality, the future and the Word of God exist first and come to us as the seventh day enters in to qualify the sixth day

B. The seventh day brings freedom, liberation, healing and hope, and comes to us out of the future

C. The reality of the future must be a criterion for us

D. This can be applied to the doctrine of the church

1. There is a first and last century church
2. The last century church is the church that will be here when Jesus returns
3. The church of the last century should be determinative for the polity, function and life of the church today, not the first century

4. Historical, biological criterion came to an end on the Cross, the criterion is now the new humanity under the new order
5. As we move towards the last century we should expect the form of the church to emerge that Christ has promised - the end of gender, economic, and racial distinctions, that our true humanity will be liberated
6. Eschatological hermeneutic in 2 Corinthians 4
7. The Bible roots us in the apostolic testimony and is our authority for saying that Jesus, the chief apostle, is alive and he is coming
8. Not historical precedence but eschatological preference of Jesus which must determine the church

E. What is the nature of what is coming to us today through Jesus Christ by the Spirit? How does this relate to revelation?
1. This is not new revelation but rather is hermeneutics, what we receive today is interpreting Scripture
2. The canon of Scripture closed revelation for us
3. Scripture is fully sufficient authority and guide for us to know the Spirit
4. Paul's use of this principle
5. There is a struggle today as to how we are using the Bible

Lesson 8
Humanity: Created in the Image of God

I. **Differing views concerning the image of God**
  A. Traditional views of the image of God
    1. Image of God is a faculty that resides in the individual and is primarily grounded in reason
    2. The mark of the image of God is the individual's rationality that perceives the revelation of God as truth
    3. It functions to give the human person moral agency
  B. Contemporary theology
    1. This view tends to avoid substantive categories of the image of God as a faculty inherent in the human person
    2. Image of God is primarily grounded in relationality rather than individuality
    3. There are not many Scriptures which specifically speak of the image of God, and the passages that do - Genesis 1: 26-27, 5:1, 9:6 - tend to be ambiguous by the parallelism that is there
    4. The structure of Hebrew parallelism of "image and likeness" are meant to point to virtually the same thing, that is, there is something in humans that corresponds to God
    5. Brunner
      a. Image is the formal construct of being a moral person bound to love
      b. Likeness is the material content
      c. Every human has the formal structure of being able to hear the Word of God and be obedient to it
      d. While we bear the image we are not in the likeness because we are not moral
      e. Non-Christians are still in the divine image because they are morally accountable
    6. Barth
      a. Initially believed that the image of God in humanity is totally destroyed
      b. Image of God is a relation and when one isn't in relation one isn't in the image
      c. Retreated from this stand because there was no way of saying that a sinner was still a human
      d. Image is still there but is totally darkened, turned inwardly and must be redeemed
II. **The effects of the Fall on the image of God : A historical overview**
  A. Augustine
    1. The image is located in the faculty of knowledge of God
    2. No true knowledge of God is possible except that one is enlightened from above
  B. Thomas Aquinas

1. He developed the concept of the *donum superadditum* which was a supernatural endowment received by Adam and Eve, and was lost in the Fall
2. They retained the image in the sense of being moral and reasoning persons
3. The additional gift of righteousness was lost and therefore the grace of God comes to restore that gift

C. Luther
1. Denied the ontological concept of image as well as the concept of *donum superadditum*
2. Believed that the image was not so much a faculty in the human as an orientation of will toward God that was lost through the Fall and must be restored by grace

D. Calvin
1. Humanity retained certain aspects of the image in the fallen person
2. Believed that there is a natural humanness and morality made possible by common grace

III. **A closer look at Barth's concept of the image of God**
A. Barth interprets the image as the relational aspect of human personal being, grounded in the differentiation of human sexuality
B. Without the differentiation from another human we can not be in the divine image, this differentiation is not only a differentiation of co-humanity
C. Barth uses Buber's concept of the structure of human relationship as I/Thou -the I must be either male or female, which is intrinsic to the differentiation
D. A man cannot be truly male unless he is in some social/communal relationship with females and the degree to which we confuse or deny our own gender, we are confusing and violating the image of God
I. Practical implications of this theological concept
J. Student question: What if you are single and in a monogamous, sexual relationship?
1. This has the same status before God as a legal marriage
2. Marriage before a community has its own role to play but the monogamous relationship that exists without legal ceremony incorporates all the ethics and moral value of what marriage should be
3. Wedding ceremony does not add any ethical responsibility that cohabitation does not already include
4. Cohabitation if it is merely mutual is already a violation of community

Lesson 9
The Providence of God

I. **Traditional views of God's relation to the created world**
    A. Deism
        1. God and the world do not touch each other
        2. The analogy is used of God as the watch maker who constructs a clock, winds it up and then leaves the room
        3. The one who made the world is no longer actively involved in it
        4. The world understood to be formed out of natural law, basic principles of morality and justice are embedded in the creation
        5. No direct interactive relation between God and the world
    B. Theism
        1. The being of God and the being of the world are distinct but there is an overlapping sphere
        2. In this overlapping sphere God does cause things to happen that do not ordinarily happen - miracle and mystery
        3. For the most part the world continues on its own course, miracles are infrequent and episodic
        4. God stands apart from his creation, interacts with it at various times for different purposes, sustains and upholds it
        5. The world has its own basic meaning
    C. Post-Reformation Theism
        1. With the emergence of modern science there is move away from the concept that the overlapping was almost total
        2. Increasingly the supernatural becomes a smaller segment of the world and the natural law is preserved
        3. The area of the scientist is to explore the cause and effect relationships within the natural world
        4. The realm of the miracle became personalized and became a smaller sphere
        5. This led to the dichotomy between science and religion for many because science could explain things that religion used to explain
        6. This dichotomy led to an uneasy relationship between scientific explanations and religion
    D. Pantheism
        1. God and the world are one
        2. God is a reality that is present in everything
II. **Process Theology - a modern alternative to theism**
    A. Advanced as a better explanation of older theistic theology
    B. Assumptions and implications of the older theistic model to which the process theologians are responding
        1. God is viewed in the Greek way - eternal, immutable, not subject to change, impassive, and with no affect
        2. Theist is concerned with defining God as other than and different from the world and yet in relationship with the world

3. We have emotions but God does not and this has implications for how we view the way in which God interacts with us
4. Implications of this model for the problem of evil
   a. If we attribute to God absolute purity, perfection and goodness, and the world is filled with evil and imperfection God can enter in for the purpose of overcoming and combating evil but we must attempt to maintain God's purity
   b. Problem of evil is managed by asserting that the goodness of God must be trusted even though we have no answers as to why a good God would not stop evil from happening
   c. If we attribute to God all power and sovereignty the question arises as to where God is when we need him most
   d. Leaves the person under affliction without much comfort
C. Theological assumptions of Process Theology
1. Assumptions originally put forward by Alfred North Whitehead in his book *Process and Reality*
2. God is a creator God who stands as the initial intention in every event that takes place
   a. God is the impetus, the energy in all activity
   b. God is involved in the process by evoking out of the process of life higher levels of consciousness and spirituality
   c. In the process there are contradictory counter forces - decay, corruption and death
   d. Through the process God will prevail
3. God is the consequent end of the process and will bear the result of the struggle
   a. Who God is and who he will be is yet to be determined, God is in the process of being formed
   b. God is in a similar process to us but has the power to overcome and survive what we cannot
4. Process theology is not pantheism but rather panentheism - God is in everything
   a. This is called dipolar theism
   b. Rather than there being a single pole of God's being, either in outside or in the world, God has two poles
      [1] The pole at the original intention of every event; and
      [2] The pole that awaits its final consummation as the end of everything
D. Critique of Process Theology
1. The model denies ontological independence of God while this is a concept that is crucial to biblical theology
2. Process theology makes God too passive while the Bible describes God as more present to the world
3. Biblical theology teaches that the relation of God to the world is asymmetrical, not symmetrical as is posited by process theology
E. Student questions regarding Process Theology

1. How does Jesus fit into this process?
   a. Process theologian would say that Jesus is a exceptional human in which there is much more of God than any other human
   b. Jesus has emerged on the continuum through the process as an explosion of deity
   c. Evangelicals believe that there is a pre-existing divine being that has entered into the process freely and as a result is subject to the process
   d. This divine person of Jesus while being in the process has ontological independence of the process
   e. Process theology has no doctrine of the incarnation of a pre-existing being
2. What does this language of Father/Son mean if Jesus is merely an eruption of the being of God and was not pre-existent?
   a. Within the theological construct of Process Theology this language would be interpreted as metaphor used to express the relationship between the God in process and the new development of God's being
   b. While there is a part of God who is part of history there is a part that is brand new
3. If process theologians do not believe in the divinity of Christ can they be considered to be orthodox Christians?
   a. Process theologians believe in a divine reality that is working through the process
   b. They can believe in the ontological uniqueness of Jesus without positing the ontological independence
   c. Jesus would be understood as the manifestation of the deity of God in human form but not one that has come into the world through incarnation of a pre-existing being

III. **A christological perspective**
   A. Starts with the ontological independence of God as a biblical assumption
   B. The knowledge of God that we have is not first of all knowledge of God as creator over and against the world, but rather as redeemer and liberator
   C. In the redemptive action God takes upon God's self the burden of pain and evil and in doing so God becomes the victim
   D. Out of the doctrine of God as one with us and for us we now have a doctrine of God as creator and a doctrine of creation
   E. The connection point between these two doctrines is the knowledge of God as redeemer in which we have participation through Christ
   F. The person of Jesus determines our doctrine of God, because this is the only God we know

IV. **Different models dealing with the problem of evil**
V. **The impact of the Christological approach**

A. The Christological approach reframes our doctrine of God
B. We have the power of a God who will stand with us in our pain and lead us on the journey towards healing and hope
C. God became weak for us, he became a disabled God

VI. **Conclusion the Christological approach**
A. A pastoral application
B. Student questions
  1. If there is an ontologically good God how did evil enter the world?
     a. Old Testament gives us no help as to the question why
     b. God takes responsibility for having created the world but also takes the consequence of it upon God's self
     c. The real question is: why would a God who didn't have to, take the consequences of evil?
     d. The Bible is not concerned with the philosophical question of why there is evil but concentrates on God's response to it
  2. With respect to the pastoral example how can it be said that God didn't have the power to help the dying woman? Didn't Jesus have the power to come down from the Cross?
     a. Lecturer needed to shatter a paradigm that was not biblical
     b. It is important to find a way to make contact with the one who feels separated from and abandoned by God
     c. Jesus did not have the power to raise himself from the dead rather God raised him (Romans 1)
     d. God, in the form of Jesus, was powerless
     e. If we affirm that, ontologically, Jesus is God then we have to say that God manifested God's self to us in the form of powerlessness
     f. God manifested God's self in powerlessness in order to demonstrate the greater power of God

VII. **The providence of God**
A. Many theologians have struggled to understand and explain what it means to talk of God's providence
B. Distinctions are often made between general, special, and singular
C. Some have thought of providence in terms of:
  1. Conservation - God's faithfulness to conserve and preserve creation
  2. Concurrence - God's providence is related to the spontaneity and freedom of human actions
  3. Governance - God's providence focuses on the "laws" which God uses to effect his control over creation
D. Providence has been understood as an answer to the question of fate
  1. Difference between a fatalistic view and a view that everything is predetermined
  2. Determinism and indeterminism are both problematic
  3. Need to have a relationship in which the purpose for the relationship is determined but not every event

4. Being a Christian and believing in God's providence means to be able to endure the uninterpretability of events
5. We live in a world that has a high degree of randomness, events that take place are not meant to reveal to us any secret wisdom from God

E. Providence as a confession of God's faithfulness and power to accomplish his promise and will
1. For Israel God's providence was a commitment to bring Israel to the point where God's purpose for Israel had been realized
2. The confession of belief in God's providence is a rejection of the omnipotence of sin and the tyranny of nature
   a. Even the events which occur as a result of the consequences of our sin have no ultimate power that is greater than God
   b. God accomplishes his gracious will in spite of human sin and failure
3. For the Israelite as well as for the Christian, God's providence is attached first of all to promise, with promise embodied in God's participation in our struggles and in our ambiguous existence for the sake of the ultimate realization of his purpose
   a. We tend to interpret events in a linear fashion - cause and effect
   b. God's providence is not a similar kind of cause and effect but is categorically different
   c. Events themselves do not produce good things, God produces good through some things and in spite of other things - evil never produces good, God doesn't create a tragedy in order to bring about a good thing
   d. No evil thing produces a positive value that otherwise God could not have created
4. Providence and the will of God
   a. The will of God is the outcome of actions in our lives not the thing that determines the action
   b. Often we will only know the will of God at the end - e.g. Paul

F. Providence as God's alignment with his people, not with nature
1. The contemporary view that God is aligned with nature over and against human persons is totally false
2. The biblical view is that God is aligned with people over and against nature, through God's mercy and covenant love
3. God can use nature to bring God's people back into focus
4. We cannot look to nature in order to have God's will revealed
5. Nature is always ambiguous but God's will is not, it is revealed to us through his covenant love

G. Providence and the kingdom of God
1. The kingdom of God is the "event" in which God displays his power through presence
2. God's kingdom as the person through whom he prevails, so that his promise perseveres

Lesson 10
The Problem of Evil

I.   **The philosophical problem**
   A. If God is all powerful, but has not the will to prevent evil, then he is a cruel and malicious God
   B. If God is loving and good, but lacks the power to prevent evil, then he is a weak and impotent God
   C. If God has both the will and the power to prevent evil, then whence evil
   D. This is the philosophical problem that has plagued people, even back as far as Habbakuk

II. **The crisis of faith**
   A. Habbakuk asks God why the righteous are suffering and the evil are prospering
   B. The answer comes in Habbakuk 2 - the just shall live by faith
   C. God responds to Habbakuk, "The question is not a philosophical one of how I can tolerate evil if I am a good God, but how I can tolerate you"
   D. There is no answer in the Bible to the philosophical question, evil is taken as a fact and God deals with it
   E. The biblical tradition has no view of evil as a problem outside of the concept of God's providence; as a crisis of faith it leads directly to God

III. **Evil and human suffering**
   A. Does God cause events which produce human suffering?
      1. One response to human suffering is to say that Satan did it
      2. This is a philosophy in which all events must be interpreted as either being caused by God or Satan
      3. This view allows no randomness in the physical universe, there is always some supernatural cause
      4. A belief in Satan frees us to keep faith in God, because we can attribute evil to Satan rather than having to blame God
   B   Does God just allow Satan to have his way with the world? Is Job the answer to the philosophical question?
      1. A belief in the permissive will of God enables some people to resolve this tension
      2. For those who believe that God is ultimately in control of everything, God could stop evil if he wants but for his own purposes, which we do not know, he permits it to happen
   C. Does God intervene to prevent evil in some cases, but not in others?
      1. Pastor from Nebraska gets assaulted while in California and attributes his safety to the fact that God was watching him
      2. This theology is often used as a psychological coping mechanism, to attribute being saved to pure randomness is not enough
      3. What about those that God doesn't rescue?
      4. We seek to defend ourselves against the pure randomness

5. God doesn't control randomness by eliminating it, he embraces this world with its randomness and gives us the promise that he will be faithful and not allow us to be subjected to any kind of evil

6. It is grotesque to have to attribute things to Satan because it puts us in the power of Satan

D. Is a weak but good and loving God an answer to human suffering?

1. Rabbi Harold Kushner: *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*

2. Do we have to end up with the alternative of a God who chooses to make children die or a powerless God?

3. Sovereignty and power were surrendered for some concept of God's goodness

4. Response of process theologians - Cobb and Griffin

   a. God is part of the process

   b. God's power is the power to evoke in us in a time of tragedy faith, trust and hope

   c. The power that we have to survive is not something that we have, it is something that God's own power brings forth

5. A more traditional Calvinist response - Larson

   a. A direct cause/effect theology

   b. Supports divine double predestination - some are created by God for glory, others to be destroyed

E. Does God permit evil in order to work good?

1. While God may not directly cause a natural disaster which results in human suffering, some feel that he permits it as instructive of his power and for the purpose of teaching a moral lesson

2. If we attribute tragedies to Satan, or to God as having a purpose, we end up with a problem

3. The question of what is meant by "all-powerful" is crucial to the understanding of God's relationship to human events and in particular tragedies

F. Can all disasters be attributed to human sin?

1. Pastoral implications of this theology

2. The world that exists today exists as God intended it to be

3. Even before the Fall the world was a dangerous place but God embraced Adam and Eve so that if any mishap occurred God was there to heal them

4. Sin alienated Adam and Eve from God such that mishap became Fate, it became deadly

G. Do those who suffer perform a vicarious function for the benefit of others?

1. This kind of theology has grotesque implications

2. Good in intention but cruel in actual fact

3. The answer lies in christology, starting with the crucified God and the pain that he suffers

IV. **Christ as the bearer of evil, and the mediator of grace and hope**

A. The theological question with regard to evil is: "What does it mean to say that God takes responsibility for evil?"
   1. God's providence is expressed through the event of the kingdom of God in which evil is grasped as part of the totality of the life which God created, and for which he gives himself as redeemer
      a. If there is randomness and danger this lies within God's created order and within God's redemptive purposes
      b. In the moment of tragedy and grief we can turn to God with confidence and trust, knowing that God can redeem
   2. God's providence is expressed through the event of redemption in which he takes evil upon himself so as to deliver, once and for all, human persons from the power of evil to separate persons from his covenanted purpose and goal
   3. God's providence is expressed through his partnership with human persons in suffering, which is the divine power to be present as advocate in the context of suffering and for the purpose of redeeming those who suffer
B. The pastoral question with regard to evil is: "How can we mediate this presence and divine power in the face of evil and with those who suffer?"
   1. God's providence is expressed through the cross, but is clearly seen and is no illusion
   2. Those who believe in specific sovereignty and deny that human decision-making can ever hinder God's plan must consider all evil as being completely planned and purposed
   3. However, many things in life are gratuitous, they need not have happened and are not purposed by God to create some good that ordinarily would not be
   4. By not subscribing to specific sovereignty we are free to assume that evil was a result of misguided human freedom or the result of the operation of the natural order
   5. God suffers with us the pain of a loss and is not surprised by it, but that doesn't mean that everything is part of God's plan
   6. When we respond and belong to God we are always at the right place and time - it is never wrong to die in God's timing
C. God is in control but does not control everything

Lesson 11
Theological Anthropology : An Introduction

I. **Biblical terminology for personhood**
   A. The terminology which is utilized with regard to the human person is often ambiguous
   B. Terms often defy clear categorical description tending to overlap with each other
   C. The distinction between that which is human and that which is non-human is not made at the level of these terms
   D. We must resist clear categorical definitions for the sake of coming to some understanding of what it means to be human

II. **The functional unity of the self**
   A. Humans are comprised of the physical and the non-physical
      1. We are taken from the dust of the ground, we have a body
      2. We have the life of that body, which the Hebrew word *nephesh*, soul, seeks to express
   B. The unity of the body and the soul is found in the spirit, the Hebraic *ruach* and the Greek *pneuma*
   C. The difference between the human and non-human is not found in the possession of the breath, the spirit
      1. From the biblical standpoint we cannot make the distinction between the human and the non-human as those with souls and those without
      2. Must be careful not to identify humans by attributing to them something which animals don't have at the functional level
   D. It is the orientation of life either towards God, which constitutes human life, or back into nature, which constitutes non-human life
      1. All creatures have souls but the human soul is qualitatively different in that it is given directly by God through the divine breath
      2. In Genesis we are told that when humans start breathing God has breathed the breath of life into them
      3. The source of our life is from God and therefore our orientation is towards God

III. **The human person is an embodied soul and an ensouled body**
   A. The spirit is the life-breath of the body/soul unity
   B. The spirit is not a third aspect of the self, but an expression of both the body and the soul
   C. The spirit is the unifying aspect of the duality of the human person as physical and non-physical
   D. Theologically we are not going to be able to solve the medical/technical question as to when life begins and ends because the Bible is ambiguous
   E. Human life is grounded in biology but biology is not a sufficient determiner of human life, biological life is a necessary but insufficient condition for human life

F. In Genesis 2, God deems that is "not good" for the human to be alone
   1. The Hebrew language suggests that the male and female emerged simultaneously, not sequentially
   2. What it is to be human is not merely to be a higher life form but to be differentiated, not from other life forms, within one's own being
   3. When sin enters in division is made out of differentiation

IV. **Differentiation of our humanity is created by God and is indispensable for the image of God**
   A. If humans are to be humans in the sight of God it is not enough that they be differentiated from all other life forms or God
   B. Differentiation must occur within our own being as humans
   C. The relationship between the creation accounts of Genesis 1 and 2
      1. Genesis 1 is the fact of the matter
      2. Genesis 2 is to answer the "what if?" question
         a. The text is a theological reflection, a hermeneutic, on what it means to be human in the sight of God
         b. It is an indictment against all discrimination and all attempts to segregate

V. **The heart as the center and unity of the self**
   A. Primary focus in the Old and New Testaments is upon the heart
   B. The trichotomous view of human personhood fails to take the heart into account
   C. Westerners tend to understand the heart as the seat of emotions, feeling and compassion
   D. In the more ancient view the bowels and intestines were the physical organs which represented feeling, for the Hebrews it was the womb
   E. The heart, in the Hebrew concept, is instructed by God who stirs it through both emotion and thought
      1. Cognition is not merely mental activity it is the intention of the heart which draw upon emotion and feeling as well as thought
      2. Bodily sensation produces feeling which informs the heart
      3. Intention is meant to result through action
      4. The receipt of God's blessing produces wisdom to the heart
      5. We are morally accountable for our intentions not just our motives
         a. It is not possible to know all the motives of others
         b. We can only have one intention at a time while we may have many motives
         c. Theologically this is a good basis for understanding psychological problems
   F. Student questions regarding biblical anthropology
      1. Is it inhuman for ethnic groups to find their identity together?
         a. The degree to which we separate out from other people solely on the basis of ethnic, racial or gender categories and find our identity there, to that degree we are coming under the judgment of Genesis 2 - it is not good

b. All differentiation other than the differentiation essential to human personhood cannot be the basis for our differentiation over and against each other because it tends to create stereo types

2. What is being meant by differentiation?
   a. Differentiation that is in the image of God is the personal differentiation in which we are able to affirm a basic unity of social, political, communal, familial structures of love and interaction
   b. Differentiation, unity and encounter refer to the fact that we are only human to the extent that we uphold the humanity of the other
   c. In diminishing the humanity of the other we are diminishing our own humanity
   d. What it is to be human in the personal image of God is to be in relationships of interdependency, not independence

3. The Israelites were called to be a special people, is this not in fact segregation? How does this fit in with the model of differentiation that we have been discussing?
   a. Must ask the question "What was God's intention with regard to calling Israel out to be a special people?"
   b. Israel's role was a vicarious one, a special people called out to serve vicariously on behalf of God's relationship to all of humanity
   c. Israel became pathological by taking that vicarious role and making something out of that
   d. Original purpose of the people of Israel is finally fulfilled through Jesus
   e. The people were forbidden to discriminate against the non-Jew on the basis of social, and economic life
   f. Being a special people did not mean that they were to ignore others and deprive them, but rather to include all others in the special provision that God had made for them
   g. The Old Testament gives us the mandate that we are to be human first

4. Could the lecturer elaborate further on what it means to talk of a single intention?
   a. It is what we can always expect of each other even though we may not have a single intention
   b. To the extent that we have more than one intention we are a threat, and unreliable
   c. In order to have a society of integrity we have to state our intentions
   d. Any motive that undermines a stated intention is a failure

Lesson 12
On Being Human: A Theological Paradigm of Personhood

I. **The self as determined by the Word and grace of God: Freedom in dependence**
   A. Creatureliness and humanity are not an antithesis, as though opposed to each other
   B. Freedom of the self is not one aspect of the self set against another aspect
   C. Freedom is the destiny of the self as an orientation of the body/soul unity
   D. In the freedom of the heart we must acknowledge that we have been created and determined by God to be for the other person, not free from the other person
   E. Humans weren't originally given freedom of choice to be either for or against God, they were only given the freedom to be for God
   F. Humans are not given the choice to be autonomous, the gaining of freedom of choice through the Fall was a fatal possibility
   G. Does the placing of the tree of good and evil imply that choice was part of the package?
       (As this question is discussed the lecturer is drawing a diagram in which there is a tree, above the word "God" is written and beside it a human represented by a stick figure. The tree is the gracious boundary given by God to protect the human. As the human stands up against the tree, it is confronted by the concrete reality of the Word of God. It is an unambiguous, empirically observable determination of the Word of God.)
       1. The tree of good and evil was a gracious boundary
       2. It was not there so they could exercise the moral integrity of choosing not to eat of it
       3. The Word of God, the "No," has an unambiguous boundary, their relationship with God is determined by it
       4. The command defines who they are and the relationship
       5. The boundary gives them freedom to operate within it
   H. If they didn't have the freedom to be against God from what did they choose?
       1. The idea that we would have the free choice to chose against God is a source of pathology
       2. To exercise that choice is pathological
       3. In not loving God that which was good became pathological
   I. Where is the source of the evil?
       1. Once God said "Let there be" being itself must issue from God, nothing has being outside of God's command that it should be
       2. With Word of God which created light, darkness exists, light has boundaries

3. The moment God has said "Let this be", non-being becomes a possibility
4. In being human we have the terrible and fateful possibility of slipping into inhumanity, into non-being
5. In resisting God, Adam and Eve slipped away from their own humanity and into non-being
6. Evil is a parasite, it has no independent existence, it feeds upon goodness
7. A subtle but important distinction must be made between ontological existence and phenomenological existence
   a. Ontological existence is existence grounded in being that God has created
   b. Phenomenological existence is the manifestation of symptoms and problems
J. God didn't create us with the ontological possibility of sin, if we sin it is not because we are created with a sin nature

II. **Responsibility in hearing**
A. Response-ability is only given to those to whom God has given the response mechanism
B. The concept of hearing is a very prevalent and powerful biblical metaphor, and is more important than that of seeing
C. Biblical references which illustrate the essential importance of the concept throughout the bible

III. **Differentiation in unity**
A. The unity of the self is a process of self-enactment
B. In responding to God and loving our neighbor as ourselves we are enacting the image of God
C. The self is not merely a cluster of personality characteristics
   1. The core of the self is that we have personhood, it is to have a set of qualities and characteristics that are ontologically based rather than phenomenologically acquired
   2. Personality is an acquired set of characteristics
   3. We are a self before we acquire self-identity
D. The self acquires a history through interaction with other persons; this is a history which has subjectivity as the core of personal being
   1. History, as a human history, involves our own interaction
   2. The loss of this "history" as a reality of encounter and fellowship at the personal level is a loss of emotional and mental health
E. The ontological structure of human personhood is co-humanity
   1. Response to another human is essential to the completeness of the ontology of the self
   2. The image of God ontologically is co-humanity
   3. Individuality is derived out of co-humanity, the more authentic our relationship is to another human the more we become differentiated as the persons we are

4. Individuated selfhood is derived out of an authentic social relationship
F. The theological significance of the history of self: continued
   1. Sin is to lose the history of relationship with each other and God
   2. Salvation is the restoration of the history of humanity in true community
   3. Therapeutic approaches to the healing of persons who suffer emotional and spiritual breakdown therefore should seek to restore the "historical" dimension of the self as a construct of spiritual and social unity

IV. **The self as a social/spiritual unity**
   A. The openness of humans as personal beings
   B. The growth of the person into a self identity takes place in a context of social and spiritual interaction, with intentionality of love as the motive force
      1. The development of self: social, personal, sexual, psychical, and spiritual
      2. These aspects are vitally integrated, the criteria by which we judge a person's spirituality must take into account whether these aspects are integrated
      3. We respond to God spiritually through our psychical, sexual, personal, social being
      4. The degree to which we are dysfunctional at these various levels effects our spiritual lives
   C. The life of the soul becomes "singular" in its union with other souls
      1. We become the specific individual that we are as we are differentiated in relation with others
         a. The degree to which we claim an absolute autonomy is not to gain the freedom of the self but to lose it
         b. We become slaves, addicted to our own desperate needs and desires
      2. In Hebrew soul is the core of the life of personhood

V. **The social nature of the self as an objective basis for personal subjectivity**
   A. Our freedom is not ours as an absolute right, as an absolute isolation from others
   B. Withdrawal from others causes us to lose the freedom to be with and for others
   C. We become persons in relation to others, our individuality is not at the expense of others though the other person's individuality must confront and offer resistance
   D. The resistance of others forms the basis of our self consciousness
      1. If another is totally passive in relationship offering no resistance, in the sense of being available, we cannot be ourselves
      2. We cannot be the persons that we are unless the other person is strong enough to resist us

3. The consciousness of self is not primarily an act of cognition, but of feeling
E. Love is the core of all rationality - Macmurray
   1. Rationality is not merely mental thoughts but it is an actual contact with reality
   2. Authentic contact with reality is made through emotions rather than through thinking
   3. The process of thinking involves abstracting from the encounter with the individual
   4. The response of a child to the touch of its mother is as fully rational as the mother's intention
F. The achievement of a community of persons is grounded in actions which embody intentionality to share a common "soul" or a common history and a common destiny
   1. In true relation each individual does not have to look after themselves because the priority of the other is to care for them
   2. Love integrates the self objectively, not subjectively
   3. Emotions, as a form of feelings, are rational in that they are directed toward the objective reality of the other subject
      a. We gain our true subjectivity by being relating objectively to another person
      b. Self identity is the result of relationship to another person as an object
G. Student question: If self identity is derived from relation with others, and those that we are in relationship with are not whole people, how can we develop if we do not have a context of healthy people?
   1. To a certain degree the individual is limited, self identity will be bound up in the pathology of the community
   2. The degree to which the individual is totally dependent upon one or two dysfunctional persons will be the degree to which they are deprived of authentic selfhood
   3. The individual will learn to contribute to the pathology because it is normal
   4. If the individual has a wider variety of relationships the dysfunction at one level can be partialized, other relationships will summon forth the self identity of the individual

Lesson 13
Human Life as Male and Female

I. **Introduction to the issues of human sexuality**
   A. There is an intrinsic element of the tragic in human sexuality
   B. In sexuality we are exposing the human soul to its ultimate promise and opening it up to an ultimate betrayal
   C. We must not confine persons of a certain sexual orientation to the tragic, sexuality itself is a continuum of the tragic and we are all on it
   D. Before we can discuss issues of human sexuality it is important to decide whether sexual differentiation is an intrinsic part of what it means to be human in the image of God

II. **Sexuality as differentiation and complementarity**
   A. There is a divinely determined order of sexuality intrinsic to the image of God
      1. Primary text is Genesis 1:27
      2. Biological sexuality is bound up with personal being
   B. The essential order to humanity is grounded in co-humanity, the one with the other
      (As the lecturer is speaking he is writing the words "I" and "Thou" next to each other. These words are bound together in a unity by arrows which are moving in both directions to indicate the reciprocity of affirming the other.)
   C. This essential order is a polarity of being experienced through creaturely humanity as male and female
      1. This is a polarity, rather than a symmetry, of complementary differences
      2. Each is different but when they interlock and function it becomes a unity of the whole
      3. The unity is a functional unity, which is achieved through the complementary engagement of the two which are not alike but bound together in the same functional unity
      4. The biological aspect of male and female becomes the expression of the personal polarity of the I/Thou
      5. Biological nature is a necessary but insufficient condition for being human
      6. Personal polarity and differentiation of humanity does not project into God biological male/female differentiation
      7. That which is part of God's eternal being is the polarity and differentiation
   D. Sexual differentiation as male and female, male or female, points to an essential differentiation which is constitutive of personhood itself
      1. While biological differentiation is easy to discern we must ask whether there is such a thing as a male or female personality?
      2. Brunner contends that there are distinct and essential differences between male and female

a. The male produces and is the leader
b. The woman is receptive and preserves life
c. It is the man's duty to shape the new and the woman's duty to write and adapt it to the situation which exists
d. The man goes out and the woman looks within
e. The man is objective and universalized, the woman is subjective and individualized
f. The man builds, the woman adorns
g. The man conquers, the woman tends
h. The man comprehends with his mind, the woman impregnates with the life of her soul
i. It is the duty of man to plan and master and of the woman to understand and unite

3. Barth denies that there are male or female traits
a. Dismisses Brunner's work calling it a malicious caricature
b. Barth's analysis
[1] Notes that male and female are not identical and seeks to express the difference
[2] Believes there is an order of ordination and subordination - seeks to establish the precedence of male and female
[3] This order does not imperil the freedom and the mutuality
c. Lecturer contends that Barth has failed to describe adequately the concept which he is seeking to draw out
[1] Barth's usage of A and B was to explain that while there is an order, A precedes B, the words beginning with A do not have priority over words beginning with B
[2] The order of a dictionary provides no hierarchy on the function and meaning of a word

4. Barth contends that each of us must begin to discover what it is to be male and female
a. We know what it is to be male or female when we are confronted with the humanity of the other gender
b. We must offer positive resistance to the other gender in order that we can discover our true femaleness and maleness

E. Student question: How can males offer positive resistance with regard to females?
1. To recognize them as fellow humans and fully equal in every way
2. To create a level playing field at all levels - socially, economically
3. In treating a woman as a human she has the possibility of becoming a woman

Lesson 14
Issues of Human Sexuality: A Biblical/Theological Paradigm

I. **Summary of the paradigm of human personhood as male and female**
II. **Contemporary ideological approach to human sexuality**
    A. The sexual identity of persons created in the image of God does <u>not</u> include biological sexual differentiation as determinative of human sexual relations
        1. Male/female is purely a biological factor and does not enter into the personal encounter
        2. The I/Thou of two persons does not have to be marked by differentiation
    B. The biological and the personal do not overlap
    C. Personal I/Thou sphere is only linked with the male/female biological sphere by cultural and ethical structures of society
    D. If we assume that biological sexuality has no particular intrinsic component of personal relationship then we must appeal to ethical and cultural norms which shift over time
        1. There is a huge cultural shift between the Old and New Testament
        2. Under this view then, it can be argued that verses in the Bible which refer to homosexuality are cultural artifacts and therefore are not applicable to us
        3. How do we deal with the fact that many of the Bible's prohibitions are not understood by us to normative but we do for the Bible's stance on homosexuality? What can we take as authoritative?
    E. In this model we cannot settle the issue of same sex relationships on the basis of biblical texts
    F. If we assume that the personal and biological do not overlap then we are forced to deal with ethical/cultural issues for which we will not have any real agreement
III. **A traditional theological approach to human sexuality**
    A. Personal aspect of the I/Thou is in the same sphere as the biological male/female
    B. Image of God includes not only the I/Thou but the male/female
    C. The ethical and the cultural are subordinate to what is truly human
    D. The implication of this model is that the degree to which there is disorder and confusion in the area of sexuality it is going to affect our human life
IV. **Implications of the contemporary ideological model - Brunner**
    A. The erotic sexual impulse is an "unbridled biological instinct" which can only be consecrated by marriage
    B. Except for marriage the biological sexual drive has no ethical content to it
    C. The culture or the society enforces the ethic of sexuality in the name of marriage so that the non-married must be abstinent

D. This is a negative ethic in which sexuality cannot be good except within marriage

V. Implications of the traditional theological model - Barth

A. The biological aspect is already bound up in the moral and ethic concept of what it is to be human

B. Marriage does not make sexual impulse morally good, it is good because it is human

C. The ethical aspect of human sexuality is bound up in what it means to be human person

D To take responsibility for one's sexual life as a human it will be exercised in such a way that it upholds the full humanity of one's sexual partner whether one is married or not

E. To uphold the dignity, worth and value of a sexual partner there has to be:
1. Fidelity, rather than promiscuity
2. Commitment rather than a one night stand
3. Responsibility for the consequences

F. Whatever the culture/ethic of marriage is it is already defined in what it means to be human

G. Mutuality is not enough, the purpose of marriage is to say that the mutuality of two people is upheld by the larger community to affirm it

H. This model then enables us to conclude that the sexual act is not intrinsically sinful, it is the context which is important

I. There is an intrinsic humanity in the sexual act that must be followed through responsibly in being affirmed by the community

J. Marriage is bound up in the ordinance of creation, written into the fabric of our human nature

VI. Homosexual relationships within the traditional theological model

A. Heterosexual marriage and relationships can be immoral because they violate human personhood

B. Homosexual relationship is not then the judgment of society or the church

C. The question is: at what level can a same sex relationship be as fully human in intending to say that if we come together can we experience the same image of God fully as in heterosexual relationships?
1. The traditional theological model says no but within the broader context of the tragic
2. People who live and love in same sex relationships are fully in the image of God but there is a tragic element to that

D. In God's purpose, revealed through the redemptive form of the covenant, the eschatological determination of the created order affirms and upholds the personal form of the human person through its temporal embodiment as biological existence
1. In the final redemptive order we will not have biological sexual factors in our lives

2. The eschatological order of redemption does not replace the "ordered ontology" of created human personhood, but affirms it and preserves it through the temporal and created order until such time as the created order gives way to the "new heavens and new earth"

VII. **Pastoral implications of the model**

A. Marriage is the way in which the human community takes hold of the responsibility to affirm and uphold a couple
   1. A failure of marriage is a violation and failure of the image of God and needs to be confessed
   2. God's commitment is to humanity, not just to marriage
   3. Divorce and remarriage does not mean that people have fallen out of the grace of God but God can redeem humans in the midst of ethical failures

B. Redemption of that which constitutes a violation of the image of God is bound up not in an ethical maneuvering but in the offering of God's grace for healing and restoration of human persons

C. There is ample Scriptural authority for establishing both God's preference with regard to human relationships and God's presence with persons in their struggle to fulfill God's purpose for them
   1. Preference refers to God's preference for us, that is, we be person's created in the divine image, male and female
   2. God offers his presence to those who do not always fulfill God's preference
   3. For the sake of teaching God's preference we should not vacate God's presence

D. God clearly prefers that marriage be monogamous, but also expressed a purposeful presence through the sometimes confusing and problematic social structure of polygamous marriage

E. God prefers that marriage be a life-long commitment and "hates divorce," yet God's presence in the lives of persons who have experienced the tragedy of a failed marriage leads many to conclude that remarriage for divorced persons is a witness to God's gracious presence

F. God's preference for human sexual relationships which follow the created order of male and female rather than same sex relationships doesn't rule out God's gracious presence in the lives of those who find it impossible to live by that divinely created preference

G. The church as the body of Christ expresses both divine preference and divine presence in the lives of its members

VIII. **The ordination of homosexuals**

A. Do we discriminate against homosexual Christians in the church by refusing to ordain them?

B. Lecturer's response - no one has the right to be ordained, membership in the church is not a claim upon an office

C. The exercising of the gift of teaching in the office is part of the gift of God to the church and there are criteria for it

1. They are responsible to teach God's preference
2. Need to also be the mediators of God's presence
D. Student questions regarding the position of the church towards homosexuality
   1. If the church would not approve of and affirm continuing adultery on the part of a church member, how can we then accept and not try to intervene in an active homosexual relationship of someone within the church?
      a. The adulterous relationship is not a sin just because it is a violation of a marriage vow legally, rather it is a violation of the humanity of the marriage partner
      b. The equivalent within a homosexual relationship would be promiscuity, they are bound by the same ethical imperative of not being promiscuous
   2. How does Paul's statement in Romans 1:24ff relate to the lecturer's model?
      a. The implication of every sexual act is personal before it is ethical
      b. Paul uses the term "nature" in various ways and often uses it to represent a cultural norm
      c. In Romans 1 he is referring to the fact that there is something ontological involved in our sexuality
      d. The context of Romans 1 is not a discussion against homosexuality, but about the consequences of idolatry and turning away from God and worshipping creation
      e. Paul discusses what it is to be inhuman
      f. In terms of the lecturer's model Paul is saying that by nature our personhood is differentiated as male and female and therefore what it is to be human is the criteria for everything that includes our human sexuality
   3. With the lecturer's model in mind is there a mandate for the church?
      a. Given the lecturer's theological assumption the mandate is to invite all to be in the body of Christ, be baptized into Christ and be filled with the Spirit of Christ
      b. Having assumed what God's preference is for human sexuality then those who receive the invitation have the responsibility to grow up into Christ
      c. Every invitation into the Christian community is an invitation to grow, to uphold the peace, unity and fellowship of the church
   4. Using the example of polygamy, how are we to deal with people who are persisting in dehumanizing behavior who want to enter the church?
      a. The mandate is to baptize and to believe that being baptized into Christ is part of the tragedy of being Christ
      b. God's presence is part of the tragic in upholding his preference

    c. If a polygamous family is upholding as far as possible the humanity of each person within that culture they are not living in sin

5. What if a homosexual person in the church is not struggling with their homosexuality but wants the church to accept who they are? What about what Paul has to say in Corinthians about the response of the church to sexual impropriety?
    a. The body of Christ must be prepared to bring into its membership all who are seeking the grace of God and suffer the consequences of losing its reputation
    b. Paul viewed Satan as a roaring lion running loose but if you are part of the body of Christ you are in a safe place
        [1] Paul believed that these people were acting out such disorder that they threatened the safe place
        [2] The response was to send them out of the safe place in order that they may fully appreciate the safety that it offers
    c. The indictment was primarily against the church for their boasting and arrogance, not for that person's sin
    d. The best place for the healing of persons is in the body, but if the church itself has become dysfunctional it is no longer being that safe place for people
    e. Lecturer doesn't believe that there is a rule by which churches can respond to these situations it must be taken on a case by case basis
    f. Criteria:
        [1] Expects homosexuals to enter the body "Christianly" not "homosexually"
        [2] Not that there are certain sins which automatically cause someone to be expelled but there are criteria which we hold all sinners accountable to ensure the health of the community

6. How do leader's deal with the hypocrisy within the church in its tendency to isolate and focus on homosexual sin as the cardinal sin while allowing others to continue in their sin?
    a. Paul did not reduce the standards and ethics of the church down to the most legalistic one
    b. As a leader you must begin the task of humanizing the church, to teach what the ethic of Christianity is, based upon a human ethic
    c. It is important for the community to be aware of what is happening within the body

7. What is the criteria for church discipline and how do we practice it?
    a. Must look to the New Testament model in which the discipline is attached to the intentionality of people to contribute to the well being of the body, e.g. 1 Corinthians 5

b. There is an important difference between the person who is struggling and the one who is demanding to be accepted
c. The struggle reflects the sense that one is seeking the grace of God
d. The person who uses and abuses the body should be disciplined as in a family, the discipline is for the sake of the ongoing bodily health

8. How do you deal with the homosexual who feels that they have no choice as to who they are?
a. None of us have a choice, but we must acknowledge that we have responsibility for how we deal with our sexuality
b. What is part of our nature does not become a right

9. Can we make a distinction between sexual orientation and practice? How can we deny homosexuals the level of intimacy that heterosexuals enjoy?
a. The biblical material makes no distinction between orientation and practice, not that it is not a valid distinction
b. Biblical material is oriented primarily toward acts, rather than orientation
c. In the Bible it is understood that all of our actions derive out of a fundamental orientation of the heart
d. The second part of the question is very difficult to judge because we find ourselves on a continuum
e. Morality is bound up in fidelity at the human level - Smedes
f. The Bible demands that we be as moral as we can be, to struggle to be human, given our nature, given the circumstances and that the church is to assist us in this process

Lesson 15
Gender Identity and Role Relationships

  I. **The adjunctive nature of the roles between men and women**
     A. Definition of the term adjunctive: brought in to perform a service but is not essentially a part of the process
     B. Roles are secondary to the created order
     C. We cannot invest in role relationships an essential definition of personhood
  II. **The relative nature of gender characteristics and attributes**
     A. The debate between Barth and Brunner
     B. It is not possible to create a list of attributes which define what it means to be male or female
     C. Men and women are free from any type of order that would systematize or erase their relationship that defines them essentially
     D. Gender specific roles due to natural biological distinctions often become culturally and traditionally fixed
       1. Design, whether through creation or through adaptation to culture, will always give way to purpose, and purpose reaches out toward the goal
       2. We must be careful to say that just because God has designed a way in which something works doesn't mean that God is bound to that forever
       3. God will change the design at any time if the purpose and goal are being frustrated
  III. **Aspects of the creation of man and woman with respect to sexual equality and role relationships**
     A. *'adam*: the undifferentiated human creature
       1. The Hebrew term for male is derived out of the Hebrew term for female - *'ish* and *'issa*
       2. This runs completely contrary to the more traditional assumption of the priority of the male over the female
     B. The disintegration of the "one flesh" source for male and female identity occurred following the disobedience of both the man and the woman
       1. Their relationship is not determined by their relationship to the earth
       2. The generic *ha-'adam* [man] has subsumed the *'issa* [woman]
     C. The ordination of women
       1. It is the resurrection of Christ and the Spirit of the resurrected Christ coming upon women which constitutes the basis for ordination
       2. Novak - more traditional line that there is no possibility that God will ever put God's Spirit upon a woman to be ordained for the priesthood because it is an eternal decision

Lesson 16
Human Life as Contradiction and Hope

I. **Human life as contingent creaturely being**
   A. Definition of contingency: the life of an entity is not self-determined but rather it depends for its existence upon something outside of itself
   B. "Being human" is contingent upon a source and power of life outside of or beyond creaturely existence itself
   C. This theological assumption is grounded in the doctrine of creation "in the image and likeness of God"
   D. For humanity our creaturely existence on the sixth day is contingent upon entering the seventh day
   E. Sin cuts off the contingency and we turn to our own devices, we attempt to fulfill our own desires and in doing so we become grotesque and distorted
   F. Sin is not immorality but futility

II. **Human life as destiny, history and freedom**
   A. Three fundamental questions:
      1. Destiny: What will become of us?
      2. History: What is the meaning and purpose of life?
      3. Freedom: What does it mean to have freedom?
   B. Answering the fundamental questions within the non-theological model
      1. When nature determines destiny we are led into naturalism
      2. Naturalism leads to human behavior determining history and we are left with empiricism
      3. When empiricism determines who we are the only freedom that we have left is to deviate from the norm
      4. Within this model we are left with the fundamental question, which we can only answer for ourselves, of who we are and the meaning of our life
   C. Elements of a theological anthropology
      1. The history of human life is not a series of events or behaviors, but the covenant acts of God through which he enters into partnership with humanity
      2. The freedom of human life is not a freedom from but a freedom for God and others
   D. Difficulties with a theological anthropology
      1. A theological anthropology must begin at the same point as a non-theological anthropology, with a recognition of the reality of human life as creaturely being, and at the phenomenological level, exhibiting many variations and even distortions
      2. Hidden within the depravity and the corruption of humanity is the original self
   E. Answering the fundamental questions within the theological model

1. Rather than allowing our nature to determine our destiny, humanity is determined by the seventh day, therefore God determines my destiny
2. Instead of naturalism being the criteria there is humanity
3. History is determined by God's encounter with us, therefore the history of humanity is bound up in the covenant
4. God establishes community as the meaning of history rather than empiricism, rather than behavior we have covenant
5. Freedom is the grace of God, the freedom to be for each other and for God

III. **Human life as existential dilemma: The existential anthropology of Kierkegaard**
A. Kierkegaard: Biographical outline
B. The human self is a dialectical relation between freedom and necessity, composed of two competing aspects of the self
   1. Physical being which is finite and leads us to necessity
      a. There is a futility inherent in our humanity because we are finite and will return to the dust
      b. Kierkegaard identifies this as one form of despair - philistinism
   2. Mental being which is infinite and leads us to freedom
      a. With the mind we can abstract from reality in order to deny our creatureliness
      b. This freedom of the mind to escape and deny leads to another form of despair called fanaticism
C. The mind is plagued with these two competing realities, to be the self is to have this sense of dread, to be aware of our finitude
   1. Dread is not merely fear it is an absolute clarity and fear concerning the reality of one's situation
   2. In order to escape from this dread we must escape from our true self
D. The will not to be the self has two possible movements:
   1. To slip into pure sensuality; or
   2. To slide into fanaticism and to act as if one can live forever
E. Nobody can survive with a conscious clarity of reality, to live with a sense of reality is to be paralyzed
F. The spirit is defined by Kierkegaard as the reach of the self towards something other than the self
G. Faith emerges when the self grasps the Spirit of God in the moment of dread, this results in authentic being
   1. Except that there is a Spirit of God we are unable to survive on our own
   2. Faith emerges out of dread, the purpose of dread is to educate faith
H God summons us to stand naked before him, open towards God
I. The authentic self is the one that wills to be the self because the self has been encounter by God

IV. **Human life as existential dilemma: The existential analysis of Ernest Becker -** *The Denial of Death*
  A. Becker contends: The work of Kierkegaard is superior to the Freudian analysis of the self, it provides a more hopeful model for the integration of therapy and faith, of psychology and religion
  B. Becker: Biographical details
  C. Becker starts with the same basic concept that Kierkegaard started with - that is, the self and dread
  D. Mental health is the same as to have faith, not to have faith is to move into despair and into neuroticism
  E. Develops the concept of cultural heroism
    1. This describes a transference process which occurs continually throughout life in which we identify ourselves with products in order that we can think of ourselves other than as we are
    2. The Western culture has created a mythology of the larger than life allowing us to identify with these culturally defined heroes in order to escape our own lives
  F. Character armor is what we develop as a personal coping mechanism
    1. Gives us a sense of our own immortality
    2. Whenever it is stripped away we are exposed to dread
  G. The neurotic is compulsive about avoiding the dread, and performs rituals in order to be safe - this is negative transference
    1. The neurotic is closer to reality than others, living daily with the terror of life
    2. If the need to partialize life becomes extreme it becomes a fetish object and is reduced to something that can be controlled
  H. There is another form of transference towards our good and health - positive transference
    1. This operates out of faith and God can serve as a transfer object as long as God is not bound up as an object which is available to us
    2. If there is a God that is transcendent then I am unable to partialize
    3. This leads in the direction of faith and mental health
  I. Twin ontological motives
    1. Eros - to the degree that motivation is primarily erotic it fashions upon an object, and a tension is engendered towards the erotic desire which leads to the concrete
    2. Agape - leads the individual into the abstract
    3. The daily struggle is between *eros* and *agape* and this tension must be mediated
  J. Selected readings from Becker
    1. Transference
      a. Seeks to immortalize the self (p. 139)
      b. Immortality motive and not the sexual motive largely explains human passion (p. 132)
      c. Fetish control (p. 144)
      d. "Taming the terror of being alive" (p. 145)

e. Has two dimensions - it reflects the whole of the human condition and raises the philosophical question about that condition (p. 158)
        2. Life enhancing illusion
            a. Creative projection - positive transference (p. 199)
            b. Community and tradition take over the dread and ritualize it thus providing an interpretation of the meaning of life
            c. Humanity needs a lived compelling illusion that does not lie about life, death and reality (p. 204)
    K. There is a need for illusory experiences as part of the establishment of self-identity through a transitional way - Ana-Marie Rizzuto
        1. The self and its experience of reality must be able to picture and imagine relationship when the object is not empirically present
        2. A projective creation allows the child, when separated from its caregiver, to overcome the sense of abandonment
        3. Incorporates in her analysis the illusions that lie and the illusions that do not lie, we must have the capacity in our faith experience to image, to create, to project ourselves upon the reality that is not susceptible to empirical evidences
    L. Mental health depends upon illusionary experiences
        1. These experiences allow us to cope with that which would otherwise be unbearable and unthinkable
        2. This is what faith is, sin is the result of an illusion which cripples, distorts and binds us leading us into neuroticism

V. Theological critique of Becker's model
    A. Real problems with identifying psychic health with spiritual life and salvation
    B. Salvation and mental health are correlated but are not identical
        1. There is an asymmetrical relation between spiritual life, salvation, forgiveness of sin, true faith and on the other hand our mental health
        2. If we have received the promise of spiritual life and wholeness that entails the expectation and promise of mental, physical and emotional health although it might not be immediate
        3. If we have achieved some degree of emotional and mental stability that is as far as it can go, there is no inner logic to mental health that necessarily leads to spiritual healing
    C. The promise of healing and restoration is an eschatological one
        1. We receive the immediate assurance of spiritual life and the forgiveness of sin
        2. Our resurrection and healing lies ahead of us although the promise is there
    D. Student questions regarding the integration of psychology and theology
        1. Does increased mental health contribute to the sense of spiritual life and health? Answer - Yes

a. If the gift of the Holy Spirit is given and received it is given and received by the self in the same ego sense that we develop a sense of self identity

b. If there is real distortion of the ego self, the gift of the Holy Spirit will remain paralyzed

c. Therapy can unlock functionally the gift of the Holy Spirit but it cannot produce it substantially

2. Is the lecturer saying that because we have the promise of physical and mental healing through the spiritual gift of forgiveness of sins that we don't need psychology or medicine?

a. That suggestion reduces integration to a spiritual aspect solely which is the other end of the spectrum from Becker's analysis

b. By holding the tension we hold in reality the empirical and the non-empirical aspects of human life

c. Becker collapses mental health and faith but Kierkegaard did not and thereby fails to keep sufficient integrity to each discipline

3. Is it not reductionistic to collapse the power of God down into comforting the suffering and the sick rather than expecting that God can dramatically enter in and heal? Answer - Yes

a. The question remains then, if the performance of physical healing would dramatically increase the numbers who attend church why then don't we do that?

b. Only God can heal

c. The lecturer recognizes the casualties in the "miracle worker" approach

d. Any miraculous healing is a sacrament of the resurrection, its purpose is to affirm that the resurrection is indeed our hope and future as the community of God

Lesson 17
The Human Dilemma of Sin and Its Consequences

I. **The equation of sin and sickness**
   A. "Sin and neurosis are two ways of talking about the same problem." Otto Rank
   B. The lecturer disagrees, believing that we cannot reduce both sin and mental illness into one language
   C. We need a theological vocabulary to talk about sin and salvation and we have to have a psychological vocabulary to talk about dysfunction and distortion
   D. Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger, *Theology and Pastoral Counseling: A New Interdisciplinary Approach*, Eerdmans 1995
      1. We need to be bilingual, each approach has integrity and its own vocabulary, each has a way of helping people
      2. Contends that the ideal is to have theological adequacy and psychological functionality
II. **Sin as an independent principle of evil or sickness**
   A. The principle of wrong behavior becomes impersonal and alien to the self; ultimately the self becomes subject to this impersonal and alien power and either succumbs in a fatalistic way, or goes into depression over not being able to "atone" for the "guilt" that is felt
   B. Mowrer believes that the concept of sin as behavior for which one is personally responsible is more hopeful than the concept of sickness for which one cannot assume responsibility
III. **Sin as a threat to human destiny, history and freedom**
   A. Sin separates us from the God who is the source of our life
   B. Destiny - sin separates us from the promise and gift of immortality
   C. History - sin robs us of the history of our being and the interaction within the community of God which is God's purpose for us
   D. Freedom - sin takes away our freedom to enjoy love as creative self expression
IV. **Sin as a defection from grace**
   A. The source of evil is in the good, not with some independent principle of evil
   B. Sin is a personal and not merely an ethical disorder
V. **Sin as existential deviance from faith**
   A. Rienhold Niehbur
      1. Posits sin as the pre-supposition of the self in a dialectical manner
      2. The human person only knows himself or herself existentially as a sinner, sin is inevitable but not necessary
      3. The freedom of the self is not destroyed by the inevitability of sin, for the self can contemplate this inevitability and acknowledge its own self deception
   B. Barth

1. The existential depiction of sin is merely the "symptom," the phenomena, of the real person and not the person
2. The language of sin must be grounded in the language of grace
3. The problem of a non-theological anthropology when it begins to deal with sin is that it has no vocabulary of grace

VI. **Sin has no necessary relation to selfhood**
   A. God did not create the occasion for sin in order to see what would happen
   B. Rather God created the occasion in which we were in grace and the impossible happened - we fell out of grace

VII. **Christ "brackets" sin with creatureliness in order to restore persons to their authentic existence within grace**
   A. Through the incarnation the divine Word brought sin as alien to human selfhood into alliance with the flesh, for the sake of "condemning sin in the flesh" (Hebrews 2:14)
   B. Jesus exists in a gracious relationship of unity and love with God, his father, but he bears a death nature
   C. Student question: Could the lecturer clarify his position on the relationship between good and evil?
      1. Seeks to avoid an ultimate cosmic dualism, which the Bible seems to rule out
      2. Tragedy is part of the mystery of the freedom that God gave creation to fall away from its own intrinsic goodness
      3. Evil is a very real phenomena, but it does not have ontological existence in terms of having being itself
      4. The Bible keeps evil in the realm of the personal, we are not abandoned to the blind impersonal forces of evil
      5. The empirical evidence of the removal of evil is at the psycho-social level

Lesson 18
Human Life as Marginal and Meaningful

I. **The ecological spheres of human life**
   A. In each of the three spheres - physical, spiritual and social - we have mental emotional experiences and perceptions
      1. Emotion is not a separate sphere because we have emotions about all three
      2. To have emotional health we need a depth of feeling of congruence with reality concerning these three spheres
      3. Behavior is how we experience each other, confronting each other with actions and words
      4. If there is dysfunction in one of these spheres the entirety of the self is involved, the spheres interpenetrate each other
   B. Human life as a psychical/physical reality
      1. We are created from the dust of the ground
      2. Personal human life is dependent on a source outside of the creaturely nature itself
      3. Pain and discomfort have an adverse effect on us as social/spiritual beings
   C. Human life as a psychical/social reality
      1. "It is not good that the one be alone." Genesis 2:18
      2. In order to be healthy we are contingent upon some relationship with other people
   D. Human life as a psychical/spiritual reality
   E. All three are involved in quality and value of life

II. **The value of human life**
   A. The value of life is contingent upon the functional inter-relationship of all three ecological spheres
   B. Human life is not 'sacred' in the sense that there is intrinsic holiness in the psychical/physical organism which constitutes the natural life of the person
   C. Holiness resides in the special relationship that humanity has with God

III. **The marginality of life**
   A. Human life may often be experienced under "marginal" conditions
   B. In a sense, all human life is marginal due to the fact that the psychical/physical sphere is liable to "error," to sickness and trauma and finally to death
   C. There has been a tendency to locate the value of human life solely in terms of the maintenance of the psychical/physical organism
   D. Utilizing the model of ecological spheres it is possible to see that the quality of life is a delicate balance and interplay of the three - the spiritual, the physical and the social
   E. The ethical implications of such issues as suicide, abortion and euthanasia all bear upon this question of the quality of life

F. Human life is not an absolute value in terms of survival as a mere psychical/physical organism but that does not mean that it has no meaning

G. Human life has the full value of human life as long as there is the possibility for human life as determined in its total ecological structure of reality
   1. Human life has a relative value, not an absolute one
   2. If human life has an absolute value then we are ethically required to prolong biological life with any means at our disposal
   3. Only when we know what it is to be human will we know what we ought to do to support the human - the ethics are derived out of what is rather than what ought to be

IV. **The value of persons and the right to die: A case study**
   A. Theologically there is ambiguity at both the beginning and the end of life
   B. The relationship of the psyche/soul to the physical body is primarily coincidental, under stress the psyche can leave that body
   C. Details of the case study
   D. Reasons for not accepting Sara's decision - student responses
      1. "I'm too selfish to let you go."
      2. This is not an individual decision but one that should be made by the family as a whole, the meaning of her life is not determined by her alone but is part of her self identity as part of a community
      3. Concern about Sara's apparent martyrdom and whether this is healthy, what are Sara's motives?
      4. Concern about the speed with which the process is occurring, there needs to be more time and thought put into the decision
   E. Reasons for accepting Sara's decision - student responses
      1. Her age is not a factor in the decision, she attains the competency to make a decision such as this as she lives out her life under these conditions
      2. While six months may seem a short time to those of us who are healthy but Sara has endured two surgeries and has been very sick in that time and it would not appear short to her
      3. It is important to respect her freedom and right to make that decision
      4. "I love you so much that I am willing to give you up."
      5. Understands that the quality of life on a dialysis machine may be, for Sara, worse than death
      6. There is a great deal of stress on Sara knowing the strain that she is putting on the family, emotionally and financially
      7. The quality of life for the patient must be accessed, and balanced against the needs of the family to hold onto Sara even if to do so is to her detriment
   F. Assessing the case in terms of the theology of life and death
      1. The sisters have discussed that life is not the absolute value

2. To what degree does our belief in resurrection after death give us some permission to accept death earlier?
3. The content of our faith is not that our hope is invested in living longer

G. Closing remarks regarding the outcome of the case study
   1. Originally the lecturer argued for more time
   2. Tracy accepted Sara's decision and Sara died

V. Assessing the criteria for determining the quality of life
   A. The life of a person has value to the extent that it can be willed to survive in its concrete situation by the self and others as a totality
   B. The value of life as psychical/physical existence is relative to the degree of health and/or trauma to the total self as a result of biological incapacity to support life
   C. Upholding life as personal value may involve releasing persons from the torment to the total person by the trauma to the body
   D. The so-called "right to die" is not absolute, any more than the "right to life."
   E. The "border-line" of human existence can never be reduced to absolute boundaries on which abstract principle and technological capability can be squarely placed

VI. Meaningfulness of life
   A. The meaning of life is more related to life as task than as gift
   B. The sense of meaningful existence through a perception of life as a purposeful task carries with it a strong sense of value, but this cannot be imposed upon an individual but can only empower the person to see the task of living
   C. Faith can be understood more as the task of life in its orientation to the world, to others, and to God than as an existential experience and value
   D. Student question: What is the difference between meaning of life and quality of life?
      1. Meaning of life - deeper, more fundamental issue and depends more on the "life enhancing" illusion
      2. Quality of life - less subjective, when this is diminished the meaning of life will be qualified as well

Lesson 19
Therapeutic Approaches to the Healing of Persons

  I.   **Introduction**
 II.   **The ecological matrix as the context for healing**
       A. Revisiting the ecological matrix
       B. The core of the self can be termed the "soul" in a theological sense
           1. The self needs a sense of its own history - experienced continuity
           2. The self is engaged in a constant process of interpreting what it means to be the self - interpretive capacity
       C. The development of the self is a process of differentiation whereby the three spheres become integrated into the core of the self's identity as an orientation toward the physical world (I-it), to the social world (I-Thou), and the spiritual world (I-self)
       D. The image of God is developmental, as the self achieves the differentiation which constitutes the life of the soul in its totality as a being related to the world, others and self in fulfillment of God's purpose
III.   **The life continuum as a context for therapy**
       A. The life of the self is a pilgrimage from being to becoming
       B. The hermeneutic and the agogic moment
           1. The hermeneutic moment is the one in which new insight is gained but on its own it does not bring about transformation
           2. The agogic moment is not only a moment of understanding, but is one in which the motive power for change is introduced by a mediator in order to empower the individual
               a. For this moment to occur the mediator must be fully human
               b. The motive power of the Word of God enters into the situation and an actual change takes place
               c. Three fold form of the Word of God
                   [1]   Kerygmatic
                   [2]   Didactic
                   [3]   Paracletic
       C. Agogic goals
           1. These goals have to do with the whole life continuum as compared to therapeutic goals which are for a more limited time period
           2. Therapy not only means healing, but the health and growth of the self as God's gift of life
           3. Therapy releases a person for growth
           4. The agogic goals constitute the growth continuum on which the development of the self takes place
               a. Self-formation: the hermeneutical task
               b. Self-socialization: the narrative task
               c. Self-fulfillment: The eschatological task
       D. Student questions on the application of the paradigm of human personhood to the healing of persons

1. Could the lecturer discuss the dichotomy between the psychological and the spiritual?
   a. Origin of the dichotomy lies in an inadequate view of the human self
   b. It is important to begin with an anthropology and then see the impact of sin upon the human person
   c. Sin fragments the functional unity of the relationship of the body/soul and salvation is the healing of that unity functionally
   d. Jesus came to heal the fractures within human persons
2. How do people change? (Note: This question is not repeated by the lecturer.)
   a. Firet believes that people don't change until they have received a motive power to change
   b. This power comes from God's Word and grace but must be mediated by a human person, and a therapeutic alliance is established

IV. A paradigm of pastoral care
A. Pastoral care as an extension of God's care
   1. The mode: Intervention
   2. The goal: Forgiveness
   3. The theological dynamic: A kind of absolution
   4. God's grace is a judgment against that which distorts and destroys the life of human persons, an intervention between sin and its consequences
   5. Pastoral care must be prepared to make an intervention with the objective of creating the moral good of forgiveness as an experienced reality
   6. Repentance is the positive fruit of forgiveness experienced as grace, not a condition of forgiveness
B. Pastoral care as a transfer of spiritual power
   1. The mode: Advocacy
   2. The goal: Liberation
   3. The theological dynamic: A kind of exorcism
      a. Ordinary exorcism
      b. Extraordinary exorcism
   4. The transfer of spiritual power is a process of empowerment
   5. God's grace establishes a shield against the invasion of that which causes disorder and destruction to the self
C. Pastoral care as the creation of a healing community
   1. The mode: Affirmation
   2. The goal: Peace/shalom
   3. The theological dynamic: A kind of eucharist
   4. Christian community is a liturgical paradigm for the healing of persons
   5. The content of affirmation is three-fold

a. It intercepts the consequences of sin and lays claim to the person who would otherwise be alienated from all hope and moral and spiritual health
b. It is a creative ritual for re-entry to the community
c. It effects a moral and spiritual renewal of life through the offering up of thanksgiving to God

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ST512: Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

Course Bibliographies
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The course bibliographies contain references provided by the lecturer. The lecturer frequently comments on the bibliographies during the lectures, and all materials referred to by him are included here.

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Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

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ST512: Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

Supplemental Study Materials

An answer key for the questions in the Study Guide "Action Plan" section is included here. Each answer is keyed to the section of the lecture outline in which the answer may be found.

A sample paper is included which will enable you to understand the format that is required for your written assignments. Use this in conjunction with the Guidelines provided in the Syllabus.

Articles by the lecturer are also provided for your supplemental study as well as a copy of the book *Theology Primer: Resources for the Theological Student* by J. J. Davis. Both of these items are listed as recommended reading for the course.

Supplemental Study Materials

Answer Key for Study Guide "Action Plan" Questions
Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

Lesson 1
Prolegomena to Theological Study

1.   In what ways does the theological enterprise differ from that of other academic disciplines?

Theology is fundamentally different from all other academic disciplines. At the center of all other disciplines is the human logos. This is the power of the human mind to analyze, abstract, evaluate and reflect in order that bodies of knowledge may be developed. In every other discipline there is an object that is the focal point of study, an object which is at the disposal of the observer. While God is the object of our study he is not accessible to us in the same way as other phenomena. We can not conceive of God, neither can we control him in order to observe him. Indeed when we use the word theology we have to ask God for forgiveness for presuming that we can study him as an object. Therefore when we study theology we cannot do it in the same way that we study anything else. (I., A-C)

2.   What role does Jesus Christ play in interpreting the knowledge of God?

As a result of our inability to study God in the way that we study other objects we are forced to ask whether theology is an appropriate human endeavor. If God is not accessible to us how then can we know who he is? The answer is found in the person of Jesus Christ. He is the logos, the logos of theos, become flesh. In him we have the only available access to the inner being of God. It is this logos which interprets God to us and out of an encounter with this divine logos we can do theology, without an encounter we cannot begin theology. Therefore the study of theology, unlike other disciplines, does not emerge from the operation of the human logos but emerges from relationship with Jesus Christ in personal encounter. As a result theological reflection is not neutral, we cannot be unbiased observers, but rather we are drawn into encounter with God. (II., A-C; III.)

3.   What is the biblical paradigm of how God is known to humanity? How does this contrast to the view taken by some theologians?

The biblical paradigm of how God is known to us is one in which he summons people into relationship through personal encounter. A biblical example of this paradigm is of Moses at the burning bush - he is summoned to believe through encounter with the God.   Other theologians suggest that we have knowledge of God through the objective assessment of the truths of God. They contend that Christian faith rests upon objective metaphysical propositions, and that God

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reveals truth rather than personal being. It is asserted that once the individual has assented to the truth of God then, through faith, there is the possibility of entering into relationship with him. (IV., A-D)

Lesson 2
The Task of Theology

1.   What are the three types of theology? How do they differ and in what ways do they intersect with each other?

The three types of theology are: exegetical, biblical, and systematic or dogmatic theology. Exegetical theology is the process by which we determine what the text says and how we are to interpret it in its original context and also understand the application that it has for us today. Biblical theology attempts to trace out different theological structures that emerge within the Bible. Systematic or Dogmatic theology has traditionally been understood as the systematic organization of theological topics. However, the lecturer believes that the true task of systematic theology is to determine what the church must believe, teach and practice in the concrete situation of its place in the world. The task of theology is to build on exegetical and biblical theology and apply it to the church in the concrete reality of its place and ministry in the church. (I., A-C)

2.   The theological task involves both hermeneutics and exegesis, to what do these terms refer and how are they involved in the task of theology?

Exegesis is the process by which we seek to interpret what the text meant in its original context - this involves the study of language, genre, and culture. Hermeneutics is the process in which we seek to interpret what the text actually means both in terms of the original context in which it was concretely situated and within our context today. Both of these tasks are critical in enabling the church to understand who it is and the role that it must play in the world. (I., A)

3.   What are the differences between empiricism and science? To what extent are both or either of these involved in the theological endeavor?

It is important to understand that the empirical method is not identical to the scientific method. Science is the study of phenomenon in terms of its own nature. Therefore science recognizes that the nature of the object to be known determines the method by which you can know . For example, the study of blood in the body is done differently from blood outside of the body, their nature is different and therefore must be examined differently, using different tools of examination. Empiricism is the observation of phenomena by an established set of principles. The Christian faith is not totally empirically verifiable but is scientifically verifiable. In order to bring about a paradigm shift we must invite people into the Christian laboratory in which we can provide individuals with instruments which will reveal the reality of God to them. (V., A)

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Lesson 3
God's Revelation of Himself

1.   How does Matthew 11:27 contribute to our understanding of the necessity of revelation of God's self to humanity? What role does the Holy Spirit play in this process?

The scientific endeavor operates within the realm of the conceivable, moving from the known to the unknown. In comparison the theological task is qualitatively different because God is inconceivable and incomprehensible. This leaves us with the question of how we are to know God because we cannot conceive of that which is revealed to us. Matthew 11:27 reveals that there is an inner relationship between the Father and the Son which we have no possibility of entering into except through the action of the Holy Spirit who draws us into the depths of the relationship existing between the Father and the Son. Without the Holy Spirit we have no possibility of the knowledge of God. (I., A-C)

2.   In what way does the concept of a horizon enable us to understand the nature of revelation? How does the act of God enable us to interpret and know the being of God? How does this paradigm differ from that of traditional systematics?

The basic paradigm that facilitates our understanding of the nature of revelation is that of a horizon. In the paradigm the horizon represents that which limits our ability to see and perceive. God exists beyond this horizon, and in order that we have any possibility of knowing him revelation must occur from God's side. Apart from God's intentional action of revelation within our horizon we have no ability to conceive of anything that lies beyond the horizon of our existence. It is the act of God occurring within our horizon that gives us the possibility of knowing the being of God. Traditional systematics begins with abstract concepts concerning the nature of God from which the virtues of God are determined. Rather than examining the acts of God in order that he may be understood, it applies abstractly construed attributes to God. This method is problematic because certain virtues define God out of action. (II., A-C; IV., A-C)

3.   Define the terms ontological and ontic. How do they differ and what role does this difference play in our understanding of revelation?

Both words are derived from the Greek word *ontos* which means being. Ontological refers to the abstract study of being, while ontic refers to the personal encounter with being in the moment. An example of this would be if you met with a person for a meal and then upon returning home you journal about the encounter you had and what you learned about your friend. The actual encounter with the person during the meal is ontic in nature but your reflection and analysis of the encounter is ontological because it involves the study of the being of your friend. In terms of revelation the ontic has priority over the

ontological. Scripture is ontological at the point that truth is revealed to us, however, when the Holy Spirit confronts us with the person of Christ an ontic event has taken place. Revelation must not stop with the ontological - that is the abstract examination of being - but must proceed to the ontic. (V., A)

Lesson 4
The Knowledge of God as Actuality and Possibility

1.   Define and explain the terms accommodation and election with reference to how the knowledge of God becomes a possibility for human persons.

These two terms are very helpful in understanding the role of the human person in the knowledge of God. Given that God is so far beyond our ability to comprehend him in order that we are able to understand his revelation to us he must accommodate himself to the conditions of the human person. In the act of accommodation God identifies with humanity to the point that there is virtually no difference between God and humanity - this is most clearly exemplified in the incarnation where God took upon himself humanity in order to reveal himself to us. In the telling of the story of encounter with God he accommodates to the frailty of the human person. The Bible is the Word of God because he accommodated to humanity and did so by speaking through human people. Election is the process by which God chooses some persons to be his witness, God designates and chooses some witnesses to encounter with him to become Word of God. (III., A-B)

2.   Outline the differences between rationalism and fideism? In what way can we understand them both to be Cartesian?

Rationalism and fideism are two extremes along a continuum. Rationalism posits that the concept of truth must be established as the basis for belief. It contends that truth must be objective rather than subjective and grounded in objective truth propositions. Rationalism would contend that knowledge is based on objective facts to which the human mind assents. Fideism, however, contends that whatever the human self holds to be true is in fact true. While these are on opposite ends of a spectrum of how it is that we can know, they are both Cartesian because they both place the thinking self as the source of reality: with rationalism the mind determines what truth is, while with fideism the subjective experience of reality determines what truth is. I, as the existing subject, am the criteria for what is true. Cartesian theology appropriates the Word of God to the human self either by fideism or rationalism. (III., E-F)

3.   In the Christological paradigm presented what role does the Holy Spirit play in the knowledge of God?

In the Christological model that was presented as an alternative to both fideism and rationalism the role of the Holy Spirit is to appropriate humanity to the Word

of God and summon humanity into the Word of God. The Holy Spirit awakens us to the knowledge of God through personal encounter, drawing us into the inner relationship between the Father and the Son. Instead of it being a process of either our rationality or our existential experience the Holy Spirit encompasses all of who we are, opening our subjective, rational and ethical selves up to the possibility of knowing God. Both the subjective aspects of our experience and the mental constructs our of our mind are made subject to the Word of God. The Holy Spirit confronts the actuality of my being with the objective reality of the person of Jesus Christ. Conversion, then, involves both our mind, emotions and will. Faith is not two movements but rather is a single movement involving both the informed mind and a consenting will, both are necessary for there to be true knowledge of God. Faith as true knowledge has both objective and subjective reality. God has both objectively spoken to and through Christ and subjectively responded as a true human being. (III., G- J)

Lesson 5
Scripture: Its Nature, Purpose and Authority

1.   In the lecture, Scripture was described as being both ontic and noetic revelation. Define these terms and apply them to the story of the woman at the well as a paradigm of the nature of Scripture.

Ontic revelation is that revelation which leads to an encounter with being and is more than merely the acquisition of abstract knowledge. Noetic revelation involves a real encounter but also real content is given. It is an objectified form of revelation as a phenomena of historical and public witness. Using the story of the woman at the well in John 4 we can see that she had an encounter with Jesus (reflecting the ontic dimension) which produced in her a witness to the fact that he was the Messiah. When she returned to the village, she testified to this experience describing the person she encountered and the place in which the encounter occurred. This information provided a basis for a cognitive and reflective act (revealing the noetic character of revelation) through which the people from the village could encounter Jesus for themselves. Scripture then has both ontic and noetic dimensions. It must be "good enough" so that we can be brought into a place where there is a possibility of an ontic encounter. (I., A-B)

2.   How do the tasks of translation and communication differ in their objectives and content? What are the dangers of utilizing communication theory for the translation of Scripture?

The task of translation is to reproduce as nearly as possible the content of the original event. This is important because the revelation and the historical environment into which it came are irrevocably bound up together. We cannot attempt to wrest them apart from each other. The task is not to translate the Bible in a vernacular that communicates the Bible. While a translation must be sufficiently contemporary so that it is readable and understandable in a modern

language, the degree to which the translation serves the purpose of communication makes it increasingly obsolete. The task of communication is to take the written word and make it come alive by communicating it with analogies and metaphors that the modern person is familiar with. The communication task is the task of the expositor not the translator. The danger of using communication theory for the translation of Scripture is that there is the danger of losing connection with the original event into which the Word of God has become irrevocably bound. All divine revelation has occurred at the historical level through real people. We must study the original languages and cultures out of which the Bible emerged in order that we may get in contact with the original people in the original event of the Word of God. (III., A-H; IV., A-E; V., A-C.)

3.   What does it mean to say that revelation precedes and creates Scripture?

Prior to the inscripturation of the Old Testament there were many years in which the oral tradition was passed down from generation to generation. For the people of Israel the oral witness was the only Word of God they had, therefore these stories were as much Word of God as the words that were written. Revelation does not begin with Scripture but rather begins with God's encounter with people. It is the reality of God's presence in revealing God's self to the people in such a way that in the retelling of the story they get bound up and become part of revelation. They told the story through the lenses of their own worldview and perspective and this became a part of the revelatory event. The Word of God is not embarrassed or limited by the style and nature of the oral account. In their witnessing to the reality of the Living God they became bearers of the Word of God. As we hear these stories today God continues to speak to us through them. (IV., A-F)

Lesson 6
Revelation and the Inscripturation of the Word

1.   Outline the process by which revelation becomes Scripture. How does the human person become bound up in the act of revelation?

Your answer should encompass the steps detailed in the lecture and in the Expanded Course Syllabus (pp. 24 - 26) You need to begin with the concept that revelation is an act of divine self revelation, not merely the imparting of information but self - disclosure. This revelation occurs within a concrete historical moment taking place within the bounds of human history and experience. It is not an existential experience of the individual but occurs in real

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time and space. The historical character of revelation is grounded in the lives of the people that God encountered. Through the faithfulness and obedience of these people as they testify to the encounter with God, others have the possibility of encountering God also. As individuals hear and respond to the Word of God their story becomes part of the revelatory event. Read again the answer to question 1. (I., A-C; II., B-C; IV., A-D)

2.   What is Barth's concept of the three-fold form of the Word of God?

The first form of the Word of God is Jesus. Barth considers Jesus to be the actual Word of God. The second form of the Word of God is the word of Scripture which is the written record of this Word of God. The Bible has the possibility of becoming Word of God, what determines whether it is Word of God or not is the relationship that the living Jesus Christ has with the words of Scripture. If through the words of Scripture we encounter Jesus Christ then the Bible has become Word of God for us. The third form is the Word proclaimed. In the preaching of the Word of God, the Word becomes an actuality. In hearing the Word preached we encounter the actual Word of God, Jesus Christ. For Barth, Scripture serves the mediation of the Word, only Scripture has the power of mediating Word of God to us and herein lies its uniqueness. Without being preached Scripture only has the possibility of Word of God. From a theological standpoint the Word of God proceeds first from God through Christ, through Scripture, to proclamation. In order that there be Word of God, God must confront us with his living presence. (III., A-E)

3.   How does an understanding of the servant form of Scripture enable us to deal with the tension between the human authorship, words and context, and the divine Word itself?

The problem of the human boundary of Scripture has always been an issue. Because of the personal nature of revelation, it always comes to a human person in a concrete historical situation and place and thus is embedded in that situation. The servant form of Scripture makes an analogy between incarnation and the process of inscripturation. It recognizes that while Jesus was Word of God in order that he may have personal encounter it was necessary that he accommodate himself to humanity. Therefore the Word of God became subject to the finite limitations of humanity. Scripture then can be seen as participating in this kind of incarnational phenomena although we must be careful not to suggest that Scripture can be placed in the same position as Jesus Christ. Scripture is not the incarnation of God, but rather is the continuing testimony of witnesses to the incarnation of God and has as its unique feature that the human authors through inspiration are able to serve that purpose. Just as we cannot strip away the humanity of Christ to get to the his divinity we cannot strip away the humanity of Scripture to reach divine revelation. The miracle of Scripture lies in the fact that God uses the frailty of the human person to reveal himself and that the "earthen

vessel" does not stand in the way of the power of God because God has invested his power in the human word. (VII., A-D)

Lesson 7
God's Creation

1.   How does the structure of covenant act as a hermeneutic of creation?

The knowledge of God as creator is preceded by the knowledge of God as Savior and Redeemer. Through Moses' experience of covenant and of being redeemed by God he reflects upon the inner meaning of creation and understands it to reflect what he has experienced in relationship with God. Covenant reveals the inner being of God's purpose and love for humanity. God's purpose exists first and is reflected in his creation. Within God's eternal being there is found grace, mercy, compassion and a purpose that existed prior to creation. Thus creation becomes the external form of the eternal and inner purpose of God. (I. - III.)

2.   What is the essential difference between the destiny of humans and that of non-humans? How did the Fall impact this destiny?

Both humans and animals are creaturely in their being and, as a result, their bodies are subject to decay and will return to the earth. The uniqueness of the human lies in the relationship that it has with God, which arises out of God's intentional summoning of them into relationship with him - a relationship which is symbolized by the seventh day. In his love for humanity God reached out and called them to participate in his eternal being. He reached into the determinism of their creaturely nature and in his love for them drew them into eternal life with him. For the animal world biology is their destiny but the human person, while sharing in the creaturely solidarity of the sixth day, falls under the determination of fellowship with God - a destiny which transcends the mortal and finite conditions of creatureliness. While subject to all the conditions of creatureliness the human person has been given the gift of freedom to be for and with God and other persons. Thus the eternal destiny of humanity is contingent upon our life with God, outside of this we are thrust back into the relentless determinism of creation. In the Fall humanity denied the reality of its complete dependence upon God and acted in a self-determining way which thrust them back into the sixth day and our creaturely nature now determines our destiny. (IV., A, B)

3.   What is the lecturer's assumption regarding the nature of existence prior to the Fall?

The lecturer contends that the nature of reality prior to the Fall is not substantially different to that which we exist under now. The natural world was part of a cycle of life, death and decay. The frailty of the human body meant that it was subject to being hurt and damaged. Humanity was created as part of the life cycle but in

his grace God made an intervention by calling us into relationship with him. Thus, human persons are part of the continuum of natural life and death but are not subject to biological determinism. The biological limitations of the human person were not fatal because God covenanted to uphold the human person beyond the end of biological life through a personal and spiritual relation with himself. The death that Adam and Eve were warned of in Genesis 3:3 was not one of biological death but one of fundamentally cataclysmic proportions - the death of sustaining relationship with God himself. Without a relationship with God which transcended biological life, human persons was thrown back upon themselves; their biology was their fate and they became locked into a biological determinism out of which there was no escape. Now death becomes a sentence, not just a biological reality under which they must life out the entirety of their lives, for they were no longer upheld in relationship with their creator. (IV. B-F)

Lesson 8
Humanity: Created in the Image of God

1.   What is the fundamental difference between traditional and contemporary views of the image of God?

Traditional views concerning the image of God focused primarily on identifying a faculty which resided in humans equivalent to something within God. Thus it was more centered on the establishment of substantive categories which described the nature of the image of God existing within humanity. For Augustine and Aquinas it was a faculty of knowledge of God, grounded in reason, a rationality which was able to perceive revelation. Luther focused more on the faculty of humanity as being the orientation of will toward God. Contemporary theology has tended to avoid such substantive categories as a faculty inherent in the human person but has asserted that the image of God is grounded primarily in relationality rather than individuality. However, there are differences between contemporary theologians as to how this relationality is manifest. Look at the debate between Barth and Brunner as an example of two theologians who agree that relationality is the key but focus on very specific content areas. (I., A-B)

2.   In Barth's view, what is the essential component of the divine image residing in humanity?

Barth interprets the image of God as the relational aspect of human personal being which is grounded in the differentiation of human sexuality. The content of the *imago* is experienced as differentiation within unity. Within God there is both unity of being which is experienced as a differentiation of persons within the Godhead. For humanity there is also a unity of being which binds all humans together but the differentiation is experienced at the personal level as the differentiation between males and females. What it is to be in the image of God is reflected in being male or female, male and female. In order to be in the image of God we must have something within our being that not only differentiates us

as I/Thou but something that is not interchangeable - and that is the biological differentiation of male and female. (III., A-J)

3.   Define the terms co-humanity and differentiation.

Co-humanity is the original differentiation of the human being. It refers to the social structure of humanity in which we must be in an I/Thou relationship in order that we learn what it is to be human. However, for Barth to assert that humanity is co-humanity is not only to express a fundamental differentiation of a social nature, but also to assert that humanity is determined in its social differentiation as male and female. Thus the terms co-humanity and differentiation are both essential to what Barth understands to be the image of God.

Lesson 9
The Providence of God

1.   Define and identify the differences between deism, theism and pantheism.

In your answer it would be helpful to use the diagrams on page 38 of the Expanded Course Syllabus to illustrate how these models differ. Deism asserts that God created the universe but then left it to its own laws and processes into which he does not intervene. Like a watchmaker he makes the world, sets it in motion and leaves it to operate by itself. Therefore there is separation between the two realms of God and the world, and there is no interaction between the two spheres. Theism contends that while the being of God and the being of the world are distinct there is an overlapping sphere. Within this sphere is the possibility of miracle in which God episodically enters into the course of human history in order to bring about his purposes. Pantheism contends that God and the world are one, the creator and creation are part of a whole constituting an undivided continuum. This model fails to maintain the ontological independence of God. It is important to note that process theology is not pantheism but rather panentheism in which God is not everything but rather is in everything. However, this view also denies the ontological independence of God in relation to his creation, a distinction which the biblical witness clearly wishes to maintain. (I., A-D; II., C., 4)

2.   In what ways does process theology react and respond to traditional theism? Identify some of the criticisms of process theology. How does a Christological perspective answer these criticisms?

In your answer you should identify the assumptions and implications of the older theistic model and how process theology responds to the problems of this model particularly with regard to the problem of evil. In doing this you will need to outline the assumptions of process theology and identify the problems that process theology faces in terms of the biblical witness to the ontological

independence of God to his creation and the very active role that the Bible attributes to him. In terms of the Christological perspective it will be important to understand how the knowledge of God as redeemer through the person of Jesus Christ enables us to bind together the doctrine of God as Creator and the doctrine of Creation. Through Jesus Christ we have a God who is both ontologically separate from us and yet stands with us taking upon himself the burden of pain and evil. In answering this question it will be helpful for you to look over your notes and lecture outline for the lesson on God's creation because this establishes the foundation for this concept. (II., B-D; III.; V)

3.   What does it mean to talk of providence and the Kingdom of God as the promise and presence of God?

In order to understand the true nature of God's rule upon earth it is important that we look to the person of Jesus Christ. In him we see two very important aspects of what it means to talk of providence in reference to the Kingdom of God. Power is displayed by Jesus in terms of his presence with human persons and his power to bring about that which he promised. <u>Presence</u> - the Kingdom of God is the event in which God displays his power through his presence with us through all the events of our lives. His rule is not understood in terms of controlling all events but one in which all of created and human reality is grasped by him. It is his continued faithfulness to be in relationship with humanity. This avoids putting God in a causal relation with events, and yet puts events within God's rule. <u>Promise</u> - the Kingdom of God as the person through whom he prevails so that his promise perseveres. Jesus is the one who brings the Kingdom as the event of his own life, death and resurrection. Providence then must be viewed and understood "through the cross" of Christ. (VI., G.)

Lesson 10
The Problem of Evil

1.   What is the philosophical problem of evil?

If God is all powerful, but has not the will to prevent evil, then he is a cruel and malicious God. If God is loving and good, but lacks the power to prevent evil, then he is a weak and impotent God. If God has both the will and the power to prevent evil, then whence is evil? (I., A-C)

2.   Outline a number of the different views presented in the lecture concerning the relationship of God to pain and suffering. What is the response of process theology to the problem of evil?

In your answer you will need to discuss the various views which were presented regarding the relationship of God to pain and suffering. Before answering the second part of the question it will be helpful for you to review the discussion of process theology that was conducted in the previous lesson. Process

theologians contend that God is part of the process. The power that he has is the power to evoke in people faith, trust and hope in times of tragedy. It is contended that God is the consequent end of the process and that he will bear the result of the struggle but that he will prevail. It will be helpful for you to understand how the concept of the openness of God is similar to process theology with regard to this question and how it differs. (III., A-D)

3.   Define the term "specific sovereignty." How does the cross and resurrection offer a different concept of sovereignty?

Specific sovereignty is a term which refers to a particular understanding of what it means to talk of the sovereignty of God in which it is denied that any human decision-making can hinder or alter God's plan. In this view all evil must be understood to be completely planned and purposed. There is no room for randomness as God is understood to be in complete control of all aspects of his creation. Through the cross and resurrection we can see how the power of God is manifest. The power of Jesus on the cross is not one of complete control but one in which God is present to us through tragedy and suffering. It exemplifies the power of God to grasp evil in the midst of life and that though evil exists within the created order it also lies within God's redemptive purposes. In the resurrection we see the power of God to bring about that which he has promised. Reread the answer to question 3 in Lesson 9. By not subscribing to specific sovereignty we are free to understand evil as the result of misguided human action or the result of the operation of the natural order and not an event which God has ordained. God is in control and has the power to bring about the promise of redemption but God does not control everything. (III., A-C)

Lesson 11
Theological Anthropology: An Introduction

1.   On what basis can we make the distinction between human life and non-human life?

From a biblical standpoint we cannot make a distinction between human and non-human on the basis of those who have souls and those who don't. According to the Bible all creatures have souls but that the distinction between human souls and non-human souls is qualitatively different. It is important not to make a distinction between humans and non-humans at the functional level. Rather it is the orientation of that life towards God which constitutes human life, or towards nature which constitutes non-human life. Therefore we can see that the self-determining actions of Adam and Eve, which thrust them back into the determinism of their biological nature and cut them off from relationship with God, served to distort their humanity, effectively dehumanizing them. (II., C-D)

2.   Discuss the relationship between Genesis 1 and 2.

In your answer you might want to refer back to the discussion in Lesson 7 about God's creation. The lecturer contends that Genesis 1 is the fact of the matter - that is, this is what God did - while Genesis 2 answers the "what if" question. It is meant as a theological reflection upon what it means to be a human in the sight of God. (IV., C)

3.   What is differentiation and in what way is it indispensable to the image of God?

If humans are to be in the image of God it is not enough that they be differentiated from animals or from God. Differentiation must also occur within our own being as humans. This question has been asked in another form in Lesson 8 question 3; for a more in depth discussion re-read the response for that question. (IV., A-B)

Lesson 12
On Being Human: A Theological Paradigm of Personhood

1.   What is the ontological structure of human personhood?

The ontological structure of human personhood is co-humanity. Response to and from another human is essential to the completeness of the ontology of the self. Our individuality is derived out of co-humanity, the more authentic our relationship is to another human the more we become differentiated as the persons we are. Individuated selfhood is derived out of an authentic social relation. (III., E)

2.   Discuss the five aspects of the self and how they are integrated. According to this model how do we respond to God spiritually, and what criteria can we use to assess a person's spirituality?

Your answer must include a discussion of the diagram on page 56 of the Expanded Course Syllabus and how these various spheres are integrated. The means by which we judge a person's spirituality must take into account all these areas because it is through our psychical, sexual, personal and social being that we express and experience our relationship with God. The degree to which we are dysfunctional at these various levels effects our spiritual lives. In this way we can understand the "fruit of the Spirit" as the objective criteria upon which a person's spiritual life is revealed, it is not based upon Christian education, years of being in the church or even positions held within the church. (IV., A-B)

3.   Macmurray develops the concept of resistance as essential to the development and growth of the self. What do you understand by the term resistance and how can this be integrated with the theological concept of differentiation?

Resistance refers to the availability of the self to another in encounter. It is a vital part of the means by which we become persons in relation to each other. If another is totally passive in relationship, offering no resistance, then the self of that person is not truly available to the other person. We cannot be a person unless the other person is strong enough to resist us. Thus resistance is an essential part of the process by which differentiation of human personhood occurs, that is, it is essential to the development of co-humanity and thus our being in the image of God. (V., D)

Lesson 13
Human Life as Male and Female

1.   How does Genesis 1:27 enable us to more fully understand what it means to talk about humanity being created in the image of God?

This verse indicates that there is a divinely determined order of sexuality intrinsic to what it means to be in the image of God. It indicates that biological sexuality is bound up with personal being. This essential order is experienced through creaturely humanity as male and female.

2.   In what ways does co-humanity - the polarity and complementarity of human personhood - reflect what is essential within the being of God?

Human personhood is experienced as a polarity of complementary differences. Each is different but when they interlock and function it becomes a unity of the whole. This unity is a functional unity, which is achieved through the complementary engagement of the two which are not alike but rather bound together in the same functional unity. In the same way God is bound together in a functional unity in which there are different elements that are not alike but are bound together. So while God experiences personal polarity and differentiation it is important not to project biological differentiation on to God. This question has been asked in another form, for further detail re-read the answer in Lesson 8 question 2. (II., B-C)

3.   What is the nature of the disagreement between Brunner and Barth on the existence of male and female personalities and traits?

In your answer it will be important for you to understand and outline the differences that exist for Brunner and Barth. It will be also helpful for you to discuss the nature of Barth's analysis and the lecturer's critique of it. Barth is concerned to ask the question, "What is the significance of male and female?" While there may be problems with Barth's analysis we still have to ask the question, "How do I understand God's summon to me as a female/male?" Barth ultimately contends that each of us must discover what it means to be male and female and that we know what this means as we are confronted with the humanity of the other gender. (II., D)

Lesson 14
Issues of Human Sexuality: A Biblical/Theological Paradigm

1.   What is the sexual ethic espoused by Brunner? How does this compare to the ethic of sexuality in Barth's model?

In order to discuss this issue well you will need to examine the diagrams provided on pages 62 and 63 of the Expanded Course Syllabus. In the contemporary ideological model the personal and biological spheres do not overlap and are linked only by cultural and ethical structures of society. If we assume that biological sexuality has no particular intrinsic component of personal relationship then we must appeal to ethical and cultural norms which shift over time. If we assume that the personal and biological spheres do not overlap then we are forced to ground our discussion in ethical/cultural issues for which we will have no real argument. Brunner contends that the erotic sexual impulse is an "unbridled biological instinct" which can only be consecrated through marriage or the ethical demand of abstinence. For him, except for marriage, the biological sexual drive has no ethical content to it and it is through the institution of marriage that the ethic of sexuality is enforced. This is a negative ethic of sexuality because it contends that sexuality is not good except as it occurs within marriage. Barth contends that the biological and personal spheres overlap and thus that the biological aspect is already bound up in the moral and ethical concept of what it means to be human. The ethics of sexuality is then to take responsibility for one's sexual life as a human and to ensure that the humanity of the other is upheld. For Barth sexuality is sanctified by humanity not by marriage. (II.; III.; IV.; V.)

2.   In order that a person uphold the dignity, worth and value of a sexual partner what factors must be present?

Fidelity, rather than promiscuity. Commitment, rather than a one night stand. Responsibility for the consequences of the sexual encounter. True encounter and disclosure of self. Barth contends that we have a moral imperative to uphold the humanity of our partner; anything other than this will dehumanize them and is a violation of the image of God. (V., E)

3. What is God's preference for human sexuality? How does the concept of God's presence apply to this? What is the mandate of the church?

Preference refers to God's preference for us to be person's created in the image of God as male or female, male and female. This preference is expressed as God's purpose for us. However, God offers his presence to those who do not fulfill God's preference. The Christian church is not meant to be a place where both the preference and the presence of God are present. All of us are in some degree of disorder and are embraced by the loving grace of God for the sake of restoration, healing and the movement towards God's preference for us. The mandate of the church is to preach and teach God's preference but to mediate God's presence. We are called to invite all people to be in the body of Christ, to be baptized into the life of Christ and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Every invitation to the Christian community is an invitation to grow up in Christ, to become the person that God intended we should be, to uphold the peace, unity and fellowship of the church. (VII., C-G; VII., D, 3)

Lesson 15
Gender Identity and Role Relationships

1. Why are roles considered to be adjunctive in nature?

Something is considered to be adjunctive when it is provisional, brought in to perform a service but is not considered a part of the process. To say that roles are adjunctive in nature means that roles are not an essential part of the created order, but rather are secondary. Therefore, role relationships can be interchangeable, a woman can serve an adjunctive role in a family when there is no father in the home just as the male can serve an adjunctive role of caregiver when there is no mother. Roles are considered to be adjunctive in nature because they are not an essential part of what it means to be human, male and female in the image of God. The biblical account of creation adds an oblique reference to roles in concluding the creation story, "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his woman and they become one flesh." (I., A-C)

2. How does an examination of the Hebrew use of language in the creation story contribute to our understanding of co-humanity?

Within the Christian church there has been an assumption of the priority of the male over the female primarily because Adam was created first and Eve was created out of Adam. However, an examination of the Hebrew use of language reveals some important clues as to the intention of the author. In the Hebrew the name Adam is a play on words which seeks to establish a relationship between the creature that God has created and the earth from which it has come. The word *ha-'adam* is a generic term for man or humanity, a more accurate translation of the word is "earth creature." At this point in the account the creature is not identified sexually. There is neither male nor female. The Hebrew words *'ish* and *'issa* for male and female do not appear until there is differentiated humanity. Only now with the creation of woman is the male identified as other, they are different and yet one. There is no order in creation but rather male and female are created together, simultaneously, not sequentially. Their sexual identity is dependent upon the existence of the other. Thus, we can see that alone the *ha-'adam* is neither male nor female, that in order to be created in the image of God there needed to be a differentiation of their being. (III., A-B)

3.   In what way are gender characteristics and attributes relative?

In your answer you should look at the discussion between Barth and Brunner regarding the nature of gender characteristics and attributes. Barth contends that it is not possible to create a list of attributes which define what it means to be male or female. Humans are free from any order that would systematize or erase their relationship. It is the Word of God which enters into the bounds of our culture to free us from its bondage. Humans are free to enter into culturally defined roles or not as the case warrants. Gender is no longer determinative of who we are, we have a new humanity because of the resurrection. In the death of Jesus all distortion of God's desire for humanity was crucified. Post resurrection there is a humanity which is to always bring to judgment any claim of power by virtue of one's gender, role or occupation. (II., A-C)

Lesson 16
Human Life as Contradiction and Hope

1.   Define contingency and what it means in terms of the nature of human existence.

Contingency refers to the fact that the life of an entity is not self-determined but rather depends for its existence upon something outside of itself. Human life is dependent upon God for our own life, our orientation and support, it is contingent upon a source and power of life outside of and beyond our creaturely existence. In order to be a human it is necessary to have a biological body but while it is necessary it is an insufficient explanation of what it is to be human. For the non-human nature determines its destiny but for the human, even though they are

also from the dust of the ground, there is an orientation toward a destiny - to share life with God. This is grounded in the doctrine of *imago Dei.* (I., A-B)

2.   What are the three fundamental questions of human existence? How are they answered by: a) a non-theological model; and b) a theological model?

The three fundamental questions of human existence are: a) what will become of me; b) what is the meaning and purpose of life; and c) what does it mean to have freedom? In your discussion you should compare the tables provided on page 72 of the Expanded Course Syllabus which compare and contrast how these different models deal with these fundamental questions and what the implications are. (II., A-E)

3.   For Kierkegaard what are the two competing realities which shape and determine the existential dilemma of human persons? What are the two ways in which humans can attempt to deny this dilemma?

Kierkegaard contends that within the human self are 2 competing elements. Humanity is a dialectic relation between freedom and necessity, composed of a duality of physical and non-physical being. The physical aspect of our being is our creaturely nature, that which will go back into the dust and as a result is limited in its being and scope. The non-physical aspect is that of the act of self-consciousness which is infinite in its scope, and freedom of possibilities. However, with all of our ability to be free to escape, our bodies make very real physical demands upon us. As a result of our dual natures we are torn by these two competing impulses. To be a self is to be plagued with these two competing realities, to be the self is to have this sense of dread, to be aware of our finitude. Humans can avoid dealing with the sense of dread in two ways both of which seek to avoid accepting and dealing with the duality of the human nature. This is done either by slipping into the despair of sensuality in which the mind is blocked out and the individual chooses to live with abandon, or sliding into fanaticism in which the mind is used in order to deny one's mortality. (III., B-D)

Lesson 17
The Human Dilemma of Sin and Its Consequences

1.   What relationship does sin have to human personhood?

Sin has no necessary relation to selfhood.   God never intended that we can be simultaneously be both sinful humanity and non-sinful humanity. We were intended solely to be human but in becoming sinners we are still human. Being a sinner is not another ontological reality. We have a human nature in the image of God that, under the condition of sin, is in a state of rebellion and alienation from God. As a result we are fragmented and less that what we were created to be. Sin is a sin against our very being, it breaks us free from our destiny with God and nature becomes our fate. (VI., A-B)

2.   What impact does sin have upon human destiny, history and freedom?

Sin is a threat to human destiny, history and freedom. It separates us from our destiny with God and nature becomes our fate. Sin did not cause human life to be finite and mortal, rather it caused the separation between the human person and the life-sustaining promise and gift of immortality which God alone offers. The effect of sin is to drive us back into non-being. Sin robs us of the history of our being and the interaction within the community of God which is God's purpose for us. Sin also takes away our freedom to enjoy love as creative self-expression. (III. A-D)

3.   Barth describes sin as the "impossible possibility," what does he mean by this?

For Barth sin is an ontological impossibility for the human person. The self is grounded in grace as its only ontological possibility. God didn't create humans to have the possibility of sinning but rather created a situation in which we existed within grace and the impossible happened, we fell out of grace. Jesus Christ brackets our sin with his own creatureliness in order to restore persons to their authentic existence within grace. (V., B; VII.; VII.)

Lesson 18
Human Life as Marginal and Meaningful

1.   What are the three ecological spheres of human life? How do they intersect and what relationship do human emotions have to them?

The three ecological spheres of human life are the physical, spiritual and social. Emotions are not a separate sphere because our emotional lives embrace all three areas. These spheres are highly integrated such that with any disturbance in any of these spheres the entirety of the self is involved. The rest of your answer should discuss human life as a psychical/physical reality, a psychical/social reality and a psychical/spiritual reality. (I., A-D)

2.   How would you describe life as marginal?

The human life is marginal in the sense that the physical/psychical spheres are liable to "error," to sickness and to death. When life becomes marginal it is because the creaturely nature of what it is to be human becomes subject to distress and dysfunction. So while not every moment of the human life is experienced under the marginal conditions of pain and suffering it is a part of the human experience of life. (III., A-B)

3.   What are some of the factors which determine the value and quality of human life?

Human life has no absolute value of its own in terms of the survival of the psychical/physical organism. The value of life is contingent upon the functional inter-relationship of all three ecological spheres. It is necessary for us to have a creaturely body in order to be human but our creatureliness is an insufficient condition to be human. What constitutes human life is more than creaturely human life. Human life is not "sacred" in the sense that there is an intrinsic holiness in the psychical/physical organism. Therefore we do not need to assert that human life must be preserved at all costs. Human life has a relative value not an absolute one. Once we have asserted this then we have to say that the relative degree of health or trauma experienced at the physiological level becomes a criterion for us at least allowing death to take place. Life itself does not determine the value of a person. The act of pronouncing death is still an affirmation of the life of the person. The life of persons has value to the extent that it can be willed to survive in its concrete situation by the self and others as a totality. Therefore in determining the value of life we must be prepared to listen to the individual involved and their assessment of the quality of their life. However, the right to die is not absolute any more than the right to life. The "border line" of human existence can never be reduced to absolute boundaries on which abstract principles can be squarely placed. (III., F-G; V., A-E)

Lesson 19
Therapeutic Approaches to the Healing of Persons

1.   What is the difference between a hermeneutic moment and an agogic moment? How does the agogic moment come about and in what way does it contribute to the health and healing of persons?

The hermeneutic moment is one in which the individual gains insight and knowledge but this moment on its own does not bring about transformation. In order for transformation to occur there must be an agogic moment. The agogic moment is a moment of understanding in which the individual receives the motive power to change through the empowerment of a mediator. There are three factors which must be present in order that the agogic moment be produced: a) the mediator must be fully human and their humanity must fully encounter the person; b) the motive power of the Word of God enters into the situation from outside; and c) actual change must take place. (III., B)

2.   What are the hermeneutical, narrative and eschatological tasks associated with the agogic goals of human growth and development?

These goals have to do with the life continuum as compared with therapeutic goals which are for a much more limited period of time. There are two tasks which are central to the achievement of these goals. They are: a) the <u>hermeneutical</u> task is a task of self-formation in which the individual must seek to interpret their life in such a way that it has continuity and is affirmed. Part of the process of gaining self-identity is that we interpret events which give us an

understanding of who we are and integrates events as they occur; b) the <u>narrative</u> task is one of self socialization in which the story of the self is acquired through participation in the story of the community in which the individual gains a name, a history and a context for discovering one's own character; and c) the <u>eschatological</u> task is one of self-fulfillment and is the creative task of faith. In this task we must understand that our history of being a sinner is not our total identity as a self but rather that our identity is grounded in the orientation toward the future of our destiny with God. (III., C.,1-4)

3.   Outline the three aspects of pastoral care presented in the lecture.

In your answer you will need to discuss the mode, goal and theological dynamic involved in: a) pastoral care as an extension of God's care; b) pastoral care as a transfer of spiritual power; and c) pastoral care as the creation of a healing community. (IV., A- C)

Sample Paper
Theological Anthropology and the Revelation of God

Dear Peter

Yesterday I received your letter and I am upset and ashamed that my rather rash statements to Peggy have got back to you. As soon as I had spoken to her I realized that if I disagreed with you on how to deal with her problems that I should've discussed it with you directly rather than saying what I did. I am afraid that I let my concern for her get the better of me and in the heat of the moment I spoke a little impulsively. I sincerely apologize for that. I am glad, however, that you are giving me the opportunity to explain my understanding of healing and wholeness.

It is important for us to grapple with what it means to say that humanity is created in the image of God. Understanding this concept will enable us to develop a vision of what God intended humanity to be and to empower people and their communities to find true healing and wholeness. The first thing that we can draw from the account of the creation of humanity found in Genesis 2 is that humanity is essentially social and personal in nature. Initially Adam existed on his own in unbroken relationship with God, and yet God deemed that this was not good. On the face of things it would appear that to be in a relationship with God in the way that Adam was would be a completely fulfilling experience. And yet something was wrong. Just as the Godhead exists in a relationship of both unity and differentiation, so we are created to exist in relationships where we find identification with each other and yet recognize our individuality of existence. To be in the image of God is to experience ourselves in relationship one with another. But Adam was alone, he did not have unity of experience with anyone and as such he could not know who he was. A relationship with God alone did not allow Adam to experience the fullness of his humanity. So we can see that there was already disorder before the Fall, a disorder which God rectified by drawing Adam into relationship with Eve where at last he could experience himself as an individual, a person within relationship. Thus, the primary social relationship was with Eve, not with God, and it was in this encounter of one with

another that they were drawn into true relationship with God and they experienced their fullest humanity. Thus to speak of the image of God is to understand ourselves as related to God, to each other and to ourselves. Sin destroyed this essential relatedness of one with another. As we tore ourselves away from true encounter, and alienated ourselves from each other and God, a terrible fragmentation of human personhood occurred.   Where once there was harmony both within ourselves and between each other and God there was now a dreadful brokenness that damaged all that God had so lovingly created.

The task of being fully human in the image of God is undoubtedly a difficult one [1] for we are indeed wonderfully and awesomely made. We are a complex amalgam of constituent spheres which, while relatively autonomous, are intimately interwoven with each other. Each of these spheres is integral to the whole of the human experience such that if there is disorder in one sphere the functioning of the whole person is affected.[2] While I agree with you that our relationship with God is a fundamental part of our humanity and that for any true wholeness to be experienced we must reconcile ourselves with God, I think in order to truly understand what it is to be human we must embrace the totality of our existence in all of these spheres - social, physical AND spiritual. We cannot separate our spirituality from all the other facets that constitute our essential humanity.[3] Our spirituality is not higher than any of our other facets for we cannot develop a true spiritual life and orientation to God without integration of all the other aspects of ourselves. Spirituality functions in and through all of our other spheres and draws us into relationship with God who is the source of all that we are. The Bible is consistent in its understanding of persons as both social, physical and spiritual beings. In Galatians we read of the fruit of the Spirit which are described as harmonious relations both within the body of believers and within the self. We do not experience a spirituality that is not completely involved with all the other facets of who we are. In 1 John 3:17 John contemplates the interwoven nature of our humanity and shows that we are unable to separate off our relationship with God from all of the aspects of who we are. If we are not in relationship with others showing concern for their physicality

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as well as their spirituality we cannot have the love of God. Thus we see that God is not only interested in our spiritual relationship with him but with all that makes us whole and healthy.

Each of us is embarked upon a journey[4] in which we are called to develop and integrate all of these elements which constitute our essential humanity - to be open to change and to grow towards fulfillment of God's purpose. We are all in the process of becoming more fully ourselves, a process in which we are constantly engaged as we face all that life gives us.[5] Any disorder, be it physical, emotional, or spiritual will be a hindrance to this process of growth and will contribute to the fragmentation and brokenness which is the hallmark of the Fall. This struggle to gain integrative wholeness is one in which we must continually recompose and reinterpret life in the context of our relationship with each other, ourselves and with God.[6] The failure to do so results in the fragmentation and the dehumanization of the individual. Each individual must be encouraged to see themselves as one who is continually integrating, and must be empowered to continue the struggle for growth themselves, ever moving towards health and wholeness. Each one of us must struggle to know what it is to be human and to experience our humanity within the context of our community and in the sight of God. As we grow we become increasingly able to be who God intended that we should be.

In the personhood of Christ we can see what it means to be fully human, for he was completely whole and integrated within himself, in his relationships with others and with God. He experienced his humanity without the fractures and the brokenness caused by sin but sought to continually integrate his feelings (the grief of Lazarus'' death, the fear and pain of the Cross), his physicality and his spirituality. He experienced our humanity and it is to him that we must look to understand what it is to be fully human. Christ entered in, and assumed this condition of brokenness and fragmentation and in his life, death and resurrection he bound our humanity together such that true human personhood could be restored to that which God intended. As Jesus stood in the garden of Gethsemane he experienced great anguish and pain. Was this the result of sin

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and separation from God? No, in fact it was at this moment of his greatest suffering and pain that Jesus was most obedient to his Father in fulfilling his will. Sin is that which prevents us from integrating all of our experiences, positive and negative, into a vision of our hope and future as it is grounded in each other and in God. We cannot view any emotional distress or upset as the result of sin, for our emotions are an essential part of our humanity.

True health and wholeness can only be achieved by understanding and ministering to the individual in this integrative way. The very nature of the complexity of the interconnection of our different spheres means that an imbalance in one of the spheres will impact upon one or all of the others. As ministers we must allow ourselves to be open to the fact that fragmentation and brokenness of an individual may result from a multiplicity of causes or emerge out of one sphere and spill over into another.[7] For myself I know that when I am physically ill my emotional and spiritual well being is affected, I feel lonely, depressed and far away from God but as soon as I am well again my perception of life returns to normal. All of us would agree, for example, that when we have the flu that we should go to the doctor to restore balance rather than going to a pastor, although prayerful support is also an essential part of what it means to search for wholeness. Our task is to be able to discern in what sphere the dysfunction is occurring so as to provide the appropriate treatment while continuing to care for all the other areas that are affected.

As I talked with Peggy last week I sensed that she has suffered a lot of pain in the last few years with the breakdown of her marriage. She has valiantly struggled on by throwing herself into church activities but at the emotional level she has been unable to take these painful experiences and integrate them into an understanding of who she is and of who God created her to be. In order to survive she has had to fragment herself, to cut herself off from all the turmoil and pain inside refusing to acknowledge the pain of what she has faced. As a result she has found it difficult to move forward , her pathway to true growth is being blocked by unresolved pain and a grief process that has never been fully recognized. I suspect that she has never allowed herself to just fall apart for fear

that others would condemn her lack of faith.   But also I would like her to see a doctor just so that we can rule out the possibility that there are not biological factors contributing to her depression.

Peter, I share your concern for Peggy and believe that we must enable her to integrate all the elements of herself, to heal the wounds that her divorce has given her and to regain a sense of inner connectedness and in doing so enable her to gain a hope for the future. Our task as the community of Christ is to give Peggy an environment in which she is able to integrate those parts of herself which are broken and in need of healing. We are to give her the support and encouragement so that she can continue along the path of growth and it is through all of our relationships with her - whether it be in the form of joining her in prayer or simply in terms of looking after her children when she needs help - that the integrative and healing power of God will be mediated to her.[8] As the body of Christ we are called to be those who give her hope and faith by being a place in which she can encounter the grace of God. However, we must recognize the source of the pain and support her as she seeks healing and at the moment I suspect that there are many emotional issues that she needs to deal with.

I hope that I have been able to explain the position that I am coming from in terms of my understanding of what it means to be fully human as God intended. Please forgive me for my unguarded comments but I hope you can understand that I am terribly concerned for Peggy and hope that we can be a place in which we affirm the totality of her humanity, not just her spirituality and that as we offer her God's grace that she will be empowered to work out some of the issues in her life and continue to develop as the person that God intended her to be. I will be happy to elaborate further on any of these issues when we meet on Thursday.[9]

NOTES

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[1]Right from the outset I want the pastor to begin to view humanity as a complex organism, for in any treatment of the human person if we are unable to grasp the complexity of humanity we can

only serve to degrade and misunderstand how we relate to each other and with God. I would want him to understand that to be human is a life task, a journey upon which we all are embarked. I particularly liked Gerkin's discussion of this drawn around the concept of the need to establish continuity of the self in his chapter on "The hermeneutics of the Self and the Life of the Soul" in his book, *The Living Human Document.* "It is the role of interpretation to sustain and solidify the line of continuing existence that provides the self with a sense of continuity at all levels of its functioning. The line of life becomes a line of interpretation - the hermeneutics of the self." p. 102

2 Anderson describes this understanding of human life as essentially ecological in nature in that each part affects the other and exist together to constitute the whole. He asserts that our ego self is comprised by all three elements of physical, spiritual and social, each of which reflects an aspect of what it means to say that we are created in the image of God. *Expanded Course Syllabus*, p. 71.   We are called to recognize the fullness of our own humanity rather than to confine ourselves to one or other of these spheres. Unfortunately in Christian circles while you may find agreement that we are not defined by our physicality or our sociality it is harder to say that we are not defined by our spirituality as this is often perceived as a denial or a denigration of the fact that we are spiritual in nature.

3   However, this is not the view taken by all Christian counselors. Jay Edward Adams appears to understand the feelings of the individual as that which created the Fall. In his chapter entitled "Sin is the Problem" he cites the 2 options which were available to Adam and Eve and which are available to us today: 1) "I shall live according to feeling", or 2) "I shall live as God says." He appears to want to deny the validity of feelings and subjugate them to a life of spiritual obedience rather than recognizing them as an essential part of what it is to be human and integrating the emotional self as part of the whole. He concludes, "Feeling oriented counseling (and much current counseling is) plays into the hands of Satan, who got the first man and woman through desire. To encourage counselors to follow their feelings rather than to obey the Word of God is to side with Satan, to solidify the original problem and to elicit complications that come from further sinful behavior. It is to side with the problem and its causes rather than the solution." *The Christian Counselor's Manual* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973 p.120-121)

4Anderson understands the process of growth as a dynamic one in which we move towards the integration of self in all of its facets, thus he understands the concept of image of God to be fundamentally developmental in nature. "The development of the self is a process of differentiation whereby the three spheres become integrated into the core of the self's identity as an orientation toward the physical world(I-it), the social world (I-Thou) and the spiritual world (I-self)." *Expanded Course Syllabus*, p. 79. Gerkin also develops a similar concept in which he depicts the developmental process as a dialectical process in which we must continually reinterpret our understanding of self and our relationship with others and God.

5Gerkin talks of this process of self formation as the hermeneutical task of each individual.

6 Gerkin talks of the hermeneutics of the self in which the individual is constantly engaged in a dialectical process of interpretation of the self. "The life of the soul does indeed involve the self's interpretative process within a framework of meaning that relates all aspects of life and relationship to a structure of ultimate meaning grounded in God." p. 44. The individual who is unable to satisfactorily sustain an integrated sense of wholeness in the midst of the tensions of life "will experience fragmentation and a need for integration. The hermeneutics of the self will not hold together; a new structure of meaning must be found." Thus the role of the pastor is to create an environment in which the individual is able to continue this process of integration of self and the narrative account of the life of the self with all of its themes, sub-themes and tensions can be held together in a unified story of self.

7Anderson notes that "not every disorder or problem of human behavior can be charged to spiritual failure anymore than all problems can be assumed to have a biological cause." p.41. Edwards disagrees with this and is outspoken in his belief that "counseling apart from the evangelistic presentation of the gospel will be of no avail." *ibid.*, p. 37. In that he elevates the

spiritual above all the other spheres of what constitutes personhood he believes that there can be no healing of any sort for the those who are non Christians. He extends no options to the non-Christian who is experiencing dysfunction except that they acknowledge the Bible's authority and acceptance of Christ as a precondition of entrance into therapy. This appears to me to be withholding the grace of God that is mediated through us to others rather than extending it to all who are sick and in need of healing. To say that healing can only be efficacious after the individual has accepted Christ appears to be saying that Christ cannot heal the sick but has come only to save the righteous!! Bonhoeffer concludes, "Everything would be ruined if one were to try to reserve Christ for the church and to allow the world only some kind of law, even if it were a Christian law. Christ died for the world and it is only in the midst of the world that Christ is Christ." *Ethics*, (New York: Macmillan, 1955, pp. 205 ff.)

[8] Anderson notes that while therapy is a relatively new phenomenon the practice of caregiving is not. I suspect the reason why therapy has become such a big part of the American culture is due in part to the fragmentation of the communities within which people were once upheld and supported. In the older societies of Europe where communities are more stable there is still a strong tradition of caregiving and support. "The concept of pastoral care ...is the Christian church's way of recognizing the basic needs of humanity as foundational to the ministry of God's grace and love." *ibid.*[9]

The Resurrection of Jesus as Hermeneutical Criterion
(Part 1)
by Ray S. Anderson

"Is Jesus not only the author of inspired Scripture, but, as the resurrected and living Lord of the church, also a contemporary reader and interpreter of Scripture?" I recently asked this question of a class of pastors in a Doctor of Ministry seminar, with dramatic results!

Some, who said they had not thought of that before, were carried away with possible implications for hermeneutical method. Others, apprehensive and troubled, suggested that this could be dangerous, for it would tend to undermine the place of Scripture as an objective revelation of God's truth for us, and as the "sole rule of faith and practice."

But if it is true that the living Lord Jesus is present in the hermeneutical task of reading and interpreting Scripture, what would this mean for the task of hermeneutics? In this article I will probe that question further, and theoretically and practically explore its implications.

As a foray into the thicket of contemporary hermeneutics, this project is more of a probe than a pronouncement. It is meant to be a programmatic essay rather than a monograph. My purpose is to stimulate discussion and to elicit a response.

I write with a sense of conviction that hermeneutics belongs high on the agenda of the contemporary theological task, particularly for those of us who hold the Scriptures to be the inspired and infallible Word of God. Whatever we mean by hermeneutics, the task is unavoidable. As F. D. E. Schleiermacher once said, "Every child arrives at the meaning of a word only through hermeneutics."[i]

But seriously, the responsibility to interpret faithfully and accurately the Word of God as given in Holy Scripture is more than child's play. It is a task that demands both rigor of mind and the wonder of a child. Interpreting Scripture is akin to standing where Moses stood on the holy ground in the presence of the burning bush, where his first meaningful act was to remove his shoes.

As a theologian, I assume that my task is a hermeneutical one. I agree with David Tracy when he says that "systematic theologies are principally hermeneutical in character," and that it is "imperative for each theologian to render explicit her/his general method of interpretation."[ii] My own commitment to the theological task as a hermeneutical one is represented by what one might call a "praxis hermeneutic." This follows closely the direction suggested by Peter Stuhlmacher in his "hermeneutics of consent." We are concerned to find a method of interpretation of Scripture which seeks conformity to the biblical text, while at the same time seeks authenticity with regard to the "praxis of faith." However, as Willard Swartley rightly cautions,

"The incorporation of understanding (interpretation) into our lives through meditation, through worship, and through living accordingly functions as an empirical, validating criterion. But while this validates the claim to understanding, the incarnation of interpretation in life and praxis of itself does not validate the *rightness* of the interpretation. For this reason the call to praxis-- living it out--must be put into critical and creative tension with the other aspects of the validating process."[iii]

I have argued elsewhere that "Christopraxis," as the act of God in Christ, is one way of understanding how the authority and the presence of truth can be located in the creative tension between the Word of God written as inspired and the Word of God living as inspiring. This act of God in Christ may now be understood as the present working of the risen Lord in the Church by the Holy Spirit. Understood in this way, Christopraxis as a criterion for biblical interpretation seems preferable to the concept of the "praxis of faith."[iv]

The Resurrection of Jesus as Hermeneutical Criterion

This brings us directly to the thesis of this essay: *the resurrection of Jesus to be the living Lord of the church constitutes a continuing hermeneutical criterion for the church's understanding of itself as under the authority of Scripture.* It is the risen Lord himself who is the criterion, not the event or idea of resurrection. For this essay, the expression "resurrection of Jesus" is to be taken as meaning "the resurrected Jesus."

First, we will explore the way in which the resurrection of Jesus served as a hermeneutical criterion for apostolic authority, the experience of salvation, and the "rule of faith." I will argue that the resurrection as hermeneutical criterion was not totally replaced by other criteria, following the inspiration of the New Testament documents and the reception of the canon by the church. Rather, the resurrection of Jesus continues to function as a criterion within the process of interpreting Scripture as a "rule of faith." I will then conclude this article by suggesting several areas where the resurrected Jesus as hermeneutical criterion may be helpful.

I will select three areas to demonstrate how the criterion was applied--the question of what constituted genuine apostolic authority, the question of what constituted legitimate grounds for saving relation to God, and the question of what constituted a new understanding of what it meant to live by the will of Christ as a "rule of faith." I will not treat these areas exhaustively, but only enough to demonstrate how, in each case, the resurrection served as a criterion.

The Resurrection as a Criterion for Apostleship

With regard to apostolic authority, the critical issue centered on historical continuity, coupled with witness to the resurrection. At first it seemed simple. The criteria for selecting a replacement for Judas included the necessity of having shared in the pre-resurrection witness to Jesus of Nazareth, as well as having witnessed his resurrection from the dead and his ascension (Acts 1:22). The early apostolic preaching centered on the announcement of the resurrection as an interpretation of the life and death of Jesus as both providential and salvific (Acts 2:32).

It was not so simple in the case of Saul of Tarsus. Not only was he not a witness to Jesus of Nazareth prior to his crucifixion and resurrection, but he was in active opposition to the testimony of the early Christians that Jesus had been raised. Yet Saul, now presenting himself as Paul the Apostle, made the claim to apostolic authority based solely on his encounter with the risen Jesus (Acts 9:1-9; 1 Cor. 9:1). In his argument to the church at Galatia, against those who impugned his credentials as an apostle, he stated that he was an apostle "not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead" (Gal. 1:1). Paul argued that he had not received his gospel from man, but "through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12).

Against those who appear to have questioned Paul's apostolic authority on the grounds that he was not a follower of Jesus from the baptism of John to the ascension (Acts 1:2122), Paul counters with the claim that it is the living Jesus who constitutes the source of apostolic authority. If having been among the followers of Jesus prior to his crucifixion is an indispensable criterion for apostolic authority, Paul has no case. But Paul could well have argued: How can one's history of following Jesus prior to his resurrection become a criterion when the chief apostle himself has died? The crucifixion put an end to the history of human actions as a criterion. The risen Lord, who is also the incarnate Word, is the new criterion. And, as Paul makes quite clear, the resurrected Jesus has appeared to him as well as to the others (1 Cor. 9:l; 15:8). Paul does not deny that the disciples, who were commissioned by Jesus to follow him, also have grounds to be apostles through the new commission of the resurrected Jesus; but he refuses to allow historical precedent to be the determining criterion.

For the Apostle Paul, there is discontinuity at the level of a claim for apostolic authority "from below," so to speak, as a historical precedent or criterion. But there is continuity "from above," because the resurrected Jesus is the same Jesus who lived, taught, died and was raised by the power of God. Paul did not reinterpret apostleship in terms of his own experience. This is not a "praxis of faith" as hermeneutical criterion. Rather, it was Jesus himself who became the criterion for Paul. Thus he did not argue that his claim to apostleship was the *only* valid claim, but that his apostleship was constituted by the *only paradigm* for apostleship--that which is based on encounter with the risen Jesus as its criterion. It is the living Christ present and at work through the power of the Spirit who constitutes the criterion. This is, if you please, Christopraxis. It was the power of God in the resurrected Christ which seized Paul and constituted for him the criterion for interpreting the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth as the "gospel."

The Resurrection as a Criterion for Salvation

A second crucial issue for the early Christian community was that of the legitimate grounds for salvation as relation to God. For the Jews, circumcision had been established as a sign of the "everlasting covenant" between Abraham and God (Gen. 17:7, 10-14). It seems quite clear that this was meant to serve as a decisive and normative "hermeneutical criterion." Paul argued, to the consternation of the Jewish Christians, that circumcision was no longer necessary as a sign of salvation and covenant relation. Paul could have argued that the Gentiles were excused from circumcision because they were not true descendants of Abraham. But on the contrary, he argued that the Gentiles were descendants of Abraham through their relation to Jesus Christ, who was the true "seed" of Abraham (Gal. 3:23-29), and yet not required to be circumcised! The Gentiles do not constitute the

criterion; the crucified and risen Christ is the criterion for both Jew and Gentile.

As in the case of apostolic credentials, the issue of continuity with a historical criterion again appeared to be at stake. But, as the early Christian community came to see, Jesus was the "end of the law" for those who have faith in the resurrected one (Rom. 10:4). Jesus was circumcised in the flesh as a sign of the everlasting covenant (Luke 2:21). Yet his circumcision did not save him. The circumcised man died on the cross. This calls into question the validity of circumcision as a continuing criterion and covenant sign. Yet, in being raised from the dead, this same Jesus was regenerated in the flesh. Thus, his regenerated flesh as the new humanity became the criterion of covenant relation, a point that even the Old Testament prophets anticipated (Ezekiel 36:26-27; Jer. 31:31-34). It is in this sense that one can say that the cross is the "end of circumcision" as a criterion (Gal. 5:6; 6:15; 1 Cor. 7:17-19).

If this can be said about the attempt to continue circumcision as a necessary criterion for salvation, would not the same apply to every attempt to circumvent Jesus' death and resurrection by imposing a criterion which is lodged in a natural or even a religious law? If Jesus the Jew died, does not Jewishness as a racial criterion for understanding election to salvation also have to surrender its exclusive claim as a criterion of covenant, and give way to the criterion of the resurrected Christ in whom there is "neither Jew nor Gentile?" If Jesus the male died, does not the male prerogative as a sexist criterion also surrender its exclusive claim for role status and authority in the Kingdom of God to the new criterion of the resurrected Christ, in whom there is "neither male nor female" (Gal. 3:28)? Or, to put it another way, can the work of the resurrected Jesus in the church, by the power of his Spirit, be set aside in favor of another criterion or principle which has not also been "crucified with him?" Hardly. Paul's hermeneutical criterion at this critical point seems clear enough.

The Resurrection as a Criterion for the Rule of Faith

If there was a third critical issue in the New Testament church, surely it was the question of what constituted a valid interpretation of the will of God for the community of believers. What constitutes appropriate behavior, life style, and the practice of faith in personal, social and civic life? If Jesus is the "end of the law," can there be any criteria left by which to determine a "rule of faith?"

Again, the criterion for Paul was the resurrected Christ as an experienced presence. As the new criterion, the living Lord does not displace the Old Testament nor the apostolic witness as criteria, but he establishes the hermeneutical criterion for these witnesses.

Here too, however, this new criterion of the resurrection of Jesus as an experienced presence represents both a discontinuity as well as a continuity with respect to the ethical demands of the Kingdom of God. "The kingdom of God is not food and drink," wrote Paul to the Roman church, "but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (14:17). This reminds us of Jesus' teaching that it was not what entered a person that constituted uncleanness, but what came out of a person (Mark 7:14-23).

In this regard it is interesting that this teaching of Jesus seemed to have no real effect as a criterion until after his resurrection and appearance to Peter, and after a personal vision in which the Lord spoke to him in preparation for his visit to the Gentile centurion Cornelius (Acts 10:9-16). Also instructive is the mention of the fact that Peter was still uncertain as to what the vision meant until there was a knock at the door with the invitation from Cornelius to come and preach to him.

This is a fine example of Christopraxis as a hermeneutical criterion. There was the remembered teaching of Jesus; there was the mystical vision in which the Lord spoke to him; but the interpretation actually came when Peter went to the house of Cornelius and preached the gospel of Jesus to him. Only then, when the Spirit of Jesus came upon the Gentile gathering with convincing power and effect, did Peter grasp the full implications of the command of the Lord, and he baptized them in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 10:44-48). This event was a "preparing of the way of the Lord" to the Gentiles, an incredibly radical and difficult hermeneutical decision--but this is how Christopraxis becomes a hermeneutical criterion.

One cannot forbid a work of the risen Christ through the Holy Spirit for the sake of a law or principle which itself points to this work. The interpretation of the law comes through its fulfillment; but Christ himself is the fulfillment of the law, not another principle or law. The law always was meant to point to the grace of Yahweh as the sole criterion for salvation. It was the *use* of the law as a criterion that wrongly led the Jews to reject the new criterion of the living Lord. Thus, the cultic law, even though it was enshrined in the sacred writings as the very word of God, gave way to the new criterion of the living Word through whom the kingdom of God is present in power.

Freedom from the law is not the new ethical criterion, but rather "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" which sets us free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2). To live according to the flesh is to live by the old criterion which is to reject the Spirit of the resurrected Lord as the new criterion. To live

according to the flesh is not only to surrender to licentiousness, but to seek to achieve righteousness by conformity to a criterion lodged in the flesh. Only a wrong interpretation of the Old Testament law could see the regulation of the "flesh" as being the criterion for righteousness. Now that the criterion *himself* is present, Paul argues in his letter to the Galatians that the regulations "written in the book of the law" have their true interpretation, which is "freedom from the works of the law" (Gal. 3:10,13). Paul argues that the law of God is not against the promise of God. But when that promise is present in the form of Christ, these regulations no longer have their "custodial" function (Gal. 3:23-29).

Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection put an end to these old regulations and established a new basis and a new criterion for the ethics of the kingdom of God in the experienced presence of the resurrected one (Rom. 8:3-11).

Of course, Christians still live in this world with its roles, structures and relationships, even though they have been "raised with Christ" (Col. 3:1). But these existing relationships are not to be the place for Christopraxis--"Christ's practice," if you please. Thus, Paul's epistles are pastoral in tone, and generally include a "domestic code," or *Haustafel,* in which existing cultural and domestic relationships are to be brought within the sphere of Christ that he may be revealed (see Eph. 5:21-33; Col. 3:18-4:1).

In these situations and social structures, there is a "command of Christ," too. Often the command is expressed in such a way that the person who receives it is expected to glory Christ through an existing order, even though that order has already "come to an end" in the death and resurrection of Christ. Thus, Paul can say as a direct consequence of the command, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col. 3:16): "Wives, be subject to your husbands, . . . Children, obey your parents in everything, . . . Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters. . . . Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly" (3:18-4: 1). The criterion in each of these cases is not a "chain of command" which functions as a legalistic principle, but rather the "command of the risen Lord" which functions as a spirit of peace and freedom.

There is, then, a "pastoral hermeneutic" which Paul applies in dealing with the practical matters of determining the rule of faith. In deciding issues for the churches, Paul based his rulings on the claim that he has the "command of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14:37). "I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you," wrote Paul (1 Cor. 11:23). In certain cases, he appears to distinguish between having a direct teaching of Jesus to impart and a word which he himself speaks which is meant to have the same effect. "To the married I give charge, not I but the Lord. . . To the rest I say, not the Lord . . . " (1 Cor. 7:10,12). He concludes by embracing both what he feels has been a direct teaching by Jesus (concerning the marriage vows) and a teaching which Jesus has communicated through Paul's pastoral words (concerning living with an unbelieving spouse) by saying, "I think that I have the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 7:40). In this case we have the interesting situation of a teaching by Jesus while on earth prior to his crucifixion and resurrection placed alongside of a teaching of Jesus which comes through his presence in the life of the Apostle Paul.

This shows us two things: first, there is continuity with the historical Jesus in determining the rule of faith for the postresurrection Christian community; second, there is also equal authority claimed for the pastoral ruling made by Paul out of the experienced presence of the risen Christ. The fact that Paul's pastoral rule has the authority of Christ himself informs us that the presence and authority of the resurrected Jesus served as a hermeneutical criterion for the early church. That is, Jesus himself continues to instruct Christians as to the will of God in practical matters of the life of faith. Jesus has not simply left us a set of teachings. He has done that. But in addition, he continues to teach. Discerning this teaching is itself a hermeneutical task, not merely an exercise in historical memory.

Through sound principles of literary and historical criticism, one can examine more accurately the *syntactical* or structural relation and meaning of words in the inspired texts. But if there is also a *semantical* or referential relation between the words of Scripture and the living Lord of the church, is this relation not a proper area of hermeneutical concern?[v] And if so, is it not the living and present Lord who upholds that referential relation for the sake of the inspired word accomplishing its purpose? And if this is so, then Christopraxis will continue to lead us into his Word, and Jesus' prayer will be completed: "Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth" (John 17:17).

The Eschatological Nature of a Hermeneutical Criterion

One further comment needs to be made before we leave this issue. Because faith as experience of the risen Christ is not the criterion, but the resurrected Lord himself, there is an eschatological tension in the pastoral hermeneutic of Paul. Christopraxis as a hermeneutical criterion never surrenders the inherent infallibility and authority of the living Word as the resurrected, ascended, and present Lord to a human experience, teaching, regulation, or tradition. Paul is quite explicit about this regarding his own teaching:

"This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any

human court. I do not even judge myself. I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then every man will receive his commendation from God." (1 Cor. 4:1-5)

According to this caution from Paul, there is a hermeneutical criterion which is anchored in the eschatological event of the final parousia of Christ. This does not evacuate the present Word of God of its authority, for "the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor. 3:17). On this basis, Paul equates the word which he teaches and writes with the Word of the Lord himself (1 Cor. 14:37). Yet, even as the inspired words of Moses and the prophets are interpreted by the hermeneutical criterion of the incarnate Word, and even as the human and historical life of Jesus is interpreted by the hermeneutical criterion of the resurrected Jesus, so the words taught by the Spirit and inspired by the Spirit will be interpreted in the end by the hermeneutical criterion of the risen and coming Jesus Christ. Does this diminish the authority of the apostolic and inspired scripture? Paul does not think so.

However, it does mean that the resurrection as hermeneutical criterion points forward to the coming Christ as well as backward to the historical Christ. In this present age, meanwhile, there is a tension between the ever-present demands of the former criteria and the already-present criterion of the resurrected Lord. The Word of the Lord came through cultural, social, and religious forms which persisted in spite of the radical new criterion of the resurrected humanity of Christ.

Where these forms were not a direct threat to the existence of the freedom of the Lord to form a new humanity, they were permitted to exist by the pastoral hermeneutic of the apostle. "Were you a slave when called?" asked Paul. "Never mind. But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity" (1 Cor. 7:21). Thus, Onesimus is sent back to Philemon not only as a Christian, but also as a fugitive slave. Paul leaves it to Philemon to apply the hermeneutical criterion of the resurrection in this situation (cf. Philemon 8-10). From this we can infer that Paul's letter to Philemon, which is the inspired Word of God, has authority not merely by virtue of what it said but in its effect to produce a modification of the behavior and life of Philemon (the interpreter).[vi] Paul did not "liberate" Onesimus by command of the divine Word. Rather, he sought the liberation of Philemon from his old ways of thinking as a slave owner, so he could be free to receive Onesimus as a full Christian partner and brother. In the same way, the authority of Scripture is evidenced by its effect in producing the intention and purpose of Christ in the liberation of men and women to become full partners in every aspect of the life and work of God's kingdom.

There ought to be general agreement as to the essential thrust of the argument thus far. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the hermeneutical criterion for determining the content of the apostolic gospel, for establishing the ground for salvation as relation to God, and for giving direction to the church in living out the life of Christ in this present age. The resurrected Jesus has usually been seen as the decisive criterion which marked the emergence of the early Christian church as a distinct community of faith in which both Jew and Gentile found unity in Christ. Our purpose has not been to develop a new criterion but to demonstrate the resurrection of Jesus as the criterion. Before we continue, it might be helpful to list the steps we have taken in demonstrating this criterion as a foundation upon which we can build our case:

1) To say that Jesus died and was raised up by the power of God is to say that the law, tradition, nature, culture, and history must give way to the new criterion of his presence as Lord in the world; 2) To say that Jesus is Lord is to bring the old order, which is passing away, under the sphere of the healing and liberating power of the command of God; 3) To say that "the Lord commands" in the context of a pastoral ruling on Christian faith and practice is to unite the teaching of Christ with the presence of Christ for the purpose of modifying the direction of Christian behavior toward maturity in Christ, whatever one's situation is at the beginning;

4) To say that one is obedient to Christ and moving toward maturity in him is to interpret Christ's teaching and will through faith and practice which looks toward commendation at his coming;

5) To say that Scripture is the Word of God is to bind the interpreters of Scripture to Jesus Christ as the living Lord, who is the infallible One;

6) To say that the resurrected Jesus is the hermeneutical criterion for understanding the Word of God is to give Holy Scripture the unique status of being the Word of God without making the authority of Scripture dependent upon literary, historical or confessional criteria alone.

7) To say that the responsibility of the contemporary church is to exercise this pastoral hermeneutic in the power of the Holy Spirit is to recognize Christopraxis as the sign of "preparing the way of the Lord" in every sphere of domestic, social, political and religious life; this is to say, "For freedom Christ has set us free . . . (Gal. 5: 1).

The Living Lord: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Criterion

We now have come to the critical task in the development of the thesis: *The resurrected Jesus as the living Lord is a continuing hermeneutical criterion for interpreting the Word of God.*

Once Holy Scripture is written and the canon closed, is it still possible to say that Jesus Christ as risen Lord is the hermeneutical criterion for interpretation of Scripture?

Or, to put it another way, having the living Lord in the church through the Holy Spirit, does the church today stand in the same hermeneutical relation to the New Testament Scriptures as did the New Testament church with respect to the Old Testament Scriptures?

I would answer no, for two reasons. First, the coming into being of the church following Pentecost was an absolutely unique event. In a sense one could say that the emergence of the church was a divinely inspired interpretation of the Old Testament Scripture with respect to God's redemptive purpose. The first church did not so much interpret the Old Testament using the resurrected Jesus as hermeneutical criterion as it was the result of this interpretation through the "acts of the Spirit" and the faithful work and witness of the apostles. Second, the apostolic foundation for the church is itself unique and no other foundation can one lay but that which is built upon the cornerstone, Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:10-15).

At the outset, it must be clearly stated that we are not talking about adding to the canon of Scripture, or suggesting a new canon, but merely interpreting rightly the canonical Scriptures, given the assumption that interpretation is a two-edged sword. One edge is the truth of *God's Holy Word* which is "living and active ... piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). The other edge is the truth of *Christ's Holy Work* by which he is active to do God's will in setting captives free and breaking down barriers which divide, preparing in his church, his body, a people who are and will be his brothers and sisters. "Examine yourselves," wrote the Apostle Paul, ". . . do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you?--unless indeed you fail to meet the test! . . . For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth" (2 Cor. 13:5,8).

Can we say that Jesus is not only the living Word who inspires the New Testament and thus insures its trustworthiness, but that he is also present in the contemporary reading and interpretation of the New Testament?

Can we affirm that the living, glorified Jesus Christ, even now preparing to come out of glory to this world and for his church, to consummate all things, is the already-present Lord who upholds his Word in Scripture as true, and directs its purpose to his own creative ends? And, can we affirm that the very words of Scripture, inspired as they are, continue to speak to us out of the very being of the One who is present with us? Can we dare to say with Ricoeur, though with a different point of reference, "I believe that being can still speak to me"?[vii]

I think we can and we must. For if we cannot, we will find ourselves in the position of the Grand Inquisitor in Dostoyevsky's classic story, who, surprised to confront Jesus himself in the roundup of heretics to be condemned, refused to allow him to contribute to what had been written. "The old man has told him He hasn't the right to add anything to what He has said of old," said Ivan, in telling the story.[viii]

Certainly there are dangers here! We are well aware of the final words of warning in the New Testament about taking away from or adding to the inspired prophecy (Rev. 22:1819). But it must also not be forgotten that the very next words contain the promise, "Surely I am coming soon" (22:20).

Let it be clearly understood that no confusion must blur the sharp line between revelation which has taken the form of the inspired writings of Holy Scripture, and interpretation which depends upon that revelation for its infallible source and norm.

The first century horizon, which is the occasion for the Scripture text in the New Testament, cannot be fused with our contemporary horizon to make revelation dependent on our self understanding (such as R. Bultmann tended to do). This would confuse hermeneutics with revealed truth itself. Nor should we attempt to push our contemporary horizon back into the first century, for we cannot do this. We can only create an abstraction of this first horizon which, if used as the sole criterion for revealed truth, makes out of divine Logos an impersonal and abstract logos as a criterion for the truth of God himself (such as C. Henry tends to do).

What we are suggesting here--if we wish to continue to speak of the hermeneutical task in this way--is that the two horizons are not resolved into a single, contemporary meaning, nor into a principle of abstract reason. As the criterion for both the original and contemporary meaning of the text, the Lord himself sustains these two points in a creative and positive tension. In this way, the horizon of the original occasion of the text and the horizon of the contemporary interpreter are not really fused at all, but remain quite distinct. Paul is permitted to say what he said as the command of the Lord in his pastoral hermeneutic, without forcing the text to be read in a way which is quite alien to the original context.

When we take seriously the fact that the resurrection of Jesus Christ continues to be the criterion for our hermeneutical task, we do not fuse the present horizon of our experience to the text as an abstract law,

nor do we fuse the text to our present horizon as a relativization of revelation to culture. Rather, we submit our present horizon of experience as well as the horizon of the text to the Lord himself, who is the living and coming One, before whom all of our understanding and actions must be judged. Only in this way can obedience to Scripture uphold both the truth and the purpose of Scripture.ix And to those who protest that the reality of the living Lord cannot be objectively discerned and known in the context of our own subjective experience, we must in turn protest that this is a denial of the sheer objective reality of the being of the risen Lord who presents himself to us both as an object of knowledge and as experience through the Holy Spirit's encounter of us. To be sure, this objective reality of Christ does not dissolve into our experience as the criterion of truth, for Christ has bound himself to Scripture and to its propositional form of revelation. But neither is the living Lord dissolved into the impersonal abstractness of revelation as the objectification of truth, with our own logic (logos) as the hermeneutical criterion.

Because the criterion of the living Lord in the church is not a different criterion from the same Lord who inspired the apostolic teaching, and not different from the same Lord who taught his disciples while on earth, this hermeneutical criterion does not stand in contradiction to, or in opposition to, Scripture itself. There is a tension, but it is the creative and redemptive tension between the "now" and the "not yet." It is the tension between the new humanity and new order, which is always and already present through the Holy Spirit, and the old order, in which we have received the command of God but which must give way to the new.

While the entire Scriptures are subject to the resurrected Jesus as a hermeneutical criterion, there appear to be areas within the New Testament where this tension between the "now" and the "not yet" is more pronounced than in other areas. These areas are noted by the fact that a particular text or passage can be used to support a practice or teaching which appears to be quite different from a teaching derived from another set of texts, using in both cases sound principles of historical and grammatical exegesis.

Where a New Testament teaching appears unanimous and consistent in every pastoral situation, we are not suggesting that the presence of the living Lord in the church can be understood in such a way that this "single voice" can be silenced or "made to sing a different tune." But where apostolic teaching and practice is clearly governed by the readiness or openness of the situation to experience full freedom in Christ, the hermeneutical criterion of the resurrected Christ as a continuing presence in the church is, in my judgment, indispensable. For it is here that the tension between the "now" and the "not yet" is most evident. This is not to suggest that we have here a kind of "God of the exegetical gaps!" All exegesis of Scripture must finally be accountable to the resurrected, always present, and already coming Lord. For the purpose of this discussion, we are focusing on those areas which are most clearly in this eschatological tension, and which require unusual sensitivity to the hermeneutical criterion we are advocating.

It is not difficult to find instances within the New Testament Scriptures where such a hermeneutical criterion is especially relevant. For example, consider the matter of the Christian's relation and responsibility to the state. In certain situations we are encouraged to "obey God rather than man." In other situations, we are reminded that we are to be subject to the governing authorities as instituted by God himself (Rom. 13: 1 7)! Or consider the issue of the Scriptures' teaching on divorce and remarriage when viewed in the context of a personal failure and confession of sin in this area. Does the living Lord offer grace and forgiveness when it is sought on the basis of the promise and teaching of Scripture?

One contemporary issue for the church is the proper role of women in positions of pastoral leadership and service. Are Christian women who testify to God's calling to receive ordination and serve as pastors of the church in disobedience to the teaching of Scripture, or are they in obedience to the Spirit of the resurrected Christ at work in the church? This issue is surely one which requires a patient and careful hermeneutical approach which honors the Word of God and which makes manifest the will and power of Christ in his church in our present situation. Part II of this two-part article will take up the issue of sexual parity in pastoral ministry as a case in which the resurrection of Jesus might serve as a hermeneutical criterion.

The Resurrection of Jesus as Hermeneutical Criterion
(Part 11): A Case for Sexual Parity in Pastoral Ministry

Can we say that Jesus not only is the living Word who inspires the words and teaching of the New Testament and thus insures its trustworthiness, but that he is also a contemporary reader and interpreter of Scripture? We answered this question in the affirmative in the last issue, and argued the following thesis: *the resurrection of Jesus to be the living Lord of the church constitutes a continuing hermeneutical criterion for the church's understanding of itself as under the authority of Scripture.*

We saw that the resurrection of Jesus served as a criterion by which the early church determined questions of apostolic authority, the experience of salvation, and the "rule of faith." We also suggested that the risen Lord continues to serve as a criterion for

interpreting the purpose of Scripture in the contemporary church. Where there is a tension within Scripture between the "now" and the "not yet," we argued that a proper interpretation of Scriptural authority as a rule of faith

must take into account the presence and work of the risen Christ within his church. This is not an appeal to experience over and against the authority of Scripture. Rather, this is a recognition that Jesus himself continues to be the hermeneutical criterion by which the authority of Scripture is preserved in its application to a concrete and present situation.

The purpose of this article is to apply this thesis in one specific area of concern for the contemporary church: the role of women in pastoral ministry.

In choosing the case of sexual parity in pastoral ministry for the purpose of working through an application of our thesis, I am well aware that this is one of the most complex and vital issues facing the church today. There are, of course, many facets of the issue, not least of which is the issue of a critical exegesis of the primary New Testament texts which deal with the role of women in society, marriage, and the church. There is no way to review the extensive exegetical and theological literature which has recently emerged concerning this question in the short space of this article.[x]

What is clear is that while the New Testament speaks with an emphatic voice concerning a restriction upon the role of women in certain teaching and ministry situations, in other situations the emphasis is as clearly on the side of full participation and full parity. One only has to compare the insistent commands issued by the Apostle Paul that women be "silent in the churches" and "not be permitted to teach or to have authority over a man" (1 Cor. 14:34; 1 Tim. 2:11), with the rather matter-of-fact instruction that a woman who prophesies (in public worship) should keep her head covered (1 Cor. 11:4). Even more significant is the same Apostle's practice of identifying women as coworkers *[synergoi]* along with men (Phil. 4:2-3), and his commendation of Phoebe in the church at Rome as a "deaconess," which is a dubious translation in the RSV of the masculine noun *diakonos* (Rom. 16:1-2). Paul goes on to describe Phoebe as his "helper" (RSV), which again is a weak translation of *prostatis,* which is a noun form of the verb used in 1 Tim. 3:5 which designates a leadership activity, or of "managing" one's household.[xi] The Apostle's overt recognition of the role of women serving as coworkers alongside other apostles is worthy of note. There is a strong possibility, according to many scholars, that the Junias mentioned along with Andronicus as being "among the apostles" was actually a woman--Julia (Rom. 16:7).[xii] "Only an extraordinary Biblical assumption that a woman could not be an apostle keeps most commentators from reading Junias as

Junia," says Don Williams. Williams goes on to cite the church father Chrysostom as saying, "And indeed to be Apostles at all is a great thing ... Oh! How great is the devotion of this woman, that she should be even counted worthy of the appellation of Apostle!"[xiii]

The point is this: with recent scholarship demonstrating that the New Testament evidence is not unanimous as to a teaching which would forbid women to exercise pastoral leadership and ministry in the church, the issue cannot be settled on textual exegesis alone. When all the exegesis is done, a decision still must be made as to which set of texts demand priority or serve as a normative criterion for determining the role of women in the church.[xiv]

It is in cases like this that the resurrected Jesus as the living Lord of the church can serve as a hermeneutical criterion. For surely he knows what his will is for the church in the particular situation of the contemporary church. And there are many of us who feel that he has already shown us what his will is by calling and anointing women for pastoral ministry in full parity with men.

The situation is not unlike that which confronted Peter. On the one hand he had the Old Testament teaching that God's gracious election was restricted to the Jews and that the Gentiles were excluded. On the other hand, he had the teaching of the Lord himself that pointed toward offering Cornelius and his household full parity in the gospel. The issue was decided for him when the Spirit fell upon the assembled people while he was yet speaking. "Can anyone forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" he exclaimed (Acts 10:47).

Can the church today recognize and affirm female members as having the same calling and gift of pastoral ministry as male members, without being disobedient to the Lord's teaching in Scripture? Or perhaps we should formulate the question as a paraphrase of Peter's rhetorical remark: "Can anyone forbid ordination for those women who give evidence of being called forth and gifted for pastoral ministry in the church?"

If Christ is at work through his Holy Spirit setting apart women for pastoral ministry with the evident blessing of God in their ministries, then there will be full sexual parity in pastoral ministry.

By pastoral ministry we mean all that a person assumes when receiving the gift and calling of ordained ministry within the church, by whatever form of polity it is recognized. By parity we mean a full share in pastoral ministry. This, of course, entails equality; but parity implies a full share in that which is distributed by Christ, while equality tends to focus first of all on rights, power, and privilege.

Can there be parity between men and women in pastoral ministry? Only if the Lord himself intends that there shall be and only if he acts within his church to

distribute the gift of pastoral ministry to women and men alike.

For some of us, at least, it has become imperative to recognize, and not deny, that the Lord is calling forth women within his church to receive and exercise the gift of pastoral ministry as a full share of Christ's own ministry. To deny this, for some of us, would be to deny that the Lord, through his Spirit, has so acted. To refuse to ordain women to pastoral ministry would be to refuse to recognize the freedom of the Lord as manifested through his work of calling, gifting, and blessing the ministry of women in the church today. It is Christ himself who is at work in this continuing ministry, as T. F. Torrance reminds us:

"Not only did he pour out his Spirit upon the Apostles inspiring them for their special task, and not only did he pour out his Spirit in a decisive and once for all way, at Pentecost, constituting the people of God into the New Testament Church which is the Body of Christ, but within that Church and its Communion of the Spirit he continues to pour out special gifts for ministry, with the promise that as the Gospel is proclaimed in his Name he will work with the Church confirming their ministry of Christ to others as his own and making it the ministry of himself to mankind."[xv]

In taking this position we are not unmindful of the objections which are raised.[xvi] There is the objection based on precedent. Jesus himself was male, and all of his disciples were male. We have already seen how this objection loses its power based on the resurrection of Jesus as a hermeneutical criterion. The criterion of maleness, as the criterion of Jewishness and the criterion of circumcision, came to an end with the crucifixion of the Jewish, circumcised male named Jesus of Nazareth. No longer can the non-Jewish, the uncircumcised, and the female members of the believing community of faith be systematically discriminated against. We are not surprised to discover that the early New Testament church carried forward these criteria as part of its tradition. The new wine was put into old wineskins with predictable tensions and torments (Matt. 9:17). What is surprising is to discover that even here there are evidences of an incipient recognition of the hermeneutical criterion of the resurrection with regard to the role and status of women in the church.[xvii] We have made reference above to the recognition the Apostle Paul gave to women as coworkers with the apostles, and not merely followers.

There is the objection that argues from church history. From the early church "fathers" through the medieval period, and even forward through the Reformation into modern church history, has the church ever officially recognized and affirmed the full parity of women in the pastoral office? As a rule the answer is no, even allowing for some exceptions. It should be noted, however, that Dean Alford records the interesting fact that "women sat unveiled in the assemblies in a separate place, by the presbyters, and were ordained by the laying on of hands until the Church Council of Laodicea forbade it in 363 A.D.--

three hundred years after Paul had written the Epistle to the Corinthians."[xviii]

But here too we have seen that historical precedent cannot be a determinative criterion for validating the present and future work of Christ. For he, as the living Lord, is the one who is the criterion himself. We have argued that the resurrection of Jesus and his already-present eschatological power in the church is the criterion for interpreting the command of the Lord. If this is true, does not the new work of Christ in the church today really suggest that Christ is continuing to give gifts to his church and prepare it for his own coming?

Ought we not at least have a sense of fear and trembling about such a possibility instead of appearing to be "dead certain" when we may really be "dead wrong?"

For many serious Christians the foremost objection to the ordination of women is based upon an argument from certain scriptural texts. We have already cited some of these above. In 1 Timothy 2:8-15, Paul sets forth what he considers to be appropriate behavior for men who pray and for women who practice piety. In this context he addresses a specific charge: "I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent" (v. 12).

Earlier, in 1 Corinthians 14:34-36, he said much the same to the Corinthian church, adding that not only is it a shame for women to speak in church, but they are to be subordinate (presumably to their husbands). In chapter 11 of this same letter, again in the context of public prayer, he states that the head of a woman is her husband, the head of a man is Christ, and the head of Christ is God (vv. 3-5).

Only a casual survey of recent literature dealing with these texts would be necessary to convince a reader that no amount of exegetical cunning can rescue Paul in these cases from the appearance that he taught in certain circumstances that women should not have full parity in ministry with men.[xix] What is not as clear is what Paul's teaching and practice is universally, without regard to the capacity of the particular situation to bear responsibly the full measure of Christ's gift of freedom. It is well known that in the Corinthian society of Paul's day, women were suspected of being immoral when not abiding by the local customs regarding manner of dress and behavior. For this reason, Paul seems to have accommodated his pastoral teaching to this cultural factor in addressing some problems in the Corinthian church. While Paul clearly held that women were equal to men, and had the freedom to minister along with the apostles, he nevertheless urged the Christian women in Corinth to abide by the local custom concerning the style of their hair. The freedom of women in Christ apparently did not give them license to act in such a way that they would be viewed as "immoral" (cf. 1 Cor. 11:4-16).[xx]

Yet when it comes to the churches of Macedonia and the church at Rome, Paul is not only silent concerning the need for women to be silent but actually encourages and recognizes the role of prominent

women, such as Lydia, Euodia, Syntyche, and Phoebe. Beyond this argument from these "descriptive" texts, there is the normative text in Galatians 3:28 where Paul explicitly states that "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Here again, if we approach the texts without regard to the historical situation, we create a textual "standoff." If one leans to the side of Paul's specific pastoral injunctions as the criterion, then one will conclude that the Galatians text does not in fact have a bearing upon the role of women in ministry, only to their full equality as children of Abraham. On the other hand, if one leans to the side of the Galatians text as a "Magna Charta" of women's liberation, then the teaching of Paul in the specific situation cannot be a criterion as a command of God. Willard Swartley says, "In Paul's writings we find texts which give different signals. Some appear to prescribe specific roles for men and women; others appear to grant freedom from these roles."[xxi]

I realize that not all will agree that there appear to be unresolved differences between certain scriptural texts relating to the role of women in the church. Some will argue that these are only "apparent" differences, and that Scripture speaks with "one voice" in all matters because that is the nature of Scripture as the Word of God. It is true that Scripture testifies to its own intrinsic unity. But if this unity becomes a "principle of harmonization" of texts, this imposes a criterion of consistency on the exegetical and hermeneutical task which serves more as an *a priori* principle than a theological insight. After all, the phenomena of Scripture in its own cultural, historical, and literary context constitute the primary source for our doctrine of Scripture, not the reverse. One aspect of the phenomena of Scripture, surely, is the freedom of the Word of God in its specific and concrete variety of expression and application to communicate authoritatively and infallibly the truth of God to us.

For this reason, we do not feel that the freedom of an author of Scripture, say, the Apostle Paul, to express the command of God in ways which are quite different in specific situations contradicts the essential unity and consistency of the Word of God itself. What does contradict the Word of God, in my judgment, is to force it into a logical straitjacket of conformity to a principle of consistency. In this case, the criterion has shifted from the Word of God itself to a hermeneutical principle which controls the exegetical task. In our case, we argue that it is the resurrected Lord himself who is the criterion of continuity and consistency in the freedom of his own self-witness to the truth of God.

If one takes Paul's various statements on the role and status of women in the church in a way which abstracts them from the historical context in which they are uttered, a kind of "textual standoff" will occur, as

we have said above. This can then compel the interpreter to attempt a kind of Hegelian synthesis through an exegetical exercise by which thesis and antithesis are resolved through a "higher principle." But this approach tends to dissolve particular texts of their full weight for the sake of a theological principle which becomes the criterion.

This can work two ways. One could take the position that Paul's christological statement in Galatians 3:28 concerning the status of male and female in Christ has a theological priority over his occasional teaching in 1 Timothy 2, where he forbids women to exercise the role of teaching or having authority over men. The theological principle of "equality in Christ" thus becomes the criterion by which one text is played off against another for the sake of resolving the apparent contradiction. This approach obviously makes the apostolic teaching to Timothy of dubious quality with regard to its being the Word of God for the church. In the end, one will wonder whether or not Timothy should have followed Paul's instructions if he applied the theological principle of equality as Paul himself taught in his letter to the Galatian church.

One can also see this same tendency to synthesize contrasting texts in the attempt to harmonize Paul's teaching in Galatians 3 with 1 Timothy 2 by interpreting the Galatians 3:28 passage as referring only to the spiritual unity and equality between male and female in Christ, and not as an attempt to eliminate these distinctives as role functions in the church. This approach succeeds in resolving the apparent impasse in interpreting the Pauline texts regarding the role of women through an exegetical surgery whereby the spiritual benefits of being in Christ are excised from the role functions of serving Christ in the church. Gender identity coupled with physical sex differentiation becomes the criterion for ministry. Male and female continue to operate as criteria outside of the benefits of Christ. Nature determines the extent to which grace can go in bringing the benefits of Christ into the historical and temporal order. In this case, the synthesis has been at the expense of the full weight of the Galatians text as a christological basis for the order of the church's ministry.

Let us assume, for the moment, that what Paul meant for his readers to understand in the above texts was exactly what he wrote, in the context of their own time and place. Rather than attempting to fuse the horizon of these texts with a contemporary horizon and so interpret them in a way which renders their meaning more congenial to our modern views of egalitarianism, suppose we let them stand as the command of the Lord to the churches to which they are addressed.[xxii] What do we then have?

The church in Corinth has an apostolic command which is equivalent to the command of the Lord

himself. Timothy has an apostolic command which is also tantamount to the word of the Lord. But what must be remembered is that the *command* of the risen Lord through the apostle, expressed in the form of a pastoral rule, does not automatically become a *criterion* which can be used independently of the authority of the Lord himself. That is to say, it is the Lord himself who is the head of the body. He is the criterion by which the church as the body of Christ defines its existence and seeks its true order. The command of the Lord comes as a specific command in the particular situation in which the church exists and is meant to teach the church how to exemplify Christ in its present state and how to grow up into Christ in all things (cf. Eph. 4:1-15). The "elementary doctrine of Christ" which the author of Hebrews suggests should be left behind for the sake of going on to maturity, is also a command of God in its own time (Heb. 6:1).

This same relationship between a specific rule and the command of God was made quite clear in our earlier examination of the way in which the resurrection of Jesus served as a hermeneutical criterion to interpret the teaching concerning the "everlasting" covenant sign of circumcision. The Old Testament law concerning circumcision was the command of God for Abraham, and remains the inspired Word of God, but not the criterion for determining salvation as relation to God. When the Judaizers sought to invoke circumcision as a criterion and a formal principle by which Gentile Christians were not given full parity in the church, Paul rebuked them vehemently (cf. Galatians 1-2).

Certainly it is true that the Bible is normative and infallible in that it is the Word of God. The Bible teaches many principles which are helpful and instructive for Christian faith and practice. The problem comes when any principle is made into a normative criterion and imposed as a rule or law which excludes the Spirit of Christ as the criterion which upholds the normative teaching of the Scriptures.

Can a Scripture text remain intact as an inspired word of God when a *principle abstracted* from that specific command no longer serves as a normative rule in the church? I believe that it can and does. The "law of circumcision" was replaced by the "law of the Spirit of Christ" as the absolute criterion. To insist that circumcision as a principle or law defines the status of human persons before God is to deny the work of Christ who broke down that barrier and gave full parity to Gentiles along with Jews (cf. Eph. 2:11-22). Yet, this does not destroy the validity and authority of the Old Testament Scriptures as the Word of God; for these Scriptures served as the revelation of God to the people of their time, and so to us, because they point to Christ, as Jesus himself testified (John 5:45-47).

In somewhat the same way, I am suggesting that those who feel it necessary to deny the very possibility (if not also the actuality) that Christ has distributed the gift of pastoral ministry to women as well as to men in his church, will be forced to make out of one group of texts an absolute criterion which excludes women from pastoral ministry. This will have the effect of forcing other texts which describe full parity for women to be concealed or suppressed. Even more serious, it will create a law which restricts Christ from exercising that freedom here and now. In a sense this fuses the horizon of the present church to the horizon of the early church and results in a hermeneutical criterion which gives primacy to the letter rather than the spirit, to law rather than grace, and to the past rather than to the future.

I think that I can understand why some would want to do this. For I too do not wish to sacrifice the authority of the inspired text to cultural relativism and "prevailing winds of doctrine." I suspect that those who feel it necessary to deny the possibility of Christ's contemporary gift of pastoral ministry to women do so because they see this as the only alternative to an approach to certain texts of Scripture which appears to relativize the text to contemporary cultural values or ideological convictions.

It is the purpose of this article to suggest that these are not the only two alternatives. One does not have to (and ought not) make out of an inspired text of Scripture a universal and everlasting law of the church which deprives half the members of the church from full parity in the gift and calling of pastoral ministry. Nor does one have (and ought not) to use as a hermeneutical criterion the prevailing impulses and ideological currents for the sake of making Scripture meaningful or acceptable to the present age.

When we allow that the resurrection of Jesus is a hermeneutical criterion (not the only one, but the supreme one), Scripture can be interpreted fairly and the Word of God which Scripture proclaims and is, can be experienced freely. It is the task of biblical exegesis to assist us in determining as closely as possible what the exact meaning of the text is with respect to the single intention of the author. Critical methods of textual study as well as basic principles of exegesis must be employed so the text can speak for itself and have its own "distance" from the interpreter. In teaching and preaching these texts, as we have referred to above, one can show that the texts say what they were intended to say by the author. However, if doctrines or principles are abstracted from these texts and applied to the church and the life of faith as the command of God for today, without regard to the work of God in the church today, the resurrection no longer serves as a hermeneutical criterion. This separates the word of God from the work of God, a practice against which the Apostle Paul warned in his letter to the Roman church (14:20).

In teaching and preaching the scriptural texts, there is also a pastoral hermeneutic which must be joined with textual exegesis in order to be faithful to Christ as the living Word. This is what Willard Swartley seems to mean when he calls biblical interpretation a "co-creative event," and goes on to say: "The task is not merely applying a learning to a given situation. To be sure, it includes that but it involves much more; the interpretive event co-creates a new human being, a new history, and a culture."[xxiii]

It must be made absolutely clear that what we are suggesting here as an argument for the freedom of the church to recognize and affirm full parity for women in pastoral ministry does not give permission to set aside the normative role of the Bible in favor of some contemporary criterion. This is true for several reasons. First, in Part One, we made it clear that all Scripture is subject to the hermeneutical criterion of the risen Lord. This binds the text of Scripture to the purpose of God's Word as a construct of truth and infallibility. Secondly, the Spirit of the risen Lord is not just another "contemporary" spirit, but is the Spirit of the incarnate Word, whose authority is vested in the apostolic witness and communicated through the inspired word as Holy Scripture.

Third, there is an eschatological tension between the "now" and the "not yet" within which Scripture stands as the Word of God written. In certain areas, of which the role of women in the pastoral ministry of the church is one, we can find the resurrection of Jesus as a critical and helpful hermeneutical criterion. Apart from that criterion, as we have noted above, there will be a tendency to impose upon Scripture a hermeneutical criterion which "wrestles" the exegetical task into submission to *a priori* principles. This eschatological tension does not allow the camel's nose under the tent, as some might fear, so that Scripture loses its binding authority upon the church. Certainly Swartley does not himself mean to open the door to any and all claims to freedom from the teaching of Scripture by his suggestion that interpretation is not only the application of what we learn from Scripture, but is a "co-creative" event.

For example, in areas of moral behavior, personal holiness in thought and life, and the intrinsic differentiation of male and female as created in the image of God, there is no thought of suggesting that the Spirit of Jesus as manifest in the church will lead to reinterpretation of the clear scriptural teaching. The resurrection of Jesus as hermeneutical criterion is a criterion which must be used to judge critically all contemporary claims for a "new moral order" for human relations, as well as a criterion to interpret critically and responsibly the Scriptures as an infallible guide to glorifying God in Christ, through a life of Christian faith and love.

The issue of the role of women in pastoral ministry is not an issue which strikes at the heart of a biblically based moral and spiritual order. Nor does this issue violate a fundamental natural order of creation, as Stephen Clark suggests in his book <u>Man</u> <u>and</u> <u>Woman</u> <u>in</u> <u>Christ</u>. To argue, as Clark does, that the subordination of female to male is "created into the human race," is of such dubious exegetical worth that it can only be accounted for by a theological predisposition to subordinate grace to nature.[xxiv]

Nor does the ordination of women, in recognition of the work of Christ in his church today, set up a new criterion of "human rights" as a principle which seeks to reinterpret Scripture in line with contemporary cultural and ideological passions.

Those who would seek to use the resurrection of Jesus as a hermeneutical principle which gives permission to reinterpret Scripture in order to make it more congenial to "modem" or "contemporary" concerns will find no basis in what has been said above. Quite the opposite. The resurrected Jesus is *himself* the criterion--there is no new principle of interpretation presented here. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom, said the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. 3:17). But it is the "Spirit of the Lord," not the spirit of the age, which gives this freedom. Paul is quite emphatic about that. But he is equally emphatic that where the Spirit of the Lord Jesus is present and manifest in his works, one must recognize and confess the truth and authority of that Spirit. It is the Spirit of the resurrected Jesus, working in his church, who is the criterion. And failure to exercise this criterion could well lead to "quenching the Spirit," a word of caution addressed by Paul to the church at Thessalonica (1 Thess. 5:19).

We must remember that the living Christ is Lord of Scripture as well as Lord of the church. The resurrected Jesus is not a criterion of new revelation that replaces Scripture; rather, he is the hermeneutical criterion for interpreting Scripture in such a way that his present work of creating a new humanity fulfills the promise of Scripture. We believe that he now chooses to call both women and men into the task of co-creating the new humanity through pastoral ministry by the gift of his Holy Spirit.

Can the church be trusted to exercise the criterion of the resurrected, coming, and already-present Christ as a "hermeneutical community" of faith and practice, under the authority of Scripture?

If it cannot be trusted, what is to be trusted? For every reading of Scripture is already an interpretation of Scripture. And the inability to interpret Scripture as the Word of God which seeks to accomplish our salvation and freedom in Christ, is already a reading of Scripture which has failed.

Let the church become the community of the resurrected and coming one, and then we shall

experience that which the prophet Joel spoke of, and that which Peter saw happening at Pentecost:

"And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; yea, and on my menservants and my maidservants in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." (Acts 2:17-18)

A Response to Anderson
By Berkeley Mickelsen, Professor of New Testament
at Bethel Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota

A two-part essay of this length warrants more space than that allotted for this response. The essay moves in the right direction, and I support Ray Anderson in his search for helpful hermeneutical criteria and in his

biblically-based case for sexual parity in pastoral ministry.

Commendations

Stress on the resurrected person, Jesus Christ. For apologetic reasons, pastors at Easter often stress the resurrection event. Anderson rightly emphasizes the *person* to whom all authority in heaven and upon earth has been given (Matt. 28:18). In Part I, he shows what revolves around this resurrected Christ and why he is the supreme hermeneutical criterion.

Pointing out the danger of bad fusions of the two horizons. Anderson shows the need for normative teaching to evaluate what happened in the first horizon, what should or could happen in our horizon, and how we establish our interpretations. Adequate interpretations demand more than a mere fusion of two horizons. They involve depth understanding of both horizons.

The description of Christ as binding himself to Scripture. Anderson does not see the truths about Christ as impersonal abstract propositions. When he speaks of a "propositional form of revelation," Anderson means fresh statements of truth that affect how we think and live. When we think of the Bible in terms of propositions, it can easily become a philosophical collection of abstract axioms. Anderson does not let this happen.

Recognition of texts that, on first impression, seem to give contrasting messages. In dealing with sexual parity in pastoral ministry, Anderson rightly observes that some texts seem to restrict certain activities for some kinds of women. Others speak about godly women and women in child bearing. Other texts point to full participation of women in various aspects of ministry.

Summary of main objections to Jesus' call of women to pastoral ministry. Anderson presents clearly and fairly the usual objections to women in pastoral ministry. He fairly critiques these objections.

Presentation of the historical situation behind New Testament passages involved in the debate. Anderson shows well the situation at Corinth, Macedonia, and Rome. He needs information on Ephesus, the background for I Timothy. We need to see the influence of the temple of Artemis with its worship of the fertility goddess, the first century Gnostic influences, and the constant emphasis throughout I Timothy on false teaching.

*Fear of true diversity is unnecessary. Di*versity frightens some people so much that they accept almost any explanation to get rid of it. Anderson condemns this approach. We must not force Scripture into a straitjacket of conformity in order to serve our emotional or intellectual need for consistency. Anderson insists that we see teachings within their historical settings rather than as axioms unrelated to the people to whom they were first written. Anderson says that Paul wrote what he wanted particular readers to understand. Different churches needed different guidelines. Paul's medical suggestions to Timothy for treating his stomach problems are not to be universalized. Yet we know that not all of Paul's teachings are in that category.

Themes That Can Be Clarified and Developed

Anderson's criterion can be enlarged. He has undoubtedly pointed out a unique and overlooked criterion in the resurrected Jesus. Yet unless we are careful, his approach can leave us with a limited abstraction--the resurrected Jesus alone. Anderson does not intend to do this. However, the reader may need more explanation of *what is involved in this resurrected Jesus.* The New Testament gives us his teachings and its teachings about him. Some of these teachings can be clearly established as normative--highest norms or standards. (See Berkeley and Alvera Mickelsen, Under*standing Scripture,* Regal Books, pp. 24-32.) Other teachings in the Old and New Testaments consist of regulations for people where they were.

Christ gave the power of binding and loosing to the apostles (Matt. 16:19; 18:18). This power involved teaching authority, and discipline (see von Meding and Muller [DNTTh], I, 171-172), but not personal

authority divorced from the gospel (ibid). Nor can it be divorced from the living, resurrected Jesus.

The first act of the resurrected Lord after his ascension and exaltation to the right hand of God was to send the Holy Spirit. "He poured out this which you are seeing and hearing" (Acts 2:33). This coming of the Spirit was what Joel spoke about, what John the Baptist prophesied, what Jesus announced during his earthly ministry, and what Peter explained in his Pentecostal sermon. It was the first act of the resurrected exalted Jesus. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the world and the teachings mentioned by Peter in connection with Pentecost (Acts 2:17-18) became real.

The inauguration of the New Covenant is seen in Jesus' solemn words of the Lord's Supper: "This cup is the New Covenant in my blood. . ." (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25). The new wine of the gospel cannot be contained in the old wineskins of Judaism (Matt. 9:17; Mark 2:22, Luke 5:37-39).

The resurrected Jesus is the *whole* Christ: his teachings and the teachings about him, his emphasis on the authority of his gospel, his work at Pentecost, the presence of the Holy Spirit, and his provision for the inauguration of the New Covenant.

Maleness, jewishness, and circumcision are clarified by the total criterion. The use of maleness, circumcision, or any other *Jewish* structure as limiting service for women is negated by the reality of sons and daughters prophesying, preaching, evangelizing, teaching, comforting, encouraging, doing the full work of the ministry.

The effects in the history of the church of Neglecting the gifts of the Spirit are seen more clearly in the light of Anderson's criterion. All gifts were given to men and women (i.e., particular gifts) for the common good (I Cor. 12:7), for the building up of the church (I Cor. 14:12), and for the building up of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12). When the church lost sight of the total, living, resurrected Christ, it lost sight of its gifts and their use.

Galatians 3:26-29 is a normative passage. One should not begin in verse 28, but rather in verse 23. Before faith in Jesus, the old covenant was in operation. But now under the new covenant all believers are sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Verse 28 is Paul's concise statement of what Pentecost involves.

Ambiguous terminology is clarified by the total criterion. Anderson speaks of a "pastoral hermeneutic" and "textual exegesis." This is puzzling at first. I think he means "pastoral regulations" for people where they were so that they could carry out the highest norms of Pentecost. To use such regulations to cancel the highest norm of Pentecost is tragic. To see them as a means to achieve Pentecost is more likely how Paul intended them to be understood. Recognition of dependence and true learning are essentials for all ministry. The Spirit of Jesus will not reinterpret Pentecost, but rather in every age the Spirit will guide teachings to make the power of Pentecost more fully operative.

The Joel passage as quoted in Acts 2:17-18 is central. Anderson closes with this passage. The total criterion of the resurrected Jesus, all that he is, all that he taught, all that is taught about him in Scripture, comes into sharp, clear focus when we see Pentecost as an historical event and also as a powerful present reality to end all sexism, racism, and classism.

A Response to Anderson
by Gerald T. Sheppard, Associate Professor of Old Testament Literature
at Emmanuel College in the University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

The biblical materials themselves assign a very limited role narratively to the teaching of the risen Lord. In the synoptic Gospels, the post-resurrection encounters are brief; Jesus' instructions appear elusive and punctiliar.

By contrast, the account in Acts 1:3 allows Jesus forty days to add to the disciples' understanding of "the kingdom of God"; but we, the readers, are offered no specific details about what he taught. Historical critics properly raise questions about the sources of such tradition. However, even working within the narrative lines of the Gospels themselves, we find no biblical tradition about what might constitute the new content of revelation by the post-resurrection Christ. Within the canonical presentation of Jesus Christ in Scripture, the post-resurrection Lord remains a silent figure for us.

Within the tradition, the unrecorded words of Christ become the grounds for fusing once and for all the meaning and message of Jesus with that of the Christ. The Gospel story is inevitably told through the eyes of those who have seen the glory of God beyond the crucifixion of God; the resurrection of human life beyond the suffering and death of the oppressed.

In Galatians, Paul claims he learns about the Gospel through a special audition in the wilderness, but he immediately assures us that he confirmed the accuracy of his knowledge by comparison with the Gospel tradition as already understood by the disciples in Jerusalem. The later Pauline reference to a "command from the Lord" coincides, in my opinion, with the early Christian understanding of prophecy which belongs to a quite different resource than what Anderson proposes. It is not based on an appeal to experience within the

churches as proof that the risen Lord has recently clarified some previously equivocal matter; for example, in a manner parallel to Anderson's case for women's ordination.

I agree with Anderson that one should value what we discover by God's grace to be the actual situation in churches. Of course, we can observe that God seems to allow women to minister as effectively, if not more so, than men. At a minimum, this evidence ought to inspire us to hope that we can hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ with a new precision. In and of itself, it need not lead to the assumption that the risen Lord has finally made a timely decision. In my estimate, Anderson's approach risks assigning the issue of women's ordination to biblical *adiaphora,* uncertainties at the margin rather than at the center of our understanding of the Gospel. I would prefer to argue theologically that women *should* be ordained, and should have been in the past, for the sake of the same Gospel to which Scripture bears witness then and now. The risen Lord has not unexpectedly decided to join us in exegesis of biblical texts on this timely subject. Conversely, through ignorance and a poverty of imagination, we have only now caught up to yet another aspect of this same Gospel. We cannot blame the risen Lord for the uncertain sounds in our Gospel of the past. We can only respond thankfully that we now know we *should* have ordained women from the beginning of the church. The church is an imperfect institution. To whom much is given much is required!

On a much more controversial matter, the presence of gay and lesbian Christians and ministers in our churches is for me a similar issue. I have argued elsewhere that our privileged knowledge of "homosexualities" demands a new precision in our hearing the Gospel. I believe that the Gospel--as Evangelicals Concerned recognizes--should lead us at least to an affirmation of gay and lesbian partnerships ruled by a biblical ethic analogous to that offered for heterosexual relationships. If one makes such claims,

then the resurrected Lord cannot be used as an excuse for the preceding centuries of sexism and homophobia. We should confess our past sins, whenever we gain a deeper knowledge of things that were already implicitly at the core of our profession of faith in Jesus Christ. After all, these are matters of life and death, not mere ambiguities.

Finally, I am disappointed in Anderson's proposal for what I consider to be a failure within Reformed Protestantism of the West. In the national Faith and Order Movement, I have been impressed with the (Eastern) Orthodox critique of the *filioque* clause in the Nicene Creed. The Orthodox contend that the *filioque* clause, on the one hand, says nothing about the economic trinity in worship and Christian praxis and, on the other hand, the *filioque* relegates the Holy Spirit to an inferior status within the Trinity. As Kilian McDonnell suggests, Protestants seem to assume that the Holy Spirit was not present with believers until the day of Pentecost. In the biblical tradition, the post-resurrection Jesus must go away so that the Holy Spirit will be with us in a special way, as the convector/comforter until Christ comes again in glory. Even at this point, many Protestants relegate the Pentecostal activity of the Spirit to the Apostolic Age and, as Anderson's proposal seems to suggest, opt for a "Christomonism" for understanding God in the Church Age.

Anderson deserves commendation both for his genuine concern to respect the nature of the biblical text, rather than merely project his own ideas into it, and for his recognition of the gift of God in the ministry of ordained women. Nevertheless, Anderson's theological thesis, in my opinion, resolves too many hermeneutical problems by a "Jesusology" of the post-resurrected Lord. Moreover, such a view tends to invite an atrophied understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit, for example, in the attestation of Scripture, discernment within the community of faith, and empowerment to announce freedom to captives and liberty to the oppressed.

A Response to Mickelsen and Sheppard, by Ray S. Anderson

Berkeley Mickelsen and Gerald Sheppard have made significant contributions to theological literature in their own right. For them to take the time to read and critique what 1 have written is a mark of their Christian collegiality and their concern to contribute further to theological dialogue within the evangelical community. The fact that they were severely limited in the amount of space to present their responses while I was privileged to write two major essays, only demonstrates

their good will and grace even further. I deeply appreciate their contributions.

Both Mickelsen and Sheppard seem to have grasped clearly the basic thesis which I proposed, with Mickelsen willing to consider it as a possible way of proceeding in the hermeneutical task, while Sheppard, if I understand him correctly, rejects it. Mickelsen has suggested some valuable insights which need to be pursued further, and points to the need for continued exploration of the biblical, cultural, and historical contexts in which the original texts were written. I am

not sure what he means by "the highest norms of Pentecost," and by suggesting that the "Spirit of Jesus will not reinterpret Pentecost." I do not think he means that the historical event of Pentecost constitutes a norm any more than the historical event of the resurrection is a norm. It is the person of the risen Christ which is normative even as it is the person of the Holy Spirit which makes the normative presence of the risen Christ in the Church a contemporary reality.

This, of course, is where Gerry Sheppard takes issue with my basic thesis. Sheppard is not willing to allow that the risen Christ was normative for Paul. Rather, Paul's experience of the risen Christ needed to be corroborated by the oral tradition of the Jesus who lived, taught, was crucified and appeared to the early disciples.

I find this strange in light of Paul's insistence that he "did not confer with flesh and blood" following his conversion, and that he only went up to Jerusalem three years after, and only then for fifteen days, and that it was fourteen years later when he went up to confer with them about "his gospel" (Gal. 1:18; 2:1). Can we read the Galatian epistle in any other way than an attempt by Paul to argue for his experience of the risen Christ as a criterion for his own apostolic authority as well as for "his gospel"?

But Sheppard does not want to allow for a Pauline reinterpretation of the gospel tradition as represented by the pre-resurrected Jesus. He will only allow that the resurrected Jesus, or the Holy Spirit, leads us to discover the same gospel with a "new precision." His basic thesis seems to be that what the church discovers today as a "permission" to ordain women can be found in the original biblical texts. This is a position taken by Daniel Fuller and has been ably presented in the November/December 1985 issue of *TSF Bulletin.*

What I hear Sheppard saying is that even Paul's teaching must be verified by its correspondence with the oral tradition as contained in the remembrance and witness of the disciples. Should Timothy have found, with a "new precision," a source in that early tradition to set aside Paul's clear instructions not to place women in authority over men? I do not think this is what Sheppard means to suggest. But then I am not clear as to what he means by the "gospel tradition," to which Paul himself must conform in order to be accurate, nor am I clear as to what he means by the "canonical presentation of Jesus Christ in Scripture."

Along with the ordination of women, Sheppard cites the case of the recognition of homosexual partnerships as one which can also be determined by a "new precision" in interpreting the biblical texts. I had expected that he would have pointed to this as a logical outcome of my own thesis, a point which I anticipated in my essay. Instead, he argues that refusal to recognize homosexual partnerships along with the refusal to ordain women by the church in its past is to substitute "our gospel" for the true and original "gospel of Christ." I have read the attempts to argue the case for ordination of women as well as for recognition of homosexual partnerships on the basis of "new exegetical precision," and I remain unpersuaded. For the reasons cited in my essay, I continue to feel that the discernment of the ministry of the resurrected Jesus in and by the church today is a recognition of an eschatological reality by which the historical Jesus, coming again, and present in the power of the Holy Spirit, is leading the church toward its future.

In the end, Sheppard charges me with following the Western tradition with regard to the *filioque.* *I* plead guilty here, with a qualification. I agree with Karl Barth, who has suggested that there are clearly no ecclesial or historical grounds for the insertion of the *filioque* clause into the Creed. Yet, Barth argues, the theological instincts which sought to locate the saving and sanctifying work of the Spirit of God in the work of Christ, the Son of God, are essentially correct. As Thomas Smail has recently shown in his two significant works, *Reflected Glory* and *The Forgotten Father,* a Pentecostal or charismatic experience of the Spirit without a trinitarian and christological context tends toward a neglect of both the Father and the Son.

My own position demands that the Spirit who is present in the church be taken with radical seriousness as making present the life of God as Father and Son. But it is the proper work of the risen Christ as the Son to prepare the church for its eschatological presentation to the Father, even as it is the proper work of the Spirit to make present in the church the eschatological reality of the Father and the Son.

In Sheppard's response, no doubt dictated by its brevity, there is no clear indication that he considers the work of the Spirit to be an eschatological manifestation of God, and that this constitutes a hermeneutical context for determining what Scripture *intends* as a continuing authority for the saving significance of Christ's life, death and resurrection.

My original purpose was to set forth an agenda for continued discussion. I have profited from the exchange and have been challenged by my responders to rethink some aspects of my position. My hope is that other readers will also be stimulated to struggle with these issues.

Notes

i H. Kinimerhe, ed., Hermeneutics: The Hand-written Manuscripts, translated by J. Duke and J. Forstman (Scholars Press, 1977), P. 52. For a discussion of contemporary issues in hermeneutics see: Anthony C. Thistleton, *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980). The theme of the "two horizons" has been set forth by Hans-Georg Gadamer in Truth and Method, trans.

by Garrett Borden and John Cumming (New York: Continuum, 1975). One might mention also Paul Ricoeur's "hermeneutics of suspicion" (Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation, trans. by Denis Savage; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970, P. 32), or Peter Stuhlmacher's "hemeneutics of consent" Historical Criticism and Theological Interpretation Scripture: Towards a Hermeneutic of Consent, trans. by Roy A. Harrisville; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977); or Geoffrey Wainwright's suggestion that hermeneutics be considered as doxology (Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life, New York: Oxford University Press, 1980, pp. 175ff.); or David Tracy's "paradigmatic hermeneutic" following Mircea Eliade's contention that "only the paradigmatic is the real"(The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism, New York: Crossroads Publishing Company, 1981, pp. 193ff.).

ii The Analogical Imagination, pp. 58-59.

iii Willard M. Swartley, Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1983), P. 223.

iv See my essay, "Christopraxis: Competence as a Criterion for Preparation for Ministry," TSF Bulletin, January/February 1984. Paul D. Hanson suggests something quite similar when he says, ". . . in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, a new breakthrough occurred in God's activity which in its uniqueness still serves as the master paradigm in the Christian's understanding of Dynamic Transcendence." The Diversity of Scripture: A Theological Interpretation (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), pp. 66-67.

v T. F. Torrance likes to say, "No syntactics contains its own semantics." Reality and Evangelical Theology (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), P. 116. "It is in the semantic relation between the human word and the divine Word that the basic clues to understanding will be found, for the higher level of God's Word comprehends the operation of the human word at the lower level and forms its meaningful reference to itself" (Ibid., P. 117).

vi Cf. Scott Bartchy, who says, "The authority of a New Testament text dealing with human behavior lies first of all in the *direction* in which any aspect of first century behavior is being modified by the text in question (i.e., *from* wherever Christ encountered the new behavior toward maturity in Christ) Jesus, Power, and Gender Roles," TSF Bulletin, January/Febmary 1984, P. 3.

vii Emerson Buchanan, trans., The Symbolism of Evil. Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), P. 352.

viii F. Dostoyevsky, The Brothers Karamazov (New York: Random House, Modern Library Paperback, 1950), P. 297.

ix See the helpful suggestion by Geoffrey Bromiley, to the effect that God is not identical with the Bible, though God teaches what the Bible teaches. God and Marriage (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), preface. In this same connection, T. F. Torrance helpfully comments: "In order to think out the relation of the Church in history to Christ we must put both these together--mediate horizontal relation through history to the historical Jesus Christ, and immediate vertical relation through the Spirit to the risen and ascended Jesus Christ. It is the former that supplies the material content, while it is the latter that supplies the immediacy of actual encounter." Space, Time, and Resurrection (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), P. 147.

x A helpful bibliography of recent literature on the issue of the Bible and the role of women can be found in the book by Willard M. Swartley, Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1983), pp. 342-345.

xi For a full discussion of these exegetical issues, see Scott Bartchy, "Power, Submission, and Sexual Identity Among the Early Christians," in Essays On New Testament Christianity, C. Robert Wetzel, ed. (Standard Publishing, 1978). See also the discussion of these issues by David Scholer in "Women in Ministry," a Covenant Companion 72/21 (Dec. 1, 1983), pp. 8-9; 72/22 (Dec. 15, 1983), pp 14-15; 73/1 Jan. 1, 1984) pp. 12-13; 73/2 (Feb. 1984), pp. 12-15.

xii See Bernadette Brooten, "Junia . . . Outstanding Among the Apostles," in Women Priests, L. and A. Swidler, eds. (Paulist Press, 1977), pp. 141-144. Also, Scott Bartchy, "Power, Submission, and Sexual Identity Among the Early Christians," op. cit., pp. 66-67.

xiii Don Williams, The Apostle Paul and Women in the Church (Van Nuys, CA: BIM Publishing Co., 1977), P. 45. The original form of the Chrysostom quote can be found in *Epistolum ad Romanus*, Homilia, 31,2.

xiv Scott Bartchy, in his helpful essay cited above, suggests that there are at least three broad categories of texts which deal with the place and role of women in the New Testament communities. There are "normative" texts, which declare the way things are to be; there are "descriptive" texts which report the activity of women without making any comment for or against these activities; and there are "problematic" texts where a disorder had occurred or was occurring which needed correction. Ibid., pp. 56ff.

xv T. F. Torrance, Space, Time, and Resurrection (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), P. 121.

xvi For a discussion of the objections raised against women's ordination, along with a perceptive argument for ordination of women, see Paul K. Jewett, The Ordination of Women (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982).

xvii For a helpful discussion of the new role of women as portrayed in the New Testament, see Don Williams, The Apostle Paul and Women in the Church.

xviii Cited by Jessie Penn-Lewis, The Magna Charta of Woman (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1975), pp. 45-46.

xix For an excellent discussion of the various exegetical approaches to these passages, see Willard M. Swartley, Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women, pp. 150-191; 256-269.

xx See Alan Padgett, "Paul on Women in the Church: The Contradictions of Coiffure in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16," Journal for the Study of the New Testament 20 (1984), pp. 69-86. Padgett discusses the three traditional exegetical arguments which seek to account for the apparent contradiction between Paul's harsh restrictions upon women in 1 Cor. 11:4-7, as compared with his emphasis in vv. 10-12 on the equality of women with men. Setting aside these solutions to the problem, Padgett argues for a new interpretation of this section which reads Paul as stating the position which the Corinthians themselves held in vv. 4-7, and then correcting this position with his own in vv. 10-12.

xxi Swartley, Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women, ibid., P. 164.

xxii For a penetrating critique of the problem of "presenting" New Testament texts, see the essay by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "The Presentation of New Testament Texts," in No Rusty Swords, English translation by E. H. Robertson (London: Collins, 1970, Fontana Library), pp. 302-320. Rather than bringing the text to the present situation in hopes of making it relevant, Bonhoeffer suggests that in presenting a text, one must bring the present situation to the text and remain there until one has heard Christ speak through the text. This changes the present to the future: "The Present is not where the present age announces its claim before Christ, but where the present age stands before the claims of Christ, for the concept of the present is determined not by a temporal definition but by the Word of Christ as the Word of God. The present is not a feeling of time, an interpretation of time, an atmosphere of time, but the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit alone. The Holy Spirit is the subject of the present, not we ourselves, so the Holy Spirit is also the subject of the presentation. The most concrete element of the Christian message and of textual exposition is not a human act of presentation but is always God himself, it is the Holy Spirit. . . . 'Presentation' therefore means attention to this future, to this that is outside and it is a most fatal confusion of present and past to think that the present can be defined as that which rests upon itself and carries its criterion within itself. The criterion of the true present lies outside itself, it lies in the future, it lies in Scripture and in the word of Christ witnessed in it. Thus the content will consist in something outside, something 'over against,' something 'future' being heard as present--the strange Gospel, not the familiar one, will be the present Gospel. A scandalous 'point of contact!'"

xxiii Swartley, op. cit., P. 225.

xxiv Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1980. The sexual difference between men and women, says Clark, has been "created into the human race" (p. 440), and thus reflects human nature as God's creative purpose (p. 447). The benefits of Christ, thus, cannot alter this fundamental "nature" with its sexual differentiation and hierarchical structure. The merits of this theological assumption need to be debated before it can be allowed to become a hemeneutical criterion in the way that Clark wishes to use it.

Chapter Sixteen

Homosexuality: Theological and Pastoral Considerations

How should the church respond to some of its members who openly acknowledge homosexual orientation and practice, particularly with regard to the office of teaching and pastoral ministry? My purpose in writing this chapter is not to seek further polarization and division within the church. Rather, I would like to contribute to an on-going discussion where compassion and clarity, along with a sense of the tragic, provide a context for the church to acknowledge both fallibility and faithfulness in attempting to be the body of Christ under the authority of Scripture and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The ancient world had no word for or concept of "homosexuality" as it is currently used today. The word "homosexual" was not coined until 1869, when a Hungarian physician writing in German used it with reference to male and females who from birth are erotically oriented toward their own sex. The word first appeared in English in 1912, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and its earliest use in an English Bible was in 1946, in the first edition of the Revised Standard Version rendering of 1 Corinthians 6:9.[1]

1. The Biblical Data

Examination of the biblical texts must therefore take note of the problem of translation into English of the original Hebrew and Greek terms used. Theological reflection on the subject of homosexuality from within the Judeo-Christian tradition begins with an examination of the biblical data. Unfortunately, the question, "What does the Bible say about homosexuality?" has not led to answers upon which all can agree. Some have even argued that an appeal to Scripture cannot settle the issue at all as it is basically a moral and not a theological concern.[2] Same sex relations are mentioned in the Bible, however, and so the biblical data must be taken into account in theological consideration of homosexuality as it relates to Christian faith and practice.

There is no biblical passage referring to homosexuality as a "condition" or "orientation." The word "sodomite" appears nowhere in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, not even to designate a person living in ancient Sodom. The Hebrew term translated as "sodomite" (*qadesh*) in the King James Version refers to a male temple prostitute (Deut. 23:17-18; 1 Kings 14:22-24; 15:12; 22:46; 2 Kings 23:7; Joel 3:3). Though the English word "sodomite" is used twice in the New Revised

Standard Version (1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10), it is an incorrect translation of the Greek words *malakoi and arsenokoitai*.

The story of the incident at Sodom (Genesis 19:1-25), which can be read as an attempt to rape Lot's two male visitors by a mob of other males, is not often referred to in subsequent Scriptural references as a sin of a homosexual nature. In Ezekiel 16 the sin of Sodom is named as greed and indifference to those in need. In Matthew 10:12-15 and the parallel passage in Luke 10:10-12, Sodom's sin is described as inhospitality in general. In Matthew 11:23-24 the city's destruction is recalled as a reminder of what happens to those who rebel against God (Furnish, 1994). The book of Jude, however, identifies the sin of Sodom as sexual immortality in which they "pursued unnatural lust" or, as the Greek puts it, "went after other flesh" (*sarkos heteros*) (Jude 7 NRSV). Much more was wrong with the citizens of Sodom than the sexual intent described in the story. But as David Wright points out, this consideration should not be allowed to eliminate the sexual element from the text and the moral judgment implied.[3]

Based upon the Levitical texts (18:22; 20:13), and the New Testament texts (1 Romans 1:26-27; Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10), some have argued that homosexuality is an "unnatural affection" and contrary to God's will. In this interpretation of the texts, an assumption is made that a male having sex with another male is forbidden in the holiness code of Leviticus 17-16, and thus homosexual practices of all kinds are forbidden, including contemporary homosexual relations between non-promiscuous partners.[4]

The context of the Levitical prohibition indicates that such an act by two males, where one takes the part of the female, is a violation of the maleness of both partners as the Hebrew text literally says, one partner is required to "lie the lying of a woman".[5] The Hebrews did not appear to make a distinction between same sex practices and a same sex orientation or condition. Rather, the emphasis was upon an objective act which violated the holiness code which separated "clean" from "unclean" actions and objects as a representation of Israel's separation unto the holiness of God.

There is no record in the gospel traditions of Jesus making any comments about same sex relations, while he did offer clear teaching concerning fornication, adultery and remarriage (Mark 10:6-9; cf. Matthew 19:4-6). The silence of Jesus on this point, however, does not necessarily constitute approval. It would be unlikely that the practices which the Pauline texts forbid in the context of the Hellenistic Jewish community would have been unknown during Jesus time. It is more likely that the immediate context of Jesus' ministry amidst the Hebrew speaking Jews did not present situations demanding his response. Paul, and the Pauline text in 1 Timothy, make specific references to same sex relations in three specific texts, and each with a negative connotation.

> Do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! Fornicators,
> idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites (1 Corinthians 6:9).
> For this reason God gave them up to degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for
> unnatural, and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed

> with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons
> the due penalty for their error (Romans 1:26-27NRSV).
> This means understanding that the law is laid down not for the innocent but for the lawless and
> disobedient, for the godless and sinful, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their father or
> mother, for murderers, fornicators, sodomites, slave traders, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary
> to the sound teaching (1 Timothy 1:9-10).

What is at dispute is the exact meaning of the terms used by these texts. The Greek word *malakoi*, translated "male prostitutes," literally means "soft ones." From this, some have concluded that the word denoted the passive partner in a same sex relation as being "effeminate" (Furnish, 1994). The second word used by Paul is *arsenokoitai* (1 Cor. 6:9; cf. 1 Tim. 1:10), which the NRSV translates as "sodomite." The word is actually a compound word including the words for "male" and "bed." Furnish suggests that the word was coined by Paul and refers to a male who has intercourse with another male.[6] Other sources suggest that *arsenokoitai* was in use in at least a limited sense prior to Paul. [7]

Paul's statement in Romans is explicit regarding same sex relations and is descriptive in nature rather than prescriptive. In this text Paul does not state what Christians should or should not do, but rather, he describes the consequences of rebelling against God and turning to one's own passions as an object of desire and even worship (Ro. 1:25). At the same time, in reading Paul's statement in Romans 1:26-27, it is difficult to conclude otherwise than that Paul would say that those who are "righteous" would not or ought not do these things. The word "unnatural" (1:26) is a translation of the Greek phrase *para physin* which is standard terminology in other ancient texts for homoerotic acts (Hays, 1994). From this, it can be argued that Paul clearly identifies homosexual relations as sinful and contrary to God's purpose for men and women.[8]

The biblical concept of sin is not restricted to specific acts but addresses the fundamental structure of all that is human, including sexuality. This is the context of Paul's statement concerning homosexual relations. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness," Paul writes. Therefore, none are better than another, for all are "under the power of sin" (Ro. 1:18; 3:9).

At no point does Paul elaborate on his reasons for his negative view of same sex relations. From other contemporary sources, however, scholars have discovered that homoerotic acts were viewed as "willful" disregard for one's natural relations with the opposite sex and "lustful" excess of sexual desire extending beyond what was "natural" within the marriage relationship.[9] According to some theologians, the context of the biblical texts which appear to condemn same sex relation are culturally determined. They suggest that what is forbidden is not consenting, committed same sex relations grounded in love, but rather the use of same sex relations in idolatrous worship, the sexual use of a boy by an adult male, and as a threat to what was considered to be "natural" sexual relations between men and women. Consequently, some conclude that the Bible is silent regarding contemporary same sex relations grounded in love and fidelity.[10]

While the purpose of this chapter is not to resolve the debate on purely exegetical grounds, one can hardly dismiss all of these texts as irrelevant. Robert Johnston has reminded us that the context of Paul's statements in Romans 1 deals with more than human lust and disorder within one's nature. Homosexuality, while not the worst sin, is nonetheless listed by Paul among those sins which are regarded as distortions of God's intended order .[11]

Those who argue that the "Bible is silent" with respect to homosexual relations which are grounded in personal love, fidelity and mutual openness, will dismiss the Levitical texts as well as Paul's statement in Romans 1 as irrelevant. But for those who say that the "silence is broken" by the Genesis 1:26-27 text, the Romans 1 and Jude 7 texts confirm the view that same-sex genital relations are contrary to God's intended purpose for humans created as male and female in the divine image. In response to the question about grounds for divorce, Jesus responded: "From the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female" (Mark 10:6; cf. Matthew 19:4). In saying this, Jesus reminds us that we must go back to the beginning and search out the contours of human sexuality as originally designed by God as the theological context in which the subject of homosexuality is to be discussed.

The purpose of this chapter is to present critical theological reflection on the issues concerning homosexuality as both an orientation and practice within the contemporary christian community. The following points summarize my conclusions drawn from the above discussion and serve to introduce the next and major concern of the chapter.

First, it is admitted by all that there are no positive statements in the biblical literature regarding same sex relations, regardless of what the context may be. At best, those who argue that same sex relations which take place between committed and loving human partners are within God's purpose, must argue from silence.

Second, the argument from silence requires that one dismiss the unique and original appeal to nature in Paul's statement in Romans chapter one. The allusions to nature in vs. 20, 25 suggest that Paul held to a divinely created order with regard to human sexuality. Other statements in the Pauline literature regarding the significance of the one-flesh heterosexual relation (1 Cor. 6:16; 7:1-9; cf. Ephesians 54:31-33) make it inconceivable that Paul would contravene that order by allowing for same-sex genital relationships.[12].

Third, the distinction between homosexual orientation and homosexual acts, as understood today appear to have been unknown or, at least, of little concern to the Hebrew people. Indeed, the concept of a psychological or biological predisposition to homoerotic relations appears to be a modern one quite foreign to a biblical world view.[13]

Fourth, the moral issues relating to homosexuality are not determined solely by whether or not homosexuality is an orientation or a practice but by the way in which one's sexuality is related to the intrinsic nature of human personhood as created in the image of God. This leads us to the deeper issue of the nature and purpose of human sexuality itself as taught by Scripture.

Fifth, a theological and pastoral approach to the issue of homosexuality within the church must take into account a wider spectrum of biblical teaching than merely the few texts which condemn specific homosexual acts. The theological predispositions, I will argue, are more significant than discussion based solely on homosexual references in the biblical text.

2. Theological Assumptions

If the biblical texts which mention homosexual acts are read in such a way that the intent of the author is disregarded in favor of a reading that is relative only to the cultural context of its own time, this "deconstructs" the text in such a way that no certain meaning can be gained which speaks to our present situation. If the biblical texts are judged to have no relevance for contemporary issues concerning homosexual orientation and practice, the use of such texts will only lead to a standoff. The result will be an impasse which makes serious discussion of the moral, theological and pastoral issues involved impossible. There will remain differences, to be sure. But what is important is that these differences be grounded in the basic assumptions which are held concerning the nature of human sexuality itself as related to the image of God. The purpose of this chapter is not to resolve the impasse created by scholars who argue the fine points of linguistic exegesis, though that work remains to be done. What I attempt here is what might be called a theological exegesis of the biblical teaching concerning human sexuality, both in the original intention of creation as well as in its fallen and often tragic state.

Theologically, we only see perfection through the grace of God experienced through imperfection. We are not first of all concerned, then, with homosexuality but with human sexuality and specifically, with human personhood as bound to human biology.

The biblical teaching regarding human sexuality is linked with the statement that humans are created in the image and likeness of God, male and female. "Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.; So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:26-27).

I have chosen two modern theologians, Emil Brunner and Karl Barth as representative of two approaches to the theological question as to the relation of human sexuality to the image of God. Brunner separates the statement concerning the divine image from the statement concerning male and female. This interpretation allows for the divine image as constitutive of human personhood to be located primarily in the person as a spiritual and moral being without regard to biological sexual differentiation. Barth, on the other hand, links human sexual differentiation at the biological level with the divine image including both.

These two ways of relating sexuality to the image of God will account for differing views as to the relation of homosexuality to human personhood. Those

who hold that sexual differentiation is not an essential aspect of the divine image will tend to view the moral issue of homosexuality as grounded solely in the quality of the personal encounter. Others, who hold that sexual differentiation is an essential aspect of the divine image believe that sexual orientation as well as sexual practice is part of the intrinsic order of human personhood. Let us consider each in turn.

2.1. Human Sexual Differentiation not Included in the Divine Image

Figure 1 presents a schematic diagram of a contemporary approach to human personal and sexual relations based on the premise that human personal sexual relations are not grounded in created sexual/biological differentiation. In this view, the sexual identity of persons created in the image of God does **not** include biological sexual differentiation as determinative of human sexual relations. Same sex relations are considered to be natural and normal in the same way that heterosexual relations are. The biological and the personal do not overlap, as shown in Figure 1.
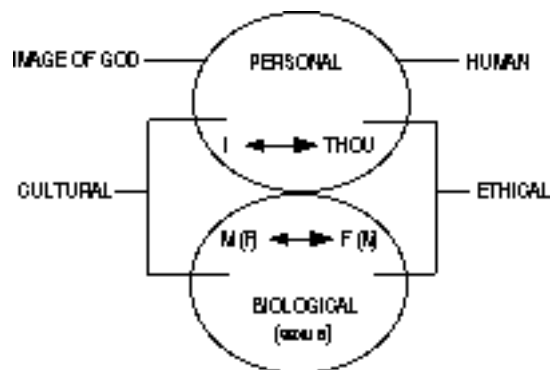
Figure 1. The personal and biological spheres.

In this model, the personal I-Thou sphere is only linked with the male/female biological sphere by cultural and ethical structures of society. This understanding leads to the claim that sexual orientation and behavior are a matter of human and civil rights (ideological) in the same way that racial and ethnic aspects of humans are based on "rights" rather than "nature." In this view, to judge same sex orientation and relations as inappropriate or wrong, is to discriminate against the basic rights of individuals to express their personal sexual orientation freely and with the full social acceptance and affirmation as those of differing skin color or ethnic origin.

With regard to human sexuality, Emil Brunner held that the erotic sexual impulse is an "unbridled biological instinct" which can only be consecrated through marriage, or the ethical demand of abstinence.[14] While Brunner did not develop his view to the point that homosexual relations were appropriate, his only argument against them was an ethical one, grounded in human cultural, and the use of the

biblical texts as applying to contemporary same sex relations. As we have seen, to the degree that his ethical position depends upon these texts, any argument against homosexuality will carry little weight with those who see the texts as quite unrelated to the kind and quality of homosexual relations under consideration in our contemporary culture.

When human sexuality is considered as primarily biological and in the same category as race and ethnic origin, the issue of discrimination, equal rights, and justice become the criteria for deciding the issue. There is ample biblical witness in support of such rights and equal justice if homosexual orientation and practice is considered solely from the grounds of human personal relationships with no biological aspect involved.

2.2.Human Sexual Differentiation an Essential Aspect of the Divine Image

Karl Barth argued that human sexuality is a manifestation of the image of God as co-relation (co-humanity) and that the mark of the human is this same co-relation grounded in sexual differentiation as male and female, male or female.[15] The **only** differentiation at the personal and social level with ontological (created being) status is thus human sexuality. The creation of Eve was more than a replication of humanity in the form of a numerical multiplication, suggests Barth. The solitariness of Adam would not have been overcome by another male for such a one could not confront him as "another" but he would only recognize himself in it . Consequently, Barth condemned homosexuality as "humanity without the fellow man".[16]

Barth's view leads to what one might call an "ordered ontology" by which sexual differentiation as male and female is grounded in the personal being of humanity. By "ordered ontology," I mean that every human has an essential created structure which is sexually and personally differentiated, as male and female, male or female. In this view, sexual differentiation at both the personal and biological level is one aspect of the structured being (ordered ontology) of human life, while skin color and ethnic distinctives are related solely to the biological and cultural. Figure 2 presents a schematic diagram of such an approach which grounds the personal and biological differentiation of male and female, male or female, in the image of God as created and intended by God and determinative of essential humanity. In this model, the personal sphere overlaps with the biological sphere so that the image of God as constitutive of humanity includes biological sexual differentiation.
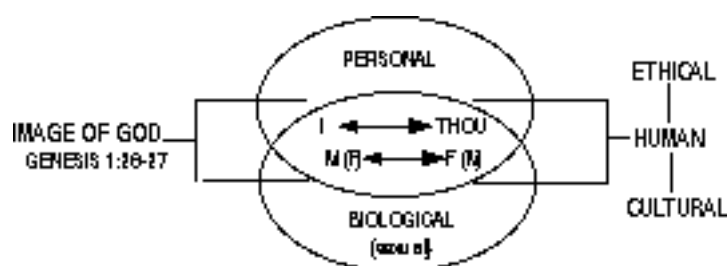
Figure 2. Sexual differentiation and the image of God

If one takes Genesis 1:26-27 as the foundational text for understanding human sexuality as rooted in the divine image, sexual orientation may be considered a personal and biological differentiation expressed through the "ordered ontology" of male and female, male or female. A theological perspective on homosexuality thus does not rest alone upon biblical texts which speak against homosexuality, but also upon the foundational biblical texts which set forth a view of human sexuality as an "ordered ontology" of personal and biological differentiation.

It can be argued, as Barth does, that there is an implicit semantic parallelism between the statement about the divine image and male and female sexuality, not only a formal parallelism. Barth protests that dividing the sentence in the text so as to separate the statement about the image from the statement about sexual differentiation is arbitrary and unwarranted. "Is it not astonishing," Barth exclaims, "that again and again expositors have ignored the definitive explanation given by the text itself [i.e., Genesis 1:26-27)], . . . Could anything be more obvious than to conclude from this clear indication that the image and likeness of the being created by God signifies existence in confrontation, i.e., in this confrontation, in the juxtaposition and conjunction of man and man which is that of male and female, and then go on to ask against this background in what the original and prototype of the divine existence of the Creator consists?".[17]

Phyllis Trible, calls the differentiation alluded to in the Genesis 1:27 text, sexual dimorphism, and suggests that this can be used as a basis to establish male and female gender equality as part of the divine image.[18]

Judith Gundry-Volf argues otherwise, suggesting that the statement concerning male and female relates to the command which follows, "be fruitful and multiply" (1:28), rather than to the preceding statement "in the image of God he created them." Gundry-Volf, following more recent higher critical theories of authorship of the Genesis account, argues against an interpretation of the "male and female" differentiation as a basis for asserting an egalitarian relation between the sexes.[19]

In response I would say that one need not accept Trible's attempt to read gender equality into the Genesis 1:26-27 text in order to appreciate her exegetical point regarding the simultaneous emergence of human being as male (*'ish*) and female (*'issa*) as constitutive of the divine image. In the Genesis 2 account, she points out that the specific terms for male and female (*'ish* and *'issa*) are only used after the creation of woman. Prior to the emergence of the female, the *'adam* is not a particular person as differentiated from other persons, but rather the creature from the earth (*ha-ᵃdama*)--the earth creature. More important, this creature is not identified sexually (Trible, 1978, p.80).

It follows then that the criticism of an egalitarian exegesis of Genesis 1:26-27 by Gundry-Volf does not relate directly to Barth's thesis for the following reasons.

First, Barth argues that the statement on sexual differentiation in the text has ontological content, not only procreative implications. Barth would allow for the implication of the text with regard to the command to be fruitful and multiply. However, Barth insists that the obvious syntactical connection between the statement on the divine image and the one immediately following on sexual differentiation is evidence of the ontological relation between personal and sexual being.

Second, Barth's interpretation does not address the issue of sexual egalitarianism but of sexual differentiation as constitutive of humanity created in the image of God. In fact some who argue for sexual equality based on the Genesis 1:26-27 text do not accept Barth's thesis, showing that sexual egalitarianism and sexual differentiation are two different issues.[20] If we allow for Gundry-Volf's reading of Genesis 1:26-27 as the basis for the command to be fruitful and multiply, this does not rule out the further conclusion that sexual differentiation is also grounded intrinsically in the image of God.

It is this basic theological assumption that led Barth to conclude that same-sex genital relations are prone to confusion and distortion of the divine image. In the remainder of this chapter I intend to trace out the implications of Barth's view of human sexuality as grounded in the image of God with respect to issues arising concerning homosexuality.

I realize that this view presents difficulties, including some recent research which seems to point to the fact that at least some homosexual orientation is caused by genetic factors[21] or, by psychopathological factors outside of the individual's control.[22] In the discussion which follows I will attempt to deal with some of these problems and develop the thesis that human sexuality is grounded essentially in the image of God and is a "created order" represented by differentiation as male and female, male or female. Pastoral implications for dealing with the issue of homosexuality and the church will then conclude the essay.

3. Discussion: Moral and Theological Issues

I have attempted in this chapter to show that lying behind the biblical texts which view same-sex relations in a negative way is the positive affirmation of human sexuality as based on an essential differentiation grounded in a biblical doctrine of creation. If we accept Barth's thesis that personal sexual differentiation is expressed through biological differentiation as male and female, male or female, same-sex genital relations would constitute a violation of this divinely created order of human sexuality. In this case, same-sex genital relations can be said to be sinful and involves a moral judgment based on a theological assumption as to our created human nature.

3.1 The Moral Issue in the Homosexual Debate.

A moral argument based on nature is what Pim Pronk calls a "naturalistic fallacy." The concept of "unnatural" in the sense of "against nature," argues Pronk, cannot denote a moral defect because nature in the sense of biological determinism has no intrinsic moral quality . Pronk charges Barth with committing this fallacy by inferring a moral order out of biology.[23]

Pronk argues that the moral objections to homosexuality based on one's "nature" have no merit. Therefore, theology cannot appeal to either biology or revelation concerning biological nature in search of moral guidelines. The moral criteria for judging all sexual behavior, including homosexual, argues Pronk, derive from the moral instincts of the community as a whole .

Is Barth guilty of this "naturalistic fallacy" with regard to his judgment against homosexuality? I do not believe so. Pronk has failed to grasp Barth's central thesis concerning human sexuality and the image of God. While Barth does link human sexual differentiation with creaturely nature, this is not a relation determined by "biology" but by the command of God. The moral basis for human sexuality is not inferred out of biology, as Pronk charges, but out of the command of God which summons humans to live out the divine image under the conditions of their creaturely nature and existence. The essential order of differentiation which constitutes the divine image is not determined by biological sexual characteristics but is "expressed" through one's biological nature .[24]

I agree with Pronk that biology alone cannot determine morality. At the same time, as Barth rightly argues, biological nature is a necessary but insufficient condition for living as human persons created in the image of God. Even as it is morally wrong to injure the physical being of another person, the expression of one's personal being through a physical action constitutes a moral action.

Pronk, it would appear, can be said to follow the basic assumption depicted in Figure 1 (above) which separates personal humanity from biological humanity, leaving culture and ethics to mediate the moral aspects of human sexuality. Thus, Pronk concludes, one should only go to the Scripture to reinforce the position one has found convincing based on other moral grounds.

Lisa Cahill warns against making moral judgments against persons who express same-sex orientation, as though such persons were morally inferior beings.[25] While a heterosexual context may be the "normative ideal," for sexual practice for Christians, she allows that, especially for persons with a strongly "homosexual identity," same-sex relations may be "objectively justifiable" as exceptional. Cahill ends up closer to Pronk in locating the moral basis for her judgment in the complex situation of human life, though she has more appreciation for biblical revelation as the source for moral criteria.

Following Barth, I suggest that theological criteria derived from biblical revelation concerning human sexuality is the basis for moral guidelines, and not the reverse. If the theological assumption is held that sexual differentiation is part of an essential order rooted in the divine image and expressed through each person's biological nature, it follows that homosexual relations cannot be affirmed as belonging to that order in the same way as heterosexual relations. As I will show

below under pastoral considerations, the context of human sexuality under the conditions of fallen humanity is always less than ideal and that moral judgments concerning the sexual life of persons must be conditioned by compassion.

3. 2 The Genetic Issue in the Homosexual Debate

Some have claimed that recent research seems to point to the fact that at least some homosexual orientation is caused by genetic factors or, by psychopathological factors outside of the individual's control, though conclusions drawn remain somewhat inconclusive.[26] Burr cites Hooker's attempt to correlate homosexual orientation to responses to the Rorschach test. Three eminent psychologists interpreted the results and concluded that no such correlation could be found. Her study, along with many others, led to the decision of the American Psychiatric Association in 1973 to remove homosexuality from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual. By and large, psychologists today do not recognize homosexuality to be pathological and thus most do not attempt to change sexual orientation.

Research into possible hormonal and biological predisposition to homosexual orientation has been both promising and puzzling. Burr suggests that evidence of hormonal factors as a predisposition toward sexual orientation remains inconclusive, and fails to answer the question: If hormones influence sexual orientation, what influences the hormones?[27]

The quest for genetic markers leading to sexual orientation has led to findings which appear to be more compelling, though surrounded by a host of unanswered questions as to the implications. The final irony, says Burr , is that if sexual orientation, like left or right handedness, can be shown to be genetically determined, the conclusion will be morally irrelevant. If God made some persons gay, Burr argues, then the only thing that hurts them is hatred and ignorance.

It is not within the scope of this chapter to assess the validity of such scientific claims. At the same time, the moral issue remains, particularly for theologians and pastors who are now confronted with the person who argues that sexual orientation is not a matter of "choice" but is rooted to some degree in genetic predispositions. If sexual orientation is not a matter of individual choice in every instance, then how can one pass moral judgment upon the sexual practice of homosexuals whose only "sexual preference" can be toward members of the same sex?

For those whose theological assumption corresponds to the situation depicted in Figure 1, the argument that condemnation of homosexuality is unfair, discriminatory, and a violation of human rights is quite compelling. Same sex relations, many theologians assert, can have the same moral content and be as expressive of the divine image as heterosexual ones. Heterosexual relations may also fail to express the image of God where the personal aspect is absent or

diminished. This has been argued from the Roman Catholic[28] as well as the Protestant perspective.[29]

The situation is quite different, however, if one argues that biblical teaching upholds heterosexual relations as God's designed and preferred order for human sexual orientation as well as practice, as Figure 2 depicts. Is it unfair and a violation of human rights to expect all persons to conform to this ideal, especially when some claim that their sexual orientation was determined by factors over which they had no control?

The answer depends upon how we have determined what is "right" and "fair." In a broken world, moral issues are often laden with such complexity and tinged with personal pain that abstract moral criteria when applied can sometimes offend concrete moral sensibilities. No one has a choice with regard to being born and certainly not with regard to the physical, emotional and social conditions and context in which one is expected to enter life. Some regard life itself as unfair and reject it.

4. Pastoral Considerations

There is, as Lisa Cahill has said, an element of the tragic in the sexual arena of life, where persons struggle to find meaning and value in contexts that are less than ideal and fall outside of what society considers normative.[30] Theological assumptions concerning human sexuality, grounded in biblical revelation, must include an acknowledgment of the brokenness and tragic aspects of the human sexual experience as well as of the divine intention regarding it.

Running right through the center of human sexuality is the element of the tragic. When the beauty and promise of human love and intimacy are linked with the capacity for sexual desire and fulfillment, no experience will prove adequate and completely fulfilling. Whatever one's sexual orientation and practice, be it homosexual or heterosexual, the element of the tragic will always be present. The tragic can mean as little as the temporary frustration of sexual desire when there is no partner available or willing to share it. It can also mean the choice to live in a relationship where sexual relations are impossible, whether due to physiological, psychological or moral reasons. Redemption from the tragic does not guarantee perfect fulfillment of every capacity or desire. It does offer grace to bear with what must be borne, and to sublimate self gratification in one area to self fulfillment in another. Every human being is a sexual being and will experience some degree of the tragic in this area.

If a person considers himself or herself to be "born" with a same-sex orientation, does that constitute moral freedom to practice same-sex relations? There are many who would answer yes. But if morality (and sin) is not determined by the freedom of individual choice, but through conformity to God's revealed design and purpose for humanity, then a different answer must be given. The choice for abstinence where sexual practice would violate the moral structure of life as created and commanded by God is tinged by the tragic, regardless of one's

sexual preference--but it can be a "good" choice. Genetic or hormonal predisposition toward sexual orientation, as with other factors one inherits from one's parents and psycho-social environment, determine certain options in life, but do not remove from us the responsibility to make good choices in living our life under these conditions.

Richard Hays, writing on behalf of his friend, Gary, a Christian homosexual who chose abstinence out of obedience to Scripture prior to his death in 1990, quoted from Gary's final letter to him: "Are homosexuals to be excluded from the community of faith? Certainly not. But anyone who joins such a community should know that it is a place of transformation, of discipline, of learning and not merely a place to be comforted or indulged".[31]

In the end, I offer these comments as to how the church may respond to the issue of persons with homosexual orientation who seek to belong and live within a community of faith.

There is ample Scriptural authority for establishing both God's *preference* with regard to human relationships and God's *presence* with persons in their struggle to fulfill God's purpose for them through the labyrinth of confusion, failure and brokenness that often attends such a struggle. The Old Testament is replete with God's expressed preference for his people, but also contains a multitude of examples of God's presence as one who graciously forgives, restores and empowers within the limits and constraints of consequences and conventions.

In using the word "preference" I do not intend to suggest that God merely "chooses" for us what is good in an arbitrary way, but that his preference is designed into the very structure of our existence as personal beings. I mean by preference what some would call the ideal or perfect will of God for our lives. Failing to achieve this ideal in one's life, does not rule out God's gracious presence. Persons with homosexual orientation can receive the Spirit of Christ and become part of Christ's body through forgiveness and mercy the same as those with heterosexual orientation.

The church as the body of Jesus Christ, expresses both divine preference and divine presence in the lives of its members. All members of the body of Christ fall short of God's preference, including Christians who are homosexuals. The church must be as inclusive as Christ's outreach into human society and as clear headed as Christ's vision of the created purpose for humans who bear the image of God.

At the same time, it would be a source of great confusion and grave error for the church to make God's presence the only means of grace and to argue that God's preference was a law which died with Christ. Both preference and presence are grounded in the grace of God, and both alike must be upheld in the teaching and practice of the church's ministry. The presence of Christ in the lives of Christians, both heterosexual and homosexual, does not condone behavior and actions which confuse and contradict God's preference, though such actions might satisfy deeply felt needs and desires. The church as the body of Jesus Christ ought to be the place

where such struggles and tensions can be experienced with the healing power of hope and love.

It must also be said that membership in the body of Christ does not entail the right to serve in the teaching office of the church simply by virtue of having been received by Christ into fellowship. The criteria for membership in the church are much broader than the criteria for those who are set apart within the church for leadership, teaching and pastoral ministry. It is therefore no contradiction for the church to trace the pattern of divine preference in its teaching and, at the same time, to follow the contours of divine presence in receiving and affirming the lives of all who seek the Kingdom of God, not on the basis of natural rights, but on the basis of divine grace.

Inclusion on the basis of God's presence does not grant anyone in the body of Christ right to ordination. Whether or not a person with homosexual orientation should be excluded form consideration for ordination is a matter for the church to decide.

While Paul addresses the members of the church at Corinth as "saints" (*hagiois*, 1 Cor. 2:2), he says that it is God who appoints in the church those who serve as teachers, leaders and apostles (1 Cor. 13:28). Furthermore, those who are set apart for these ministries are to consider themselves "stewards of God's mysteries," and accountable to Christ for what is taught and practiced (1 Cor. 4:1-5).

In the later pastoral epistles, specific qualifications are set forth for those who hold the office of bishop, elder, and deacon (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9). The inference that one can draw from these passages is that those set apart for ministry in the church have no claim on the office by virtue of membership in the body. Instead, they are recognized as gifted and called by the Spirit of God to the office for the purpose of upholding sound doctrine, exemplifying spiritual maturity, self-discipline, marital integrity, domestic peace, and a good reputation among those who are "outsiders."

Discrimination within the body as to who should be set aside for the teaching office entails both wisdom and discernment on the part of the church taking into account many criteria, including maturity, domestic stability, personal integrity and spiritual giftedness. Might not these criteria also include sexual orientation as well as sexual practice measured by the responsibility to uphold both divine preference as well as divine presence?

Where the church has determined on biblical grounds that homosexual practice is inconsistent with God's preference for human sexual relation, members of the church with homosexual orientation may be required to abstain from such practice as a condition for ordination. Such a church cannot do otherwise and retain its integrity.

 Some have argued that to ordain women to pastoral ministry while denying ordination to those who practice homosexuality is discriminatory and a violation of human rights. In response it must be said that there are biblical antecedents for the role of women in ministry, both in the Old Testament and the New Testament. In

certain cases, God has clearly expressed what I have called "preference" by anointing and setting apart women for ministry. Huldah was recognized as a prophetess (2 Kings 22:14), as was Deborah (Judges 4:4) and Noadiah (Neh. 6:14). Despite Paul's restriction on the role of women in certain cases, he affirmed Phoebe as a deacon and Junia as one among the apostles (Romans 16:1,7).

Though these cases are exceptional, they nonetheless constitute a biblical antecedent for the contemporary practice of ordaining women as led by the Spirit. There appears to be no biblical antecedent for the approval of or affirming of practicing homosexuals as teachers, leaders or pastors. While the Holy Spirit liberates and empowers persons for ministry, one should always seek a biblical antecedent for the work of the Spirit in the contemporary church. On this basis, the ordination of women does not constitute an open door to the ordination of practicing homosexuals.

While the church is a fallible institution, often in its practice and sometimes in its teaching, God's gracious presence is not withheld from its members. Recognizing its fallibility, the church orders its life with both humility and a sense of the tragic. Fallibility is not an excuse for conceding to human frailty nor is it an argument for abandoning the search for authentic biblical teaching. With humility, the church seeks the mind of Christ through the unity of the Spirit.

Tragic as it is to live with unfulfilled sexual desires and with unrealized vocational aspirations within the church, even more tragic would be the rending of the body of Christ over a matter of who should occupy the chairs at the head of the table when Jesus gave priority to those who serve.

The community of faith can be a community of transformation and discipline for both those with homosexual and heterosexual orientation. The testimony of many is that empowerment to move toward the discovery of sexual wholeness as male or female can also be found through the grace and power of Christ's presence in such a healing community.[32] When homosexuality becomes a divisive issue within the church it has the danger of shifting human sexuality from a possibility to a necessity under the banner of human rights.[33] This attempt to escape the tragic by trading what is partial for the whole, will, in the end, prove to be a greater tragedy for us all. [34]

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[2] P. Pronk, *Against Nature? Types of Moral Argumentation Regarding Homosexuality* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).

[3] D. F. Wright, "Homosexuality: The Relevance of the Bible." *The Evangelical Quarterly*., 1989, 61: 291-300.

[4] G. Grant, *Unnatural Affection: The Impuritan Ethic of Homosexuality in the Modern Church* (Franklin, TN: Legacy Communication.. 1991).

[5] V. P. Furnish,. "The Bible and Homosexuality: Reading the Texts in Context*." Homosexuality in the Church--Both Sides of the Debate*. Jeffrey S. Siker. (ed) (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994), p. 20.

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10 See. for example: James B. Nelson,. "Sources for Body Theology: Homosexuality as a Test Case." *Homosexuality in the Church--Both Sides of the Debate*. Jeffrey S. Siker. (ed) (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994), pp. 76-90. J. S. Siker, "Homosexual Christians, The Bible and Gentile Inclusion: Confessions of a Repenting Heterosexist." *Homosexuality in the Church--Both Sides of the Debate*. Jeffrey S. Siker. (ed) (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994), pp. 178-194. R. Scroggs. *The New Testament and Homosexuality* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984). G. R. Edwards,. *Gay/Lesbian Liberation: A Biblical Perspective* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1984). J. Boswell*, Christianity and Social Tolerance: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian era to the Fourteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1980.

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16 K. Barth, K*, Church Dogmatics*. III/4 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1961), p. 166.

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23 P. Pronk, Against Nature? Types of Moral Argumentation Regarding Homosexuality (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).

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[31] R. B. Hays, "Awaiting the Redemption of our Bodies: The Witness of Scripture Concerning Homosexuality," in *Homosexuality in the Church--both Sides of the Debate*. Jeffrey S. Siker. (ed) (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 199), pp.14-15.

[32] A. Comiskey, *Pursuing Sexual Wholeness* (Santa Monica: Desert Streams Ministries. 1988).

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THEOLOGY PRIMER

Resources for the Theological Student

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Contents

Preface

   The beginning student in theology may feel overwhelmed by the massive amount of theological literature that has been produced during two thousand years of Christian history. The Theology Primer is intended to help the student to find his or her way around the theological landscape, and to facilitate the task of locating the theological resources needed for the work of ministry. The "Guidelines for Theological Research, Reflection, and Expression" are designed to assist the student in developing skills for applying biblical and theological principles to practical situations in ministry. A "Brief Glossary of Theological Terms" gives capsule definitions of a number of technical terms which may be unfamiliar to the new student. A "Brief Guide to Modern Theologians" gives concise sketches of the lives and positions of a number of theologians whose names are likely to be encountered by the theological student. "Truth: Philosophical and Theological Issues," may be helpful particularly to those with little previous background in theology and philosophy. The "Bibliography" includes significant books that are

likely to be useful in a first-unit course in systematic theology.

Any manual such as this is bound to reflect the limitations inherent in the constraints of space and the writer's selective choices. Nonetheless, it is hoped that this small volume will prove to be a handy reference tool both for the student and for those now engaged in the work of ministry.

John *Jefferson Davis*

1
Guidelines for Theological Research, Reflection, and Expression

Christian theology was born in the context of the existential needs of ministry in the church. New converts needed to be catechized in preparation for full membership, heretical teachings threatening the faith and unity of the church had to be combated, and all members needed instruction in the sound doctrine essential to growth in Christian maturity. In the context of seminary education, which all too often gives the impression of being unrelated to the actualities of church ministry, it is good for teacher and student alike to recall this existential focus of Christian theology.

As the title indicates, this discussion concerns theological research, reflection, and expression. While some in the ministry may do little in the way of formal research, theological reflection and expression are inescapable. One cannot preach a sermon or teach a Sunday-school lesson or counsel a parishioner without at least implicitly reflecting in a coherent way on the content of Scripture and its application to the contemporary needs of the church. The

purpose of formal training in theology is to sharpen one's skill in performing these functions. Given the fact that theological reflection will occur in any case, it is the presumption here that it is desirable to do this in as informed and coherent a fashion as our abilities, training, and circumstances will permit.

Theological expression can be in oral or written form: a sermon, a lesson, a pastoral conversation, a term paper would be common examples. In the following discussion, the primary concern is for written expression, especially research papers, but many of the considerations would be of general applicability. In keeping with our concern to relate theological reflection and ministry, we begin with a situation that could easily arise in today's church.

Situation

You are the pastor of a small evangelical church in a Midwestern town. One of the elders of your church, who is also a member of the local school committee, comes to your office to seek counsel on a decision which he must make within the week. The town has become agitated by widespread rumors that Mr. _____, a popular social-studies teacher in the high school, is a practicing homosexual. In a private interview with the school committee Mr. _____ stated that he was indeed a practicing homosexual, but that, in his view, his private life had no bearing on his performance as a teacher, and that his lifestyle was not in conflict with the teaching contract requiring "personal integrity" and "conduct in keeping with community standards." He has indicated that the American Civil Liberties Union is prepared to file suit against the school committee for personal harassment if a move is made for dismissal. Would you advise your elder to vote for dismissal? Would you advise some other course of action? In a pluralistic

society, how do biblical values relate to policy decisions which affect non-Christians?

Analysis

Definitional Phase (Planning)

The process of theological reflection appropriately begins with a definition of the problem. Can the problem be stated clearly in the form of a question, or several concise questions? Putting the issue in question form helps us to focus in our own minds various aspects of what may be a rather complex reality. What exactly is it that I am trying to decide? In this case we might ask, "How do my convictions as a Christian on the subject of homosexuality relate to a policy decision affecting an unbeliever?" Since it is frequently helpful to attempt to generalize the issue at hand, we might ask, "To what extent are moral principles based on Scripture suitable as legislative norms in a pluralistic society?" By generalizing the question this way, we can see from the outset that our research and reflection could bear fruit in other areas of contemporary concern beyond the immediate horizon of our problem, for example, abortion, divorce, or in vitro fertilization. It is in fact the case that true research—in contrast to merely "cranking out a paper"—opens our minds to new horizons and intellectual vistas not anticipated at the beginning of the process of reflection. All true learning is an encounter with the unknown, a venturing into uncharted waters, and is inherently risky—but also potentially very rewarding.

Now that we have focused the issue in question form, our next step in the definitional phase naturally moves to a consideration of key terms, concepts, and distinctions. It has been said that to define well is to think well. It has also been said that the making of distinctions is the key to suc-

cess in theology. Both statements have a great deal to recommend them. From the very first moments of our postnatal existence, when we can scarcely distinguish our bodies from the outside world, until the moment of our death, the making of distinctions is vital to our effective functioning in the world. Hot and cold, smooth and sharp, male and female, food and poison—upon such distinctions our lives are predicated. It should come as no surprise, then, that becoming familiar with key terms, concepts, and distinctions plays a significant role in a first theology course. The "Brief Glossary of Theological Terms" has been developed with this need in mind.

In the case at hand, the terms homosexuality and homosexual are obviously central. Do I have a precise understanding of their meaning? Should I use the terms *homosexual* and gay interchangeably, or prefer one to the other? What about the distinction between homosexuality as a practice and homosexuality as a tendency? Is this distinction valid? Relevant? Other concepts such as law, morality, and religion will need attention. Can legal policy be separated from morality and/or religion? What about traditional distinctions among various types of law in the Old Testament, that is, cultic, moral, and civil? Further distinctions need to be considered in the matter of sin versus crime. What is the relation between the two? To what extent do they overlap? Then finally (at least at this juncture), the concepts of *conscience,* general revelation, and common grace call for analysis. How accountable is the unbeliever to the moral law? How much does he or she know prior to conversion?

At this point the beginning student may feel inclined to throw up hands in despair, saying, "How can I be expected to know what terms and distinctions are crucial in an area in which I haven't done much previous work?" This is a fair question, and it occurs to any researcher. We often proceed with only a vague idea of the solutions we

are seeking, but with the conviction that we will recognize what we are looking for when we encounter it. In the meantime, we can only plunge into the subject matter of the problem, gradually acclimating ourselves to a new environment, gradually increasing our skill in finding our way around the new terrain. In spite of the outline suggested in this chapter, true research and discovery most often proceed not in a straight line, but in very uneven fits and starts. (For those of you who might be inclined to probe further the dynamics and psychology of the process of discovery— "heuristics"—I would recommend Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy, by Michael Polanyi.)

Analytical Phase ("Input")

At this point in the investigation we are prepared to ask the question, "What types of information do I need, and where can I locate that information?" The answers to these questions have, at least implicitly, already been generated by the reflections on key terms, concepts, and distinctions in the first phase. In a Christian context we naturally turn to biblical passages dealing with homosexuality, civil law, general revelation, and conscience. Here we can make use of Bible dictionaries, encyclopedias, concordances, and commentaries. In many cases a Bible dictionary provides a convenient entry into a subject area, not only giving a general overview and survey of pertinent texts, but usually helpful bibliographic clues as well. This represents the exegetical dimension of the research. Various systematic theologies and theological monographs can help us see particular issues such as homosexuality in the wider context of biblical revelation, for example, the doctrine of man, law and grace, and the nature of sin.

For both the exegetical and theological dimensions of the investigation, periodical indices such as Religion Index

One: Periodicals (formerly Index *to* Religious Periodical Literature) and *New* Testament Abstracts are invaluable for locating journal articles dealing with a particular term or biblical text. A well-written journal article is one of the most helpful tools available for obtaining in a reasonably short period of time a sense of the previous scholarship in an area and the important lines of interpretation within it. For purposes of general orientation, a journal article can often be more helpful than a book. Journal articles also tend to represent the "state of the art" in scholarly research, in that specialized discoveries find their way into the journals before being incorporated into books, at least in most cases.

In assembling information it is important to consider the *historical* dimension. How have past generations understood issues similar to the one at hand? What analogies from history might shed light on our particular problem? What is the history of the church's opinions on the subject? If these opinions have changed or developed, what factors influenced the changes? Various theological encyclopedias listed in the bibliography in this book can be helpful at this point. A work like P. A. Sorokin's *Dynamics of* Culture contains much information on various patterns of law, religion, and morality in different historical periods. The Encyclopedia *of* Philosophy can be an entry into the area of natural law and its development over the centuries. Especially in a theologically conservative context, the student may be inclined to attempt to move directly from the biblical text to a contemporary solution, without considering or appreciating the intellectual labors of those in the past. Sometimes this attempt to overleap the past merely ends up in activities that "reinvent the wheel." Historical consciousness can be a real timesaver, and is a habit of mind that needs to be cultivated. If our first question is, "What does the Scripture teach on this subject," perhaps our second should be,

"What is the history of discussion on this issue?" There will be very few cases indeed where we cannot profit from the labors of those who have preceded us.

Finally, as an essential component of this phase, the con temporary and empirical data pertinent to the case need consideration. What are the exact factual and circumstantial dimensions of the problem at hand? Are our assumptions about Mr. _____ in our case based on hearsay and rumor, or on reliable firsthand testimony? What are the particulars of the teaching contract and the laws of the community and state? Are there medical, psychological, and sociological studies on the subject of homosexuality that might inform our theological understanding and our pastoral practice? A journal article like Paul Cameron's "Case Against Homosexuality" *[Human Life Review* 4:3 [1978J: 17-49), is helpful at this point. While the controlling presuppositions of our human understanding and practice of ministry are drawn from Scripture, the medical and social sciences can fill out our perceptions of a complex human reality. Effective pastoral ministry presupposes a sound understanding of the relevant biblical principles and the relevant empirical data; neither can be neglected.

Synthetic Phase ("Process")

In the synthetic phase the goal is to process the various informational inputs and reach a conclusion. This involves reading the sources, taking notes, and mentally organizing the material. The information must not only be read and filed, but more importantly, assessed and weighed. What arguments and considerations are emerging as the central and compelling ones? What lines of evidence and argumentation bear upon these key foci? In the case being discussed here, the question of the "cultural conditioning" of biblical revelation will emerge as a fundamental issue. Are the biblical pronouncements on homo-

sexuality limited by their time and culture? How are they to be related to modern research in the social sciences? What elements of biblical revelation are appropriate foundations for secular legislation?

This process of weighing the evidence and the arguments is of all the phases of research perhaps the most difficult to reduce to an explicit and formalized procedure. There is a sizable "unprogramed" and intuitive element at work here. In weighing the data, it is frequently helpful to discuss the problem with someone else. The very act of verbalizing our thinking process in someone else's presence can give focus and definition to our work. Often a question raised by a friendly listener can be more productive than hours of solitary reading in generating new insights and new directions to pursue.

Once we have reached a tentative conclusion, it is especially helpful to attempt to express the essence of that conclusion in a brief sentence or two. We haven't completely understood the impact of the research until such a concise statement can be made. (Of course we may conclude that at this stage our information is inadequate and the whole matter is inconclusive.) This phase is parallel to the attempt to clearly focus key terms, concepts, and distinctions at the beginning of the research process.

Finally, in this synthetic phase, it is worthwhile to attempt to generalize our conclusions. What do our conclusions imply for other related areas, for example, Christian attitudes toward legislation concerning divorce, abortion, or Sabbath observance? This attempt to generalize will often have the effect of making us more consciously aware of the open-ended nature of groundbreaking research. Answers in one area should generate new questions and avenues of investigation in other areas. In this case, for example, the whole question of the relationship of theology and psychology as alternative ways of understanding human nature could be a significant "spin-off" of the research.

Expressive Phase ("Output")

The expressive phase is concerned with the communication of the results of our theological research, in either written or oral form, to the parties concerned. This might be in the form of a sermon, a lesson, a pastoral conversation, or a term paper. For any of these forms, it is quite helpful to prepare a clear outline of the results we wish to communicate. The discipline of outlining is not only an aid in effective communication, but also a help in selecting the most relevant pieces of information from the extensive body of material processed during our research and reflection.

If the final product is to be in written form, several tools should be available to us: a good unabridged dictionary, and a copy of A Manual For *Writers of* Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations by Kate L. Turabian. The content of our communication is more significant than its form, but *effective* communication is hindered by poor grammar, spelling, and syntax. If you have deficiencies in this area, have someone proofread your final draft before typing the finished copy. This practice can be beneficial even when your grasp of the mechanics of written expression is satisfactory. On matters of style and syntax, *Elements of Style* by Strunk and White is quite helpful.

Finally, as part of this expressive phase, it is wise to consider the *pastoral* dimensions of the process of communicating the results. What is the state of understanding and maturity of the people to whom I will be communicating? What are the human dynamics of the situation that could impede the understanding of what I am trying to say? What forms of language will be most helpful to the individuals and groups involved? Such questions appropriately bring our theological reflections back to the point at which they originated, namely, the actual life situations of those involved in the work of ministry.

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Brief Glossary of Theological Terms

An asterisk preceding a term indicates the definition of that term is included in the glossary.

Allegory: A mode of speech, generally narrative in form, in which persons, places, objects, and events are held to have symbolic meanings. Unlike a type, an allegory is not necessarily based on a historical person or event; in distinction from a parable, an allegory is not limited to a single main point. Allegorical interpretations of Scripture were common in the patristic and medieval periods but have been largely rejected by the Reformers and modern Protestants.

Analogia Entis: A doctrine found in medieval and scholastic theology, and defended vigorously by Thomas Aquinas. According to this doctrine, from the being of the universe we may reason back analogically and proportionately to God.

The doctrine of the analogy of being was strongly attacked by Karl Barth in Church Dogmatics, where he in-

sisted that God cannot be known from the creation, but only in the revelation in Jesus Christ.

While Barth's position serves as a corrective to an autonomous natural theology, it does not appear to do justice to the degree of moral accountability presupposed on the basis of general revelation in such texts as Romans 1:18-23.

Anthropology: The part of the theological system devoted to the study of the origins, nature, and destiny of man. Since the nineteenth century, anthropology has become an increasingly prominent focus of theological reflection. In formulating the doctrine of man, systematic theology attempts to integrate the data of the social sciences within a framework based on divine revelation.

Anthropomorphism: The attribution of human characteristics to God. In biblical usage physical characteristics are occasionally predicated of God in a metaphorical sense (e.g., Gen. 3:8; Num. 11:23; Ps. 33:18). Personal characteristics such as intellect, feelings, and will are predicated of God in a real though qualified sense. Anthropomorphic usage in Scripture reflects the fact that human relationships derive ultimately from the creative will of the personal God (cf. Eph. 3:15) who created man in his own image and likeness (Gen. 1:26).

Antinomy: In theology, one of a pair of apparently conflicting statements, each of which possesses claims to validity. Notable examples of biblical antinomies include the divine and human natures in the one person of Jesus Christ, and the concurrence of divine sovereignty and human responsibility in the process of salvation. Biblical antinomies arise when the divine reality intersects with the human, and point to the inability of human reason to exhaustively comprehend the nature and actions of God.

Apologetics: The intellectual defense of the Christian faith. Topics traditionally dealt with in apologetics include

the relationship of faith and reason; proofs for the existence of God; creation and evolution; the problem of evil; miracles and natural law; evidence for the resurrection of Christ; the inspiration of Scripture. In contemporary evangelical circles discussions of methodology in apologetics usually involve the differences between the schools commonly known as *evidentialism and *presuppositionalism.

Arminianism: A theological movement initiated by Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609) of the Netherlands in reaction to the Calvinistic understanding of predestination, divine grace, and salvation. The followers of Arminius, called Arminians or Remonstrants, further developed the views of Arminius. The tenets of later Arminianism emphasize, but are not limited to, the following five doctrines: man's depravity resulting from the fall is not total; God's election is not unconditional but is based on foreseen faith; Christ died for the sins of all, not just the sins of the elect; the grace of God in the gospel calling to conversion can be resisted; a truly regenerate person may fall from grace and lose his salvation altogether. The Calvinistic party in the Netherlands rejected those propositions at the Synod of Dort (1618-1619).

Attributes of God: The perfections of the divine Being. The incommunicable attributes, emphasizing the absolute distinction between the Creator and the creature, include aseity or self-existence, immutability, eternity, omnipresence, and simplicity. The *communicable* attributes, reflected in a limited degree in the creature, include omniscience, wisdom, goodness, love, mercy, patience, holiness, righteousness, truth, and omnipotence. The divine attributes mutually qualify one another and may be said to be identical with the divine nature or essence.

Bibliology: The part of the theological system devoted to the doctrine of Scripture. Important concepts usually

treated include authority, revelation, inspiration, illumination, and inerrancy.

The doctrine of Scripture was not systematically articulated in the early church and patristic era. Since the rise of modern biblical criticism, it has become one of the primary foci of theological reflection among evangelicals.

Calvinism: The theological tradition associated with John Calvin (1509-1564) and his later followers. The Synod of Dort (1618-1619) affirmed "Five Points" which are commonly held to be key tenets of classical Calvinism: total depravity or the total inability of man to contribute to his own salvation; unconditional election, that is, election apart from any foreseen faith; limited or definite atonement; irresistible or effectual grace; perseverance of the saints.

Christology: The part of the theological system dealing with the person and work of Christ. Ecclesiastical reflection on the person of Christ achieved classical expression in the Creed of Chalcedon (451). Reflection on the nature of the work of Christ (atonement) has exhibited greater variation across the centuries. Evangelicals stress the priestly and substitutionary dimensions of the biblical understanding of the work of Christ.

In any theological system Christology will play a central role, inasmuch as the understanding of the person and work of Christ is determinative for the understanding of salvation and the Christian life.

Coherence Theory of Truth: The theory which holds that truth consists in coherence with other statements known to be true. The coherence theory has been held by rationalist metaphysicians such as Gottfried Leibniz, Benedict Spinoza, Georg Hegel, and F. H. Bradley, and more recently, by the logical positivists Otto Neurath and Carl Hempel. While the coherence theory is quite appropriate in *a priori* disciplines such as mathematics and

logic, it is less so in empirical disciplines such as history and the natural sciences.

Common Grace: The general benevolence of God toward the creature, benevolence which restrains the destructive consequences of sin, and enables the unregenerate to act in external conformity to the moral law and to exhibit creativity in works of culture (cf. Gen. 1:28; Matt. 5:45; Rom. 2:14). The concept of common grace helps the Christian to better appreciate the positive contributions and partial insights of non-Christian peoples.

Contextualization: A theological term prominent in recent discussions in missiology and liberation theology. Contextualization refers to the process through which the substance of biblical revelation is interpreted and applied in terms of the categories and thought forms of those who are receiving the message.! Systematic theology, like counseling and homiletics, seeks to be context-specific in its application of biblical truth.

Correlation, Method of: A method of structuring the theological system articulated by Paul Tillich in the first volume of his Systematic Theology. Existential "questions" from the human situation are correlated with "answers" drawn from divine revelation. The method in itself is a sound one, as long as divine revelation, rather than the human situation, controls the nature of the theological agenda.

Correspondence Theory of Truth: The theory which holds that truth consists in some form of correspondence between belief and the actual state of affairs in the world. During the twentieth century, due to the influence of the modern scientific outlook, it has often been held that this correspondence must in all cases be capable of empirical verification. While Christian faith is deeply rooted in history and in the structures of the spatiotemporal world,

the correspondence of the Christian position as a whole to ultimate reality will only be verified eschatologically, that is, by the return of Christ at the end of history.

Cosmological Argument: An argument for God's existence proceeding from the existence of the world to God as the world's sufficient cause. Its defenders have included Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Rene Descartes, Gottfried Leibniz, John Locke, Charles Hodge, Norman Geisler, and most Roman Catholic theologians; among its critics have been David Hume, Immanuel Kant, J. S. Mill, Bertrand Russell, and Gordon Clark. While philosophers are divided on the question of whether the argument makes belief in God's existence logically inescapable, Romans 1:18-21 indicates that, given God's general revelation in nature, disbelief in God is morally inexcusable.

Covenant Theology: A stream in the Reformed theological tradition emphasizing covenants in relation to God's dealings with humanity and the unity of the Old and New Testaments. Covenant theology was developed by the Continental Reformed theologians Olevianus (1536-1587) and Ursinus (1534-1583) and by William Ames (1576-1633), an English Puritan, and given a central place in the work of the nineteenth-century Princeton theologians Charles and A. A. Hodge.

Critical Philosophy: A term most often associated with the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, especially with regard to the epistemological doctrines presented in The Critique *of* Pure Reason (1781). Kant argued that we cannot know reality as it is in itself, but only as it appears to us, mediated through the categories of the human mind. Kant also denied the validity of the traditional proofs for the existence of God, holding that the concept of God must be understood as a postulate of moral experience.

Cultural Conditioning: A term used to designate the influence of the cultural context on the outward form of bib-

lical revelation. The study of hermeneutics addresses the task of distinguishing the normative content of biblical revelation and its cultural form. See also *historicism.

Demythologizing: A method of interpreting the New Testament (German: Entmythologisierung) proposed by the German theologian and biblical scholar Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976). The "mythological" cosmology and categories of the New Testament are to be translated into the categories of existentialist philosophy, especially as developed by the philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), in order to make the Christian message more understandable to modern men steeped in the world view of the natural sciences. Bultmann's attempt to communicate the Christian message effectively in the modern age is severely defective in that it virtually eliminates the supernatural element in historic biblical Christianity, thus fundamentally altering the nature of the message itself}

Dispensationalism: A system of biblical interpretation associated with J. N. Darby (1800-1882) and his followers and popularized through the notes of the Scofield Reference Bible. Dispensationalists distinguish seven periods in biblical history: Innocence (before the fall); Conscience (from the fall to Noah); Human Government (from Noah to Abraham); Promise (from Abraham to Moses); Law (from Moses to Christ); Grace (the church age); the Kingdom (the millennium). Dispensationalists draw sharp distinctions between God's purposes for Israel and for the church and emphasize literal fulfillments of Old Testament prophecies.

Dort, Synod of: An assembly of the Dutch Reformed Church convened in Dort (Dordrecht) in response to the Arminian controversy. The synod, meeting from November 1618 to May 1619, affirmed the authority of the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the "Five Points" of Calvinism. See *Calvinism.

Ecclesiology: The part of the theological system dealing with the doctrine of the church. Topics usually treated include the nature of the church; attributes of the church; forms of government and ministry; sacraments; and the mission of the church.

Although in the past evangelicals have sometimes tended to ignore ecclesiology, in the latter part of the twentieth century questions concerning the nature of the church and its ministry and mission have been moving to the forefront of contemporary theological reflection.

Election: The divine action whereby certain persons are chosen by God for special privilege and blessing; pre-eminently, God's choice of some for eternal salvation. According to the Arminian tradition, God's election is conditioned upon foreseen faith; according to the Reformed tradition, God's election is unconditional-faith being the consequence rather than the condition of divine election.

Epistemology: The branch of philosophy concerned with the possibility, nature, and conditions of human knowledge. Modern philosophy has been dominated by epistemological concerns, reflecting the impact of the work of Rene Descartes (1596-1650) and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). Empirical epistemologies take the data of the senses to be the primary means of acquiring knowledge. Rationalistic epistemologies stress the perception of clear and distinct ideas by the human mind, often taking mathematics and logic as paradigms. In Christian theology, fideistic epistemologies hold that valid knowledge of God is acquired when the believer by faith appropriates the witness of the Holy Spirit to divine revelation. As in soteriology, so in epistemology: knowledge of God becomes a possibility for man only at God's initiative, by grace through faith.

Eschatology: The doctrine of the "last things": the intermediate state; the return of Christ; the general resurrection; the last judgment; and the eternal state.

It is now increasingly recognized that eschatology is not merely the last in a series of theological loci, but in a very real sense, the horizon of all New Testament theology. In the New Testament, Christian existence is lived within the tension of the "already"-"not yet" structure of the kingdom of God, which is both a present reality and a future hope.

Esthetics: The branch of philosophy concerned with the nature and criteria of beauty. A number of issues dealt with in esthetics, for example, the nature of metaphor and symbol and their relation to human cognitive and affective states, are particularly relevant to the concerns of theology and hermeneutics.

American evangelicals in this century have not, for the most part, shown great interest in esthetic questions. Theologically, this may be reflective of an inadequate grasp of the biblical doctrine of creation, and an almost exclusive concentration on the cognitive rather than the affective dimensions of divine revelation.

Ethics: The study of the principles of right conduct. Ethical systems can be broadly classified as either deontological or teleological. In deontological systems the basic ethical motif is obedience to laws or norms, understood either as laws of reason (Immanuel Kant) or as laws of divine revelation (Judaism; Islam; conservative Protestantism). In teleological systems, the basic ethical motif is the pursuit of some human good; for example, happiness (Aristotle); pleasure (Epicurus); the vision of God (Aquinas); the greatest good of the greatest number (J. S. Mill, Jeremy Bentham) or the will to power (Friedrich Neitzsche).

Evidentialism: A term designating a theory of apologetics which holds that the truth claims of Christianity must be verified by appealing to historical evidences available to believer and unbeliever alike, rather than by

appeal to revelational starting points. Proponents of an evidential apologetic today include John Warwick Montgomery, Clark Pinnock, and Josh McDowell.

Existentialism: A philosophical orientation characteristic of such modern thinkers as Soren Kierkegaard, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Karl Jaspers, and Gabriel Marcel. Existentialists hold that neither traditional metaphysics nor the natural sciences are adequate for understanding the deepest issues of human life. In the twentieth century theologians such as Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Rudolf Bultmann, and Paul Tillich have been influenced in various degrees by the existentialist tradition.

Fideism: A term designating a theory of apologetics and biblical authority which holds that the ultimate ground for accepting the claims of Scripture is the testimony of the Holy Spirit to the Word of God, received by faith in the believer's experience. While not minimizing the role of reason and historical evidences, fideists hold that these elements, apart from the Spirit's witness, can produce only probable judgments, and not the certainty of faith. Advocates of this position include Calvin and the Westminster divines, and today, J. I. Packer and Donald Bloesch.

Form Criticism: An approach in biblical studies pioneered by Hermann Gunkel in relation to the Old Testament narratives of Genesis, and by Martin Dibelius and Rudolf Bultmann in relation to the Gospels. Form critics attempt to understand the literary subunits of the text in terms of the process of their oral transmission and usage in the life of the community. Some presuppositions of the more radical form-critics are in tension with an evangelical view of the authority of Scripture, especially where the creative contributions of the community are so emphasized as to endanger the essential continuity between history and theology in the biblical text.

Hermeneutics: In theology, the study of the principles and presuppositions of biblical exegesis. In the narrower sense of biblical hermeneutics, the primary concern is to recover the meaning which the text had for its original recipients. In the broader sense of theological hermeneutics, the concern is to bridge the chronological and cultural distance between the text and contemporary context by relating the text to the thought forms and categories of the modern world. In the latter sense, systematic theology functions as a "hermeneutical bridge" between the Bible and the contemporary world. See also *New Hermeneutic.

Historicism: A philosophical outlook which became prominent during the nineteenth century, reflecting the influence of Hegelianism, the historical studies of the Bible, and the theory of evolution. As defined by Ernst Troeltsch (d. 1923), historicism is the tendency to view all forms of knowledge and experience in the context of historical change.

For the evangelical, the relativistic implications of historicism are mitigated by the constancies of human nature and by the core of divine revelation which is normative in all ages.

Illumination: The witness of the Holy Spirit to the Word of God which enables the believer to understand its saving content (cf. Ps. 119:27, 73; Matt. 16:17; Acts 16:14; I Cor. 2:12-13).

Inerrancy: A consequence of divine inspiration, preserving the writers of Scripture from all error in their teaching. There are several views held by evangelicals concerning the scope of inerrancy. One view holds that inerrancy is predicated only of biblical teaching concerning faith and practice. Another view holds that inerrancy also extends to matters of scientific and historical detail. Both views are agreed that sound biblical interpretation takes into account such factors as authorial intent, literary

genre, colloquial expressions, approximations, and the like. Synonym: infallibility.

Infralapsarian: In relation to the doctrine of election, the view which holds that election follows the fall in the logical order of the divine decrees. According to infralapsarians, the logical order of the divine decrees is (1) the decree to create; (2) the decree to permit the fall; (3) the decree to elect some to be saved. This view appears to be in accord with the biblical correlation of divine salvation and human sin, and with the divine attributes of justice, holiness, and wisdom. Antonym: *supralapsarian.

Inspiration: A term referring to the divine origin of the Scriptures, through the Holy Spirit's influence upon the human authors. The doctrine of inspiration presupposes God's providential supervision over the entire process of the formation of the canon, so that the original revelation was recorded and transmitted in ways consistent with the divine intention. Evangelicals hold that inspiration is plenary, extending to all parts of the canonical books, and verbal, extending to the very words of the text, and not merely the ideas contained therein. The terms *confluent* and *organic* are used to denote a view of inspiration which recognizes the instrumentality of the human writer's personality, as opposed to "mechanical" or "dictation" views.

Liberation Theology: A contemporary theological movement which interprets salvation and the mission of the church primarily as the changing of oppressive socio-economic and political structures, rather than as redemption from individual guilt and sin. Heavily indebted to the social analysis of Karl Marx, liberation theology parallels many of the features of the social gospel in America earlier in this century. Contemporary advocates of liberation theology include James Cone, Frederick Herzog, Letty

Russell, Rosemary Ruether, Gustavo Gutierrez, Jose Miguez Bonino, Rubem Alves, and Hugo Assmann.

Logic: The branch of philosophy concerned with the rules of valid inference and reasoning. Inductive reasoning proceeds from particulars to general principles; deductive reasoning proceeds from general principles to particular conclusions.

The study of logic was first systematized by Aristotle and further developed by European and Arabian thinkers during the Middle Ages. Since the nineteenth century, philosophers have tended to focus their attention on highly abstract systems of symbolic and mathematical logic.

In Christian theology, human logic, operating under the authority of Scripture and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has the legitimate tasks of defending biblical truth from skeptical attacks, and showing the coherence of the various elements of the organism of Christian truth. While human logic can assist in preserving revealed mysteries such as the Trinity and the incarnation from heretical distortion, human logic in and of itself can never fully comprehend them. Human logic points to the mysteries, and guards them, but can never claim to fully possess or control them.

Logical Positivism: A philosophical position advocated during the 1930s by A. J. Ayer and others which held that all meaningful statements must be capable of empirical verification. According to this view religious and meta-physical statements are neither true nor false, but in the strict sense, meaningless. Critics of this view pointed out that the positivist criterion of empirical verifiability was not itself capable of empirical verification, but was based on an implicit judgment of the truth of metaphysical materialism.

Lutheranism: The ecclesiastical and theological tradition associated with the Protestant Reformer Martin Luther (1483-1546) and his followers. Two of the cardinal tenets of the Lutheran tradition are expressed in the phrases *sola fide* and *sola scriptura*—justification by faith alone, and Scripture alone as the supreme authority for faith and life. The church is understood not as a hierarchical structure, but as a spiritual community, a "priesthood of all believers." The Lutheran view of the Lord's Supper, commonly known as *consubstantiation,* holds that the body and blood of Christ are present to the believer "in, with, and under" the elements of bread and wine.

Marxism: The philosophy associated with the life and thought of Karl Marx (1818-1883), also known as dialectical materialism. In Marxist thought the laws, values, customs, and beliefs of any society are a reflection of, and to a great extent determined by, the more basic socioeconomic realities of that society, especially the nature of the ownership of the means of production. Human thought is determined by the social structure, and not vice versa.

Marxism is important not only as a powerful competitor to Christianity, but also in terms of its influence in contemporary theology, especially among liberation theologians. In such theologies a Marxist analysis of society functions as a hermeneutical key for interpreting and applying the Christian message. See *liberation theology.

Metaphysics: The branch of philosophy concerned with the nature and structures of being or ultimate reality. Traditionally, metaphysics has addressed such issues as the nature of existence, properties, and events; the relation between particulars and universals, individuals and classes; the nature of change and causation; and the nature of mind, matter, space, and time.

Since the time of Kant (1724-1804), metaphysics as traditionally conceived has been in disfavor in Protestant theology. More recently, there has been a revival of in-

terest in metaphysics among process theologians who have attempted to restate Christian faith in terms of the metaphysical vision of Alfred North Whitehead.

Basic to a biblical outlook on metaphysics is the fundamental distinction between the Creator and the creation. The objectively existing and knowable structures of the created world reflect the creative power, wisdom, and will of the Triune God, as mediated through Jesus Christ the Logos, who is the mediator between the uncreated God and the created order.

Natural Theology: A term used to designate that which can be known of God apart from special revelation. Roman Catholicism, reflecting the position of Thomas Aquinas, holds that the existence of God can be proven by reason alone. Modern Protestant theology, reflecting Immanuel Kant's, David Hume's, and Karl Barth's philosophical and theological criticisms of the traditional theistic proofs, has tended to deny the validity of natural theology. Recent process theologians such as John B. Cobb, Jr., Schubert Ogden, and David Griffin have, however, argued for its validity. Evangelical Protestants are divided on the issue. See *evidentialism, *presuppositionalism, *fideism.

Neoorthodoxy: A twentieth-century theological movement most prominently associated with the work of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner. Reacting to both nineteenth-century liberalism and seventeenth-century confessional orthodoxies, neoorthodoxy stressed the transcendence of God, revelation as primarily a personal encounter with God rather than the communication of propositional information, the priority of divine grace and faith in the knowledge of God, and the reality of human sin. After assuming a dominant position between the First and Second World Wars, neoorthodoxy declined in influence during the later 1950s and 1960s.

New Hermeneutic: A post-Bultmannian development in

Protestant theology associated with the work of Ernst Fuchs, Gerhard Ebeling, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Robert W. Funk, and James M, Robinson, By drawing on the later philosophical writings of Martin Heidegger, proponents of the New Hermeneutic are attempting to transcend the limitations of a purely historical-critical approach to exegesis and to develop a theory of interpretation which will translate the historical meaning into the contemporary situation. As presently formulated, the New Hermeneutic still bears the marks of its Bultmannian heritage, limiting the arena of the divine-human encounter to human inwardness, rather than allowing for the possibility of God's real action in observable spatiotemporal history.

Noetic Effects of Sin: The darkening of the human mind by sin, so that a special influence of divine grace is needed for understanding and obeying biblical truth (cf. I Cor. 1:18; 2:12-14; II Cor. 4:4; Eph. 4:17-18).

Ontological Argument: An argument for the existence of God proposed by Anselm (1033-1109). Defining God as "that than which none greater can be conceived," Anselm argued that such a definition logically implies God's necessary existence. The argument was criticized by Aquinas and Immanuel Kant, and defended by Rend Descartes, Georg Hegel, and more recently by Charles Hartshorne. Evaluations of the validity of the argument turn on judgments concerning the possibility of establishing the relationship between the mind and external reality by the powers of reason alone. At the very least, the argument can be seen as an articulation of the nature of God as self-existent, infinite, and eternal, as presented to human experience in God's own self-revelation.

Pantheism: The belief that the substance of God and the substance of the world are in some sense identical. Such views have characterized much of classical Hinduism, and, in the West, can be seen in the philosophical positions of Benedict Spinoza and Georg Hegel.

This is to be distinguished from panentheism, the view which holds that the being of God includes the being of the universe, but at the same time transcends it. Panentheism is characteristic of contemporary process theology.

Person(s): In trinitarian usage, the term used to refer to the distinct yet interpenetrating centers of individuality in the divine life: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The terms persona (Lat.) and hypostasis (Gr.) refer to the eternal distinctions within the divine life; the terms substantia (Lat.) and *ousia* (Gr.) to the eternal ground of unity.

Point of Contact: A term made famous by a debate between Emil Brunner and Karl Barth during the 1930s. Is there a point of contact for the gospel in the natural man? Brunner argued that the sense of guilt constitutes such a point of contact. Barth, on the contrary, argued that the only point of contact is the faith created by the preaching of the Word of God (Church Dogmatics, I/1, p. 273).

Reformed theologians have tended to see in the existence of common grace (cf. Matt. 5:45; Acts 14:17) and the image of God such a point of contact or common ground for doing Christian apologetics.

Pragmatism: One of the most influential philosophies in America during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Most often associated with the work of Charles S. Peirce (1839-1914), William James (1842-1910), and John Dewey (1859-1952), pragmatism stressed the practical consequences of an idea as a measure of its truth. William James could speak of truth as the "cash value" of an idea. While rightly stressing the relationship of truth to the practical concerns of life, pragmatism is inadequate in and of itself for choosing the ultimate goals or ends—as opposed to methods and means—of human existence in time and eternity.

Predestination: The eternal foreordination by God of all events, including the salvation of certain individuals (cf.

Acts 2:23; 4:28; Rom. 8:29-30; Eph. 1:5, 11). *Election can thus be understood as a subcategory of predestination. From Latin *praedestinare*, the Vulgate translation of Greek *proorizo*, "foreordain."

Presuppositionalism: A term designating a theory of apologetics which holds that biblical revelation is the necessary presupposition of any coherent system of truth. According to Gordon Clark, all true statements are either explicitly stated in Scripture, or must follow from scriptural statements through sound logical inference. According to Cornelius Van Til, the existence of the Triune God and the infallible authority of Scripture are the necessary presuppositions for knowing the truth of any fact what-soever.

Process Theology: A contemporary theological movement based on a view of reality in which process, change, and evolution are just as fundamental as substance, per-manence, and stability. God, in a continuous and creative relationship of involvement with the world, is himself understood to be undergoing a process of self-development and growth. Basic to process theology is the metaphysical system of Alfred North Whitehead's Process and Reality. Contemporary advocates of process theology include Charles Hartshorne, John B. Cobb, Jr., Schubert Ogden, and David Griffin.

Redaction Criticism: A recent trend in New Testament scholarship in which the evangelists are seen not as mere compilers of the tradition, but as theologians who creative-ly shaped their material in the light of their understanding of Christ and the situations of the churches they were ad-dressing. Redaction critics are concerned to recover the distinctive perspectives of the Gospel writers. Evangelicals can affirm this concern without endorsing the tendency of the more radical critics to separate theology from factual history in the Gospel accounts.

Revelation: The process by which God acts in history,

makes himself personally present to his people, and communicates to them his saving will, purposes, and claims upon their lives. Revelation thus encompasses God's deeds, God's presence, and God's word; it is both "personal" and "propositional" in nature.

Revelation refers to the original deed, self-presentation, or communication of God; *inspiration to its divinely superintended recording in Scripture; *illumination to its application to the contemporary believer through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Soteriology: The branch of theology which deals with salvation or redemption. Traditionally, soteriology is divided into objective soteriology and subjective soteriology. Objective soteriology is concerned with the active and passive obedience of Christ: Christ's active obedience to the law of God as the second Adam; his satisfaction of divine justice through his substitutionary and atoning death on the cross. Subjective soteriology, or the application of the work of redemption by the Holy Spirit, deals with calling, regeneration, faith, repentance, conversion, justification, sanctification, perseverance, and glorification.

In recent theologies there have been noticeable tendencies to reinterpret salvation in anthropocentric and socio-economic categories. See *liberation theology.

Supralapsarian: In relation to the doctrine of election, the view which holds that election precedes the fall in the logical order of the divine decrees. According to supralapsarians, the logical order of the decrees is: (1) the decree to elect some foreseen as created but not yet fallen; (2) the decree to create; (3) the decree to permit the fall. Antonym: *infralapsarian.

Teleological Argument: The argument that the existence of order or design in the world implies the existence of an intelligent designer, that is, God. The argument has been defended by Aquinas and William Paley (1743-1805),

criticized by Immanuel Kant and David Hume, and in this century defended in various forms by R. E. D. Clark and F. R. Tennant. Insofar as it presupposes the principle of causality, this argument can be understood as a special case of the *cosmological argument.

Theology: In the broader sense, the subject matter of the theological system as a whole; in the narrower sense, the doctrine of God. Theology proper deals with the existence, knowability, attributes, and triune nature of God. In some traditions, the doctrines of the decrees and divine predestination are treated in connection with theology proper.

Typology: A method of biblical interpretation in which the persons and events of the Old Testament are understood to foreshadow the deeper spiritual meanings of New Testament revelation: for example, Jonah and the resurrection of Christ (Matt. 12:40); the crossing of the Red Sea and Christian baptism (I Cor. 10:1-6). The possibility of valid typological meanings in the Old Testament cannot be excluded without invalidating the insights of the New Testament writers themselves. See *allegory.

Wesleyanism: The ecclesiastical and theological tradition associated with John Wesley (1703-1791) and his followers. As an expression of the Protestant Reformation, historic Wesleyanism holds to the supreme authority of Scripture, the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the universality of sin, and other classical Christian doctrines. Special emphases of the Wesleyan tradition include a stress on personal religious experience and the new birth; the conviction that Christ died for all, and not for the elect only; the doctrine of preliminary or prevenient grace, which to some extent counteracts the effects of original sin; and the teaching of Christian perfection or entire sanctification, which holds that the believer can in this life experience God's grace to such an extent that the heart is emptied of all sin and filled with a pure love for God and the neighbor.

Will of God: Theological discussions distinguish the decretive, preceptive, and permissive wills of God. The decretive will determines whatsoever comes to pass, and is normally known only after the fact. The preceptive will reveals God's norms for moral conduct, and may be either obeyed or disobeyed by moral agents. The permissive will refers to those actions which, though not in accord with divine precepts, are permitted by God and ultimately are redirected to serve redemptive purposes (Gen. 50:20).

3

Brief Guide to Modern Theologians

The following brief sketches are not intended to be a comprehensive guide to either the biographies or the theologies of the figures listed. This guide is intended to give the beginning student some initial orientation to the lives and positions of theologians whose names are likely to be encountered in lectures and reading assignments.

Representative works are listed for each theologian. In the case of translated works, the date cited is that of the commonly available English translation. An asterisk preceding a name indicates a biographical sketch of that person is included in this chapter.

Barth, Karl *(1886-1968).* Swiss neoorthodox theologian. Born in Basel; studied at Berne, Berlin, Tubingen, and Marburg; held pastorates in Geneva and Safenwil; taught at universities of Gottingen, Munster, Bonn, and Basel; a leader in the resistance of the German Confessing Church against Nazism and a leading contributor to the drafting of the Barmen Declaration (1934).

Barth's theology can be understood as a forceful reaction against the optimistic and man-centered orientation of the nineteenth-century theology of *Schleiermacher and the followers of Hegel. Barth stressed the transcendence of God over man and his culture and religion; the necessity of divine revelation and the futility of natural theology; the finitude and sinfulness of man and the priority of divine grace; the need to rediscover the insights of the Bible and the Protestant Reformers.

Contrasted with Protestant liberalism, Barth's theology represented a profound recovery of biblical themes. The defects of this approach include a tendency to separate revelation from empirically verifiable historical events, and a separation of the "Word of God" and Scripture— with the consequence that the cognitive basis of divine revelation is eroded.

Anselm: *Fides quaerens intellectum*, 1962; *Church Dogmatics*, 1936-1969; *Natural Theology,* 1946; *Protestant Thought: From Rousseau to Ritschl*, 1959. Bavinck, Herman *(1854-1921).* Dutch Reformed theologian. Born in Hogeveen in the Netherlands, the son of a pastor. Bavinck was educated at the Theological School of the Christian Reformed Church and the University of Leiden, and taught theology at the Theological School in Kampen and at the Free University of Amsterdam, where he succeeded Abraham Kuyper.

Bavinck's major work, the four-volume *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek (Reformed Dogmatics)*, is characterized by its close adherence to the data of Scripture, its concern for the historical development of doctrine, and a synthetic style of reasoning which frequently attempts to bring various viewpoints closer together.

Bavinck was also active in the ecclesiastical affairs of his day and gave significant leadership to the Christian school movement in the Netherlands.

Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, 1906-1911; *The Doctrine of*

God, 1951 (tr. of vol. 2 of Ger. Dog.); *Our Reasonable Faith*, 1956; *The Philosophy of Revelation*, 1953.

Berkhof, Louis (*1873-1957).* American Reformed theologian. Born in the Netherlands, Berkhof was educated at Calvin Seminary and Princeton. He taught for many years at Calvin Seminary, and also served as its president. Standing in the tradition of Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck, Berkhof was considered a representative spokesman for orthodox Calvinism in the United States.

History of Christian Doctrines, 1937; *Principles of Biblical Interpretation*, 1950; *Systematic Theology,* 1941.

Berkouwer, G. C. (1903-   ). Dutch Reformed theologian. Berkouwer was educated at the Free University of Amsterdam, and after serving a number of years in the pastorate, was called back to the university to teach dogmatics, a position previously held by Abraham Kuyper, Herman Bavinck, and Valentinus Hepp.

With the publication of his multivolume Studies in Dogmatics Berkouwer has established himself as one of the leading evangelical theologians of Europe. In his writings he has stressed the integral relation of theological reflection and the living faith of the church. He has expressed reservations about the concept of inerrancy as it was articulated in the Hodge-Warfield tradition.

The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism, 1965; *Studies in Dogmatics*, 14 vols., 1952-1976; *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, 1956.

Bloesch, Donald (1928-   *).* American evangelical theologian. Born in Bremen, Indiana, Bloesch was educated at Elmhurst College, Chicago Theological Seminary, and the University of Chicago. He is presently professor of theology at Dubuque Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. Standing within the broader Reformed tradition, Bloesch has attempted to mediate some of the past disputes between Calvinism and Arminianism, and between

Calvinism and Lutheranism. His writings display both a critical and an appreciative relationship to the neoorthodox and Roman Catholic theological traditions.

Essentials of Evangelical Theology, 2 vols., 1978-1979; *The Evangelical Renaissance,* 1973; *The Ground of Certainty,* 1971; *The Reform of the Church*, 1970.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich *(1906-1945).* German Lutheran theologian. Born in Breslau, Germany, and educated at Tubingen, Berlin, and Union Theological Seminary, Bonhoeffer was active in the German Confessing Church's resistance to Nazism. Implicated in a plot to assassinate Hitler, he was arrested in 1943 and executed in 1945.

In its general orientation Bonhoeffer's theology has considerable affinity with the neoorthodox movement associated with Karl Barth. Bonhoeffer became well-known in English-speaking circles through his criticisms of "cheap grace" in *The Cost of Discipleship*, through his emphasis on Christian community in *Life* Together, and through the fragmentary passages of his posthumous Letters and Papers from Prison, which later became a major source of inspiration for the theologies of secularity in the 1960s.

The Cost of Discipleship, 1960; *Creation and Fall*, 1959; *Ethics,* 1955; *Letters and Papers from Prison*, 1967; *Life Together*, 1954; *Temptation*, 1955.

Brunner, Emil (*1889-1966).* Swiss neoorthodox theologian. Brunner, who taught theology for many years at the University of Zurich, shared many of the theological concerns of Karl Barth, but differed sharply with Barth on the question of natural theology. Unlike Barth, Brunner held that some valid knowledge of God is available to man in creation, apart from special revelation. Brunner made extensive use of the "I-Thou" philosophy of Martin Buber, and stressed the "personal" rather than the propositional or cognitive aspects of divine revelation. Brunner, more so than Barth, believed that it is part of the theologian's task

to enter into sympathetic dialogue with secular thinkers and representatives of non-Christian religions.

The Divine Imperative, 1947; *Dogmatics*, 3 vols., 1950-1962; *The Mediator*, 1947; *The Misunderstanding of the Church*, 1953; *Revelation and Reason*, 1946.

Bultmann, Rudolf (1884-1976). German New Testament scholar and neoorthodox theologian. Bultmann was educated at Marburg, Tubingen, and Berlin, and taught New Testament studies at the universities of Breslau, Giessen, and Marburg. He was instrumental in the development of form-critical studies of the Gospels, stressing the faith of the early church rather than historical events *per se* as the key to the theological significance of the documents. Bultmann is perhaps best remembered for his program of "demythologizing," in which he insisted that the entire structure of the New Testament is "mythological" (e.g., a three-storied universe, angels, demons, miracles), and consequently needs to be translated into the categories of existentialist philosophy in order to be understandable to modern man.

Bultmann's reinterpretation of the miraculous element in the New Testament effectively denies the omnipotence of God, and has affinity with a deistic conception of God's relationship to the world. Bultmann's later disciples have tended to react against his sharp separation of faith and history in studies of the historical Jesus.

Existence and Faith, 1960; *Faith and Understanding,* 1969; *The History of the Synoptic Tradition,* 1963; *Jesus Christ and Mythology*, 1958; *Theology of the New Testament*, 1951, 1955.

Carnell, E. J. *(1919-1967).* American evangelical theologian and apologist. Born in Antigo, Wisconsin, Carnell was educated at Wheaton College, Westminster Theological Seminary, Harvard, and Boston University. From 1945 to 1948 he taught at Gordon College and Divinity School.

In 1948 he joined the faculty of Fuller Theological Seminary, and served as its president from 1954 to 1959.

Carnell was one of the chief leaders in the intellectual reawakening of American evangelicalism after World War II. In his apologetic methodology he attempted to combine elements of the evidential and presuppositional schools.

The Case for Orthodox Theology, 1959; *Introduction to Christian Apologetics*, 1948; *The Theology of Heinhold Niebuhr*, 1951.

Clark, Gordon H. (1902-   ). American evangelical philosopher and apologist. Born in Philadelphia, Clark studied at the University of Pennsylvania, Heidelberg, and the Sorbonne. He has taught at the University of Pennsylvania, Reformed Episcopal Seminary, Wheaton College, Butler University, and Covenant College.

Clark is known in American evangelical circles for his penetrating discussions of ancient and modern philosophy, his staunch defense of Calvinistic orthodoxy and biblical inerrancy, his emphasis on the cognitive aspect of divine revelation, and his epistemology which holds that all valid truths are either explicitly stated in the Scriptures or are logically deducible from Scripture.

A Christian View of Men and Things, 1952; *From Thales to Dewey,* 1956; *Religion, Reason, and Revelation*, 1961.

Cone, James (1938-   ). American liberation theologian. Cone, who is presently Charles A. Briggs Professor of Systematic Theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York, is perhaps the most prominent of American black theologians. According to Cone, who in his theological work draws significantly from Marxist insights for his understanding of the sociological dimensions of the Christian faith, the central message of the gospel is liberation from the various forms of human oppression, as understood within the context of the black experience in America.

Black Theology and Black Power, 1969; *A Black Theology*

of Liberation, 1970; *God of the Oppressed*, 1975; *The Spirituals and the Blues: An Interpretation*, 1972.

Geisler, Norman (1932-   ). American evangelical apologist and philosopher of religion. Born in Warren, Michigan, Geisler was educated at Wheaton College and Graduate School, Detroit Bible College, and Loyola University. He has taught at Detroit Bible College, Trinity College (Ill.), Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and is presently professor of theology at Dallas Theological Seminary.

Noted for his advocacy of the value of Thomistic philosophy for evangelical apologetics, Geisler has recently articulated a sophisticated defense of the validity of the cosmological argument for the existence of God.

Christian Apologetics, 1976; *Ethics: Alternatives and Issues,* 1971; *Philosophy of Religion*, 1974.

Gerstner, John *(1914-   ).* American Reformed church historian and theologian. Born in Tampa, Florida, Gerstner studied at Westminster Theological Seminary and Harvard. After serving as a pastor for five years, he joined the faculty at Pittsburgh-Xenia Seminary in 1950. Since the merger of Pittsburgh-Xenia and Western Seminary he has served on the faculty of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary as professor of church history.

Gerstner is noted in American evangelical circles for his staunch Calvinism, his defense of biblical inerrancy, his opposition to the ordination of women as teaching and ruling elders, and his advocacy of a rational-evidential apologetic in the tradition of Charles Hodge and Benjamin B. Warfield.

A Bible Inerrancy Primer, 1965; *A Predestination Primer*, 1960; *Reasons for Faith,* 1960; *The Theology of the Major Sects,* 1960.

Harnack, Adolf von (1851-1930). German church historian and theologian. Harnack, one of the outstanding

patristic scholars of his generation, taught at the universities of Leipzig, Giessen, Marburg, and Berlin. In his *History of Dogma* he examined the development of Christian doctrine from a theological standpoint which considered the use of Greek metaphysical categories in the early creeds to be a distortion of the primitive Christian faith. In his famous lectures at the University of Berlin during the 1899-1900 academic year, later published as *What Is Christianity?,* he gave a moralistic interpretation of the Christian faith, holding that the ideas of the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the Sermon on the Mount as an ethical ideal constitute the essence of the faith. As a proponent of exacting historical studies, and of a theological standpoint characterized by a moralistic and antimetaphysical bent, Harnack epitomized many of the crucial emphases of nineteenth-century liberal theology.

History of Dogma, 7 vols., 1894-1899; *What Is Christianity?,* 1901.

Henry, Carl F. H. (1913- J. American evangelical theologian. Born in New York City, Henry was educated at Wheaton College, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Boston University. He has taught at Northern Baptist Seminary, Fuller Seminary, Wheaton College, Gordon Divinity School, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Eastern Baptist Seminary, and has served as editor of Christianity Today.

A prolific writer standing within the Reformed tradition, Henry played a leading role in the renewal of evangelical scholarship after World War II. His writings have argued for the rational defensibility of the Christian faith and the importance of the cognitive element in divine revelation.

Christian Personal Ethics, 1957; *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4 vols. so far, 1976- ; *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*, 1948.

Hodge, Charles *(1797-1878).* American Presbyterian theologian. Born in Philadelphia, and educated at Princeton College and Seminary, Hodge was a leading theologian in America for much of the nineteenth century. He taught for more than fifty years at Princeton Seminary, and exerted great influence in the affairs of the Presbyterian church and American ecclesiastical life generally. He was noted as a vigorous defender of orthodox Calvinism and the verbal inspiration and infallibility of Scripture.

Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 1836; *Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church,* 1839-1840; *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols., 1871-1872.

Kung, Hans (1928-). German Roman Catholic theologian. Kung, professor of dogmatic and ecumenical theology at the University of Tubingen, has been known in Catholic and Protestant circles for his interest in church renewal, ecumenical relations, and restating the faith for contemporary man. More recently he has been disciplined by the magisterium for his attack on papal infallibility and his denial of the literal truth of the preexistence of Christ, the virgin birth, and the deity of Christ as understood in the Formula of Chalcedon. In these latter matters, Kung's positions seem reminiscent of the positions of nineteenth-century Protestant liberalism and the demythologizing program of Rudolf Bultmann.

The Church, 1967; *Infallible? An Inquiry*, 1971; *Justification: The Doctrine of Karl Barth and a Catholic Reflection*, 1964; *On Being a Christian,* 1976; *Structures of the Church*, 1964.

Machen, J. Gresham (1881-1937). American Presbyterian New Testament scholar and apologist. Born in Baltimore, Machen was educated at Johns Hopkins, Princeton University and Seminary, Marburg, and Gottingen. During the years 1906-1929 he taught New Testament at

Princeton Seminary, resigning in 1929 due to the liberal re-alignment of the seminary. He was a principal founder of Westminster Theological Seminary and what is now the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. From 1929 to 1937 he served as president and professor of New Testament at Westminster. Machen was one of the primary intellectual leaders of the conservatives during the modernist-funda-mentalist controversies of the 1920s and 1930s.

Christianity and Liberalism, 1923; *The Origin of Paul's Religion, 1927; The Virgin Birth of Christ*, 1930.

Moltmann, Jurgen (1926- J. German Protestant theo-logian. Since 1967 Moltmann has been professor of sys-tematic theology at the University of Tubingen. He became a prominent theological figure in 1964 with the publication of *Theology of Hope* which emphasized eschatology and the categories of hope and promise as central elements in Christian theology. More recently Moltmann's interests have focused on "political theology," stressing the Christian message as a message bringing release from dehumanizing socioeconomic and political forces. In the process, the biblical call for individual repentance and regeneration has been somewhat neglected.

The Church in the Power of the Spirit, 1977; *The Crucified God,* 1974; *Religion, Revolution, and the Future*, 1969; *Theology of Hope,* 1967.

Niebuhr, Reinhold *(1892-1971).* American Protestant theologian. After studying at Elmhurst College, Eden Theological Seminary, and Yale Divinity School, Niebuhr spent thirteen years in the pastorate in Detroit, and then accepted an invitation in 1928 to teach ethics at Union Theological Seminary in New York. Niebuhr shared many of the tenets of neoorthodoxy (e.g., in the areas of biblical authority and in a symbolic understanding of creation and fall), but emphasized more strongly than Barth the need for Christian involvement in social and political reform.

The doctrine of man was a central focus of Niebuhr's work. In his discussions of human nature, original sin, and the ambiguities of history and of the exercise of power, Niebuhr incisively criticized the more optimistic views of man which had characterized older Protestant liberalism and the social gospel.

Christianity and Power Politics, 1940; *Moral Man and Immoral Society,* 1932; *The Nature and Destiny of Man,* 2 vols., 1946.

Orr, James (1844-1913). Scottish evangelical theologian and apologist. Born in Glasgow, Orr was educated at the University of Glasgow, and taught at the United Presbyterian Theological College of Scotland and at the United Free Church College in Glasgow.

He was known on both sides of the Atlantic as a capable and articulate defender of evangelical positions.

The Christian View of God and *the World,* 1897; *God's Image in Man*, 1905; *The Progress of Dogma,* 1901; *The Virgin Birth of Christ,* 1915.

Packer, James I. (1926-). British evangelical theologian. Born in Gloucestershire, England, Packer was educated at Oxford, taking degrees in classics, philosophy, and theology. He has taught at Tyndale Hall and Trinity College, Bristol, and during the 1960s was warden of Latimer House, an evangelical study center at Oxford. He has been a visiting professor at Westminster, Fuller, Trinity, and Gordon-Conwell seminaries, and is presently on the faculty of Regent College in Vancouver.

Standing in the Reformed and evangelical stream of the Anglican tradition, Packer draws much inspiration for his theological work from the English Puritans. In his defense of the inspiration and infallibility of Scripture he has stressed Scripture's self-attesting authority and the witness of the Holy Spirit rather than evidential considerations.

Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God, 1961; *"Funda-mentalism" and the Word of God,* 1958; *Knowing God,* 1973.

Pannenberg, Wolfhart (1928-   ). German Protestant theologian. Since the 1960s Pannenberg has emerged as one of the most prominent European Protestant theologians. Educated at the universities of Basel, Heidelberg, and Gottingen, he has been professor of systematic theology at the University of Mainz and, since 1968, professor at the University of Munich.

In certain respects Pannenberg's theology can be seen as a criticism of the theologies of Barth and Bultmann. In Pannenberg's view, divine revelation is open to investigation through the rational and historical methods shared with other scholarly disciplines. The resurrection of Christ is, in principle, open to confirmation through historical research. Theology must be in continual dialogue with other disciplines in a common search for truth and reality.

Pannenberg's positions are a healthy corrective to the tendencies in neoorthodox and existentialist theologies to separate revelation from reason and history. At the same time, there seems to be an insufficient grasp of the bearing of the noetic effects of sin and the witness of the Holy Spirit in relationship to the understanding of divine revelation.

Jesus—God and Man, 1968; *Theology and the Kingdom of God,* 1969; *Theology and the Philosophy of Science*, 1976.

Pieper, Franz *(1852-1931).* American Lutheran theologian. Born in Germany, Pieper was educated at Northwestern (Watertown, Wis.) and Concordia Seminary at St. Louis. He taught at Concordia from 1878 to 1931, and served as its president from 1887 to 1931.

One of the best-known theologians of the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church, Pieper gave special emphasis in

his dogmatics to the doctrines of grace and inspiration.
   Christian Dogmatics, 4 vols., 1950-1957.

Rahner, Karl (1904-   ). German Roman Catholic theologian. Born in Breslau, Rahner entered the Society of Jesus in 1922, was ordained in 1932, and after a period of study with Martin Heidegger, completed his doctoral studies in 1936. Since 1948 he has taught dogmatic theology at the universities of Innsbruck, Munich, and Munster.

   Rahner, one of the most innovative and prolific of living Roman Catholic theologians, has written on a wide range of systematic, philosophical, and pastoral issues. His theological outlook, frequently characterized as "transcendental Thomism," attempts a synthesis of classical Thomism and the philosophical tradition of German idealism, variously represented by Immanuel Kant, Georg Hegel, and Martin Heidegger. Evangelical Protestants would question a fundamental characteristic of Rahner's theological method, that is, his starting point in a philosophical understanding of man rather than the divine revelation in Scripture. Rahner's conclusions are often controversial, for example, his view of the incarnation combining aspects of classical and process theology, his concept of the "anonymous Christian" and salvation through non-Christian religions, and his belief in the inescapability of theological pluralism within the church itself.

   Encyclopedia of Theology (ed.), 1975; *Foundations of Christian Faith*, 1978; *Hearers of the Word*, 1969; *Spirit in the World*, 1968; *Theological Investigations*, 16 vols., 1961-

Rauschenbusch, Walter (1861-1918). American Protestant theologian and social reformer. The son of a German-born Baptist minister, Rauschenbusch was educated in America and Germany, graduated from Rochester Theological Seminary, and served as pastor of a working-class

German Baptist church in New York City, where he became concerned to relate the Christian faith to the social needs of his day. In 1897 Rauschenbusch was called to teach at Rochester Theological Seminary.

As a leader in the social-gospel movement, Rauschenbusch found inspiration in the ideal of the kingdom of God stressed in the liberal tradition of Ritschl and Harnack. The kingdom of God was to be progressively realized in history through the reign of love in human affairs, exemplified in the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, the inaugurator of a new humanity. While Rauschenbusch discerned the reality of the corporate structures of evil, his theology tended to underestimate the radical nature of indwelling sin in the individual, and the need for personal regeneration. The social-gospel movement was eclipsed by the rise of neoorthodoxy in the 1930s, but more recently many of its concerns have found expression in various liberation theologies and in a renewed concern among American evangelicals for social demonstration of the gospel.

Christianity and the Social Crisis, 1907; *Christianizing the Social Order*, 1912; *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, 1917.

Schleiermacher, Friedrich (1768-1834). German liberal Protestant theologian. Born in Breslau, Schleiermacher spent most of his life in Berlin as a preacher and professor of theology. Often known as the "father of liberal theology," he argued that the essential character of the Christian religion is not to be found in doctrinal truths or in a system of ethics, but rather in a personal experience of divine realities, in religious feeling. Religion itself is a "feeling of absolute dependence," a God-consciousness most perfectly realized in the consciousness of Jesus of Nazareth. Christian doctrines are attempts to give verbal expression to the fundamental experiences of piety. In reacting to the rationalistic philosophy and orthodox

theology of his own day, Schleiermacher developed a theo-logical outlook which, while having the merit of stressing the importance of personal religious experience, devalued the importance of doctrinal truth and the role of Scripture as an objective norm for Christian faith and practice.

The Christian Faith, 1822; *On Religion; Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, 1799.

Thielicke, Helmut (1908-). German Lutheran theologian; professor emeritus of systematic theology, the University at Hamburg, Germany. Known in English-speaking circles as a gifted preacher and ethicist, Thielicke's theological position has recently been comprehensively set forth in his systematic theology, The Evangelical Faith. Working from a standpoint influenced both by the Lutheran and neoorthodox traditions, Thielicke has attempted to delineate a theology which is neither merely a "conservative" repetition of the Christian tradition nor a "modern" transmutation of its content into categories acceptable to the "modern mind."

Christ and the Meaning of Life, 1962; *Encounter with Spurgeon*, 1963; *The Evangelical Faith*, 1974- ; *Theological Ethics*, 1966.

Tillich, Paul (1886-1965). German Protestant theologian. Tillich, the son of a German Lutheran pastor, was educated at the universities of Berlin, Breslau, and Halle, and taught theology and philosophy at Berlin, Marburg, Dresden, Leipzig, and Frankfurt. He emigrated to America in 1933 and taught at Union Theological Seminary in New York, Harvard, and the University of Chicago.

Tillich's philosophical theology, heavily influenced by existentialism and German idealism, employs a "method of correlation" in which questions from the human situation are related to answers from divine revelation. Jesus Christ is understood as the bearer of the "New Being," who overcomes man's estrangement, anxiety, and guilt.

Tillich offers highly symbolic interpretations of Christian doctrines such as creation, fall, and resurrection, and makes little direct use of Scripture in developing his theological system. He was one of the most influential theologians in America during the 1950s and 1960s.

The Courage to Be, 1952; *Dynamics of Faith*, 1957; *Systematic Theology*, 1951-1963; *Theology of Culture*, 1959.

Van Til, Cornelius (1895-). American Reformed apologist. Born in the Netherlands, Van Til came to the United States with his family in 1905. He was educated at Calvin College, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Princeton University. After one year (1928-1929) of teaching at Princeton Seminary, he joined the newly-formed faculty of Westminster Theological Seminary, where he taught apologetics for more than forty years.

Known as a vigorous defender of a presuppositional approach in apologetics, Van Til insists that the infallible truth of Scripture and the existence of the Triune God are the necessary presuppositions for the knowledge of any truth whatsoever.

A Christian Theory of Knowledge, 1969; *Common Grace,* 1947; *The Defense of the Faith,* 1963; *The New Modernism*, 1946.

Warfield, Benjamin B. (1851-1921). American Presbyterian theologian. Born near Lexington, Kentucky, Warfield was educated at Princeton University and Seminary and at the University of Leipzig. From 1878 to 1887 he taught at Western Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh, and then accepted a call to teach didactic and polemical theology at Princeton Theological Seminary, where he succeeded A. A. Hodge, the son of Charles Hodge,

Warfield was perhaps the most learned conservative scholar of his day, being proficient in theology, patristics, and New Testament exegesis. He was committed to the Calvinism of the Westminster Confession of Faith and the

inerrancy of Scripture. His writings continue to be influential in American conservative circles today.

Counterfeit Miracles, 1918; *Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, 1948; *The Lord of Glory,* 1907; *The Plan of Salvation*, 1915.

Whitehead, Alfred North *(1861-1947).* Anglo-American mathematician and philosopher. Whitehead, who began his career as a mathematician in England, moved to the United States and taught philosophy for thirteen years at Harvard. He developed a process metaphysics in which change and development are as fundamental to the nature of reality as permanence. In Whitehead's metaphysics God's nature is "bi-polar," having both a "primordial" (or eternal) aspect and a "consequent" aspect which is affected by the change and temporality of the world. Whitehead's views have been a major source for contemporary process theologians such as John B. Cobb, Jr., Charles Hartshorne, Schubert Ogden, and Norman Pittenger.

Adventure of Ideas, 1933; *Process and Reality*, 1929; *Science and the Modern World*, 1925.

4

Truth: Philosophical and Theological Issues

Philosophical Issues

Pragmatic *Theory of Truth*

Pragmatism, one of the most influential philosophies in America during the first quarter of the twentieth century, gave rise to a distinctive concept of the nature of truth. Most often associated with the work of Charles S. Peirce (1839-1914), William James (1842-1910), and John Dewey (1859-1952), pragmatism stressed the practical consequences of an idea as a measure of its truth. In the words of William James, truth is that which "proves to be good in the way of belief'; it is the "expedient in the way of our thinking." James could even speak of the truth of ideas as their "cash value." According to John Dewey, the hypothesis that works is the true one. Truth is that which is instrumental to an active reorganization of a given environment, or which helps to remove some specific trouble or perplexity.

A pragmatic theory of truth thus conceived is paralleled by the earlier conception of Karl Marx (1818-1883), in which truth is not so much a theory about reality, as a power or program for altering reality. The truth of an idea is manifested in praxis, in its effectiveness in altering man's socioeconomic environment.

Such pragmatic theories of truth have had a continuing appeal to the practically-oriented American temperament, and have the advantage of keeping theoretical reflection related to practical concerns. Nevertheless, pragmatic theories all share a basic limitation, namely, that any criterion of "expediency" or "usefulness" cannot in itself give an adequate answer to the question, "Useful in relation to what ultimate end?" Answering the question of the ultimate end of human existence requires a metaphysical or revelational starting point, rather than a merely pragmatic one.

Coherence Theory of Truth

The coherence theory of truth is characteristic of the rationalist metaphysical systems of Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716), Benedict Spinoza (1632-1677), Georg Hegel (1770-1831), and F. H. Bradley (1846-1924). More recently, this theory has been advocated by the logical positivists Otto Neurath (1882-1945) and Carl Hempel (1905-), who were greatly influenced by the models of pure mathematics and theoretical physics. According to the coherence theory, (a statement is true if it coheres with a system of statements already known to be true, or with a system of statements deduced from self-evident axioms) Proponents of this theory hold that particular facts or statements have meaning only when seen as parts of an organic and self-consistent whole. The coherence theory of truth has the merit of stressing the essential unity and relatedness of all truth, but it also has a number of significant weaknesses.

For a given set of facts, it is possible to propose any number of coherent explanations, each of which might appear to be internally consistent. The criterion of coherence alone is not sufficient for choosing among the competing explanations. The test of coherence with a system of statements already known or believed to be true may also prove inadequate when dealing with dramatic new facts or discoveries which are not easily assimilated within standard frames of reference, for example, the discovery of radioactivity and its impact on classical physics. Revolutionary discoveries, rather than being accredited within the older frames of reference, often become the basis for constructing new and more comprehensive ones.

Features of the coherence theory of truth may be found in the apologetic systems of the twentieth-century Reformed theologians Gordon H. Clark (1902-) and Cornelius Van Til (1895-). According to Clark, the one fully coherent system of truth is based on the axiom, "The Bible is the Word of God." The predicate "true" can be applied only to the statements contained in the Bible, or to statements which can be logically deduced from the Bible. This position has the advantage of assigning to Scripture an absolute epistemological priority in Christian theology and apologetics, but it has the grave defect of leaving no place for sense experience in the knowing process. It is difficult to see how true statements such as "giraffes are taller than zebras" or "Peking is the capital of China" are deducible from statements found in Scripture.

According to Van Til, the actual existence of the Triune God and the infallible authority of the Bible are the necessary presuppositions of the intelligibility of any fact in the world. Particular facts are known to be true only as part of a complete system, and, according to Van Til, the only system which provides coherence is the one based on these basic Christian presuppositions of the existence of the Triune God and the infallible authority of Scripture.

Strictly speaking, then, the unbeliever has no grounds for knowing that any of his beliefs are true. While this view has the merit of stressing the ultimate relatedness of all truth to the basic premises of biblical revelation, it does not appear to do adequate justice to the fact that those who hold radically different systems, for example, Muslims, Christian Scientists, Marxists, and Skinnerians, all believe that their systems give coherent and intelligible interpretations of human experience and reality as a whole. For the Christian, of course, the existence of the Triune God and the infallible authority of Scripture are the necessary starting points for a comprehensive system of truth, but this is seen to be the case only after conversion, and through the eyes of faith.

Correspondence Theory of Truth

From ancient times to the present, some form of the correspondence theory has tended to be the dominant model for understanding the nature of truth. Aquinas, drawing on an earlier Neoplatonic tradition, defined truth as "the adequation of things and the intellect." In this century Bertrand Russell has argued that "truth consists in some form of correspondence between belief and fact." If a given statement corresponds to the actual state of affairs in the world, that statement is said to be true. Such a formulation would appear to be in keeping with our usual common-sense understandings of the nature of truth.

While evangelical Christians are in general agreement that the truth of Christianity does consist in its correspondence to the structures of objective reality, there is not unanimity on the exact nature of that correspondence, or on the means by which that correspondence is to be verified. Contemporary evangelical apologists such as John Warwick Montgomery and Clark Pinnock stress the

role of historical evidences in verifying the truth claims of Christianity. Such an "evidential" approach clearly has strong biblical support (e.g., John 5:36; 10:25; I Cor. 15:17). At the same time, arguments based on historical evidence, apart from the inner witness of the Holy Spirit, at best lead to a high degree of probability, not to the certainty of faith. Proponents of Van Til's apologetic approach also argue that a historical "fact" can be properly understood only as part of a larger framework of meaning provided by the biblical view of reality. The empty tomb can be seen either as an inexplicable quirk of nature, or as evidence for the deity of Christ, depending on one's total frame of reference. Spiritually significant "facts" can be perceived only by those who are willing to submit to their claims upon personal life (John 7:17). In order to see the facts of the kingdom of God, to recognize them for what they are, one must be born again (John 3:3), and become a recipient of the Holy Spirit, who heals our blindness to the truths of the Christian faith (cf. I Cor. 2:14).

The pragmatic, coherence, and correspondence theories of truth complement one another in the Christian's attempts to give an account of the truth value of faith. The believer finds the claims of Christ verified in personal experience, in the unfolding of a comprehensive and coherent view of reality, and in the correspondence of the biblical data to the facts of history. In the last analysis, however, the believer's certitude rests on the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit to the Word of God, since certain challenges to faith—for example, the presence of radical evil in the world—cannot be totally overcome by philosophical appeals to common sense and evidences. The believer looks forward to an ultimate eschatological verification of the faith, when, at the return of Christ, all doubts will be banished, and the truth of the Christian faith will be a massive and undeniable reality to unbeliever and believer alike.

Theological Issues

Revelation: "Personal" or "Propositional"?

In the twentieth century there has been a continuing debate about the nature of divine revelation and truth in theology. Is divine revelation primarily "personal" or "propositional" in nature? Those influenced by neoorthodox theologians such as William Temple (1881-1944), John Baillie (1886-1960), and Emil Brunner (1889-1966) have tended to argue that divine revelation is primarily a personal encounter with God in Christ, rather than the transmission of information about God. This point of view, representing in part a reaction against the older Roman Catholic view of faith as intellectual assent to propositions taught by the church, and the stress in seventeenth-century Protestant orthodoxy on precise doctrinal formulation, reflects the philosophical influence of existentialist thinkers such as Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) and Martin Buber (1878-1965). In response to such emphases, theological conservatives have tended to stress the propositional or cognitive dimensions of divine revelation. As is often the case in theological controversies, both positions witness to important dimensions of the truth. The neo-orthodox position rightfully focused attention on the dynamic and personal characteristics of God's revelation to man. The conservative emphasis on the cognitive dimension of the revelatory event is an essential biblical corrective, however, since without a divine interpretation of the revelatory event, one is left with a contentless experience or a barren mysticism. A proper view of Christian truth distinguishes the personal and propositional elements, but does not separate them.

"Orthodoxy" or "Orthopraxis"?

In recent years a number of Latin American liberation

theologians have argued that truth consists more in right action (*orthopraxis*) than in right belief (*orthodoxy*). According to the Brazilian theologian Rubem Alves (1933-), "Truth is the name given by the historical community to those actions which were, are and will be effective for the liberation of man." This understanding of truth reflects the Marxist conception in which ideas are understood primarily as instruments for social change, rather than as disinterested reflections on the structures of reality. Liberation theologians quote with approval the famous dictum of Marx: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is, to change it."

Such a view of truth can function as a needed corrective to rarefied forms of thinking which ignore the concrete needs of existing human beings and the problems arising from unjust social structures. The biblical revelation does indeed point to the integral relation existing between the genuine knowledge of God and obedience to God, an obedience which implies concern for the poor and oppressed. There is a real danger, however, that such views will substitute secular models of human liberation for the biblical one. The truth of God does indeed liberate human beings oppressed by sin and its consequences, but not necessarily with either the means or the immediacy that human wisdom might expect.

Truth: Absolute *or Culturally* Relative?

During the modern era a number of philosophical and cultural currents have combined to call into question for many the very idea of absolute and unchanging truth, whether in the Bible or elsewhere. Many studies in cross-cultural anthropology and comparative religions tended to stress the diversity of belief systems held by the various cultural groups under consideration. The philosophy of Karl Marx and the discipline known as the sociology of

knowledge stress the influence of the social environment on both the form and content of all human thinking, including religious thought. The historical-critical method of studying the Scriptures, especially as it was practiced during the nineteenth century, at times so emphasized the details of the original historical context of the biblical text that the abiding religious content was displaced or obscured. These factors all tended to erode belief in abiding and eternal truths, and helped to foster the mood of relativism which is so characteristic of contemporary thought.

It is the case, of course, that God reveals truth through the specific languages, cultures, and historical contexts of the biblical writers. Responsible biblical interpretation demands that the reader of Scripture give the most careful attention to the original setting of the writings in order to discern the intentions and purposes of the sacred writers. Only through such foundational study can the significance of the text for the contemporary situation be appropriated. While in practice it may at times be difficult to neatly distinguish abiding principles and the specific cultural forms in which they are applied by the biblical writers, in principle this can and must be done. The instruction, for example, that women should not pray in church without a veil (I Cor. 11:5) should be seen as a culturally specific way of applying the more universal principle of I Corinthians 14:40, that in the church all things should be done decently and in order.

The universal and abiding character of biblical truth is rooted in the basic continuities of human nature, in God's unchanging character, and in God's sovereign control of all the processes of history and culture. The Bible speaks to man as he has always existed in the sight of God, as one who is made in the divine image, has fallen into sin, and is subject to the universal conditions of anxiety, guilt, fear, and loneliness. The God of Scripture is not the god of one culture or ethnic group, but the Creator of heaven and

earth, the author of the laws of nature, the architect of the cosmic environment in which all men live. His character is eternal and unchanging. The sovereign God who speaks in Scripture is not the captive of the cultural forms which are the channels of divine revelation. The Word of God in its sovereignty and freedom efficaciously accomplishes the divine purpose (Isa. 55:11) through the instrumentality of human culture. "The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever" (Isa. 40:8, RSV).

5

Bibliography:
Introduction to Theology

The literature of theology is enormous. The following bibliography has been prepared for a first course in theology with the beginning student especially in view. Works of particular value to the student have been indicated with an asterisk. In the case of translated works, the date of publication listed refers to more generally available reprints.

In preparing this work I have received helpful assistance from the bibliographic work of John Bollier, Roger Nicole, and Clark Pinnock, whose efforts are gratefully acknowledged.

Scripture

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Nineteenth-century English Methodist; contains helpful discussions of the history of doctrine.

Prenter, Regin. *Creation and Redemption*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967. Danish Lutheran. Neoorthodox in his view of revelation; stresses integral connection of creation and redemption.

Rahner, Karl. *Foundations of Christian Faith.* New York: Seabury, 1978. Grounds theology within the horizon of human experience; draws philosophical resources from existentialism and phenomenology.

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A Theology. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974.

Not a formal systematic theology, but deals with incarnation, salvation, and ecclesiology from a feminist perspective. Russell teaches at Yale Divinity School.

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American Presbyterian; Reformed. Comprehensive and still valuable. Shedd taught for many years at Union Theological Seminary of New York.

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evidence of significant erosion on inerrancy in various evangelical denominations and schools.

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Briggs, Charles A, *The Bible, the Church and the Reason.* New York: Scribner, 1892.
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    1960. Classic discussion of the knowledge of God.

*Charnock, Stephen. *The Existence and Attributes of God.*
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ST512 EXPANDED LECTURE SYLLABUS

FOR

ST512 THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE REVELATION OF GOD

RAY S. ANDERSON

FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
ST512 THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE REVELATION OF GOD

An Ancient Prayer

From cowardice that shrinks from new truth,
    from laziness that is content with half-truth,
    from arrogance that thinks it knows all truth,
O God of Truth, deliver us.
<div align="right">Author Unknown</div>

I. Prolegomena to Theological Study

1. The Possibility and Necessity of Theology

A. The Logos of Theos

B. Theology as a human word (logos) of response to the divine Word (Logos).

> The word "Theology" includes the concept of *Logos.* Theology is a *logia*, logic, or language bound to the *theos,* which both makes it possible and also determines it. The inescapable meaning of logos is "word," . . . The Word is not the necessary determination of the place of theology, but it is undoubtedly the first. Theology itself is a word, a human response; yet what makes it theology is not its own word or response but the Word it hears and to which it **responds.** Theology stands and falls with the Word of God, for the Word of God precedes all theological words by creating, arousing, and challenging them. Should theology wish to be more or less or anything other than action in response to that Word, its thinking and speaking would be empty, meaningless, and futile. Barth: *Evangelical Theology*, pp. 16-17

Theological thinking, therefore must be "analogical" rather than simply "logical".

This is contrary to the position held by Carl Henry, who says that human thought about God must be "univocal" and not "analogical" thought. "The infinite and the finite," says Henry, "are contained in one and the same logicality."

> "Does the truth of God, which meets us through the Logos this side of man's conjectural speculations about invisible reality, mesh us in an activity of rationality that comprehends the Infinite and the finite in one and the same logicality?. . . Only univocal knowledge is, therefore, genuine and authentic knowledge. . . Only a univocal element in analogical affirmation can save it from equivocation. Unless we have some literal truth about God, no similarity between man and God can in fact be predicated; . . . The alternative to univocal knowledge of God is equivocation and skepticism. (Carl Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority*, Vol. III, pp. 221-222, 364).

Barth says, however:

> Theology is **modest** because its entire logic can only be a human *ana-logy* to that Word; analogical thought and speech do not claim to be, to say, to contain, or to control the original word. But it gives a reply to it by its attempt to co-respond with it; it seeks expressions that resemble the ratio and relations of the Word of God in a proportionate and, as far as feasible, approximate and appropriate way. *Evangelical Theology*, pp. 16-17.

There is a correspondence, but not an exact identity between theological words and the Word of God. The possibility of Theology rests upon this correspondence, which must be established from God's side.

T.F. Torrance says in this regard:

> Theological statements are to be understood as correlated also with their human subjects, as well as with their given object, not only because these subjects formulate them but because their Object, the divine Subject, posits them as subjects by addressing them personally and claiming from them personal responses. Thus although theological statements take their rise from a centre in God and not in ourselves, the very nature of the divine Object makes it impossible for us to abstract them from the personal and community setting in which they take place without damaging their mode of reference and indeed without falsifying them. *God and Rationality,* Oxford, 1971, p. 189

C. There is no place of neutrality, or "objectivity" in theological study.

   E.G. Moses at the burning bush

   The approach to the study of God is an approach to God!

D. The context of theological study:

Worship and prayer:

> Knowledge of God takes place not only within the rational structures, but also within the personal and social structures of human life, where the Spirit is at work as **personalising Spirit.** As the living presence of God who confronts us with His personal Being, addresses us in His Word, opens us out toward Himself, and calls forth from us the response of faith and love, He rehabilitates the **human subject**, sustaining him in his personal relations with God and with his fellow creatures. T.F. Torrance: *God and Rationality,* p. 188

T. F. Torrance tells the story of his friend who wished to study under a famous pianist, but was told that he was too old, his fingers already had lost the flexibility needed. He put himself through painful exercises, breaking down the cartilage structure--then went back and was accepted! So, says Torrance, must theological students submit their mind to "rehabilitation". The possibility of theology is based on Anselm's famous statement: *Fides quarens intellectum*--faith seeking understanding. `I believe, help my unbelief' Mark 9:24

"Every idea of Him we form, He must in mercy shatter." C. S. Lewis. Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer, NY: Harcourt, Brace, & World, p. 187

2. The Task of Theology

A. To Hold the Community of Faith Accountable to the Word of God

> It is fitting that there should be a special theological activity, just as there are special emphases in other tasks of the community. The special theological science, research, or doctrine concentrates on the testing of the whole communal enterprise in the light of the question of truth. It functions to a certain extent vicariously and even professionally. Moreover, it is related to the community and its faith in roughly the same manner as jurisprudence is related to the state and its law. The inquiry and doctrine of theology, therefore, are not an end in themselves but, rather functions of the community and especially of its *ministerium Verbi Divini.* Theology is committed directly to the community and especially to those members who are responsible for preaching, teaching and counseling. The task of theology has to fulfill is continually to stimulate and lead them to face squarely the question of the proper relation of their human speech to the Word of God, which is the origin, object and content of this speech. Theology must give them practice in the right relation to the quest for truth, demonstrating and exemplifying to them the understanding, thought, and discourse proper to it. Barth: *Evangelical Theology*, p. 41.

1) Exegetical theology

   cf. John 1:l7 "he has 'exegeted (made known)' him"

   Its source is Scripture, it must begin by determining what the text says: there is an exegetical theology which never attempts to go beyond this;

2) Biblical theology

   Determining what theological structures are either implicit or explicit in Scripture.
      e.g. Paul's theology of the church, or spiritual gifts

3) Systematic, or dogmatic theology

   Determining what the church must believe, teach, and practice in the concrete situation of its own place in the world and with responsibility to the Word of God as given.

     cf. here O. Weber, Vol. I, pp. 21, 51-52

   The Pharisees and Jesus

      Scripture says

      Moses taught

      but I say unto you
              "sabbath made for humans, . . . "

Theology is a joyful and happy task

Barth suggests that the task of theology should be accompanied by a continued sense of "astonishment."

> If anyone should **not** find himself astonished and filled with wonder when he becomes involved in one way or another with theology, he would be well advised to consider once more, from a certain remoteness and without prejudice, what is involved in this undertaking. The same holds true for anyone who should have accomplished the feat of **no longer** being astonished, instead of becoming continually **more** astonished all the time that he concerns himself with this subject. When he reconsiders the subject, however, such a man might find that astonishment wells up within him anew, or perhaps even for the first time. And this time such wonder might not desert him. That astonishment should remain or become wholly foreign to him is scarcely conceivable. But should that happen, both he and theology would fare better if he would devote his time to some other occupation. . . . This astonishment is indispensable if theology is to exist and be perpetually renewed as a modest, free, critical, and happy science. If such astonishment is lacking, the whole enterprise of even the best theologian would canker at the roots. On the other hand, as long as even a poor theologian is capable of astonishment, he is not lost to the fulfillment of his task. *Evangelical Theology*, pp. 63-64.

B. To Give Account of What Faith Means

In this sense, theology is an apologetical task.

1 Peter 3:15 "be ready always to give an answer (apologia) to any one who asks you a reason for the hope that is within you."

Suggestions on theological methodology:

1) The nature of the object to be known determines the method of knowing

cf. T.F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconstruction*, pp. 32-32; 39; 53; 61.

cf. O. Weber, Vol. I. pp 47ff
there is an "inner logic" which must be penetrated and thought in terms of our own rationality.

cf. John 8:43
`Why do you not understand my speech (lalia)? It is because you cannot hear my word (logos).'

The speech (lalia) is ambiguous, and must be understood in terms of the logos which utters it.

It is the work of Logos to explain lalia, which it adopts, and it is the work of Lalia to reveal Logos, which it serves.

cf. Torrance, *Theology in Reconstruction*, p. 141

Because God reveals himself as personal and related being, he must be known according to this "inner relationship" of his being. Thus, as Barth clearly demonstrates, knowledge of God must be trinitarian in its structure.

Medieval theology says Torrance (*God and Rationality*, pp. 33f), followed this sequence:

> quid sit: what is it, the question of abstraction, essence
> an sit: whether it is, the question of possibility, does it exist
> quale sit: of what is it, the question of nature, what kind, etc.

Calvin, says Torrance, turned this sequence upside down and began with the question of the true nature of the revelation of God as given in Christ. Then he turned to `an sit', the testing question, does what you know rest on reality. Thus, the question of what is it? then becomes a "meta question" and usually falls away as unimportant. That is, the question of abstract nature does not become the determinative question in the process of knowing God, for he reveals himself concretely in accordance with his actual being and nature.

This permitted Bacon, says Torrance, to develop the concept of modern science with its approach to the discovery of the interior nature of things as they are. cf. *Theology in Reconstruction*, p. 66.

Carl F. H. Henry, on the other hand, criticizes Torrance for introducing pure subjectivity into the concept of truth by insisting on truth as grounded in personal self revelation rather than in abstract, metaphysical statements.

 "Does the God of the Bible actually reveal himself to man in dialogical revelation as Torrance expounds it? Or does the truth of God, which meets us through the Logos this sides of man's conjectural speculations about invisible reality, mesh in an activity of rationality that comprehends the Infinite and finite in one and the same logicality?" (God, Revelation and Authority, Vol. 3, pp.363-4)

Henry claims that the rational human mind can grasp the "mind of God [Logos]" immediately and directly. Thus, "truth," for Henry must be an abstract, objective concept of the human mind before it can be a personal, ontological reality. For this reason, Henry also rejects any analogical reference to divine truth.

 "The logical difficulty with the theory of analogical prediction lies in its futile attempt to explore a middle road between univocity and equivocacy; only univocal knowledge is, therefore, genuine and authentic knowledge." (ibid, p. 364)

Henry does not deny that we must have a personal, saving encounter with Jesus Christ in order to experience the truth of the gospel. However, he insists that "truth statements" about God must precede and be the basis for "faith statements"

concerning our relation to God. At another point Henry suggests that the statements of Jesus which begin, "I am the way, the truth and the life," must be transposed into third person statements, "He is the way, the truth and the life." Only when biblical statements are turned into rational propositions, says Henry, can they be received as "truth."

How different this view of truth is from the Hebrew view of reality is illustrated by the Rabbinical stories.

"The Rabbinical Stories: A Primer on Theological Method," by Belden C. Lane,
The Christian Century, Dec. 16, 1981

The God of the Jews is never encountered in the abstract (as a logical necessity or mechanical proof), but always in the specific, historical and relational. Nowhere is this more apparent than in God's disclosure of his name as Yahweh. The divine being, says Gerhard von Rad, is presented "not in the sense of absolute, but of relative and efficacious being--I will be there (for you)." That is the meaning of Yahweh. God is always known by his acts, by his involvement with his people, by name.

But again, the truth can best be framed in metaphor. Time before time, when the world was young, two brothers shared a field and a mill, each night dividing the grain they had ground together during the day. One brother lived alone; the other had a wife and a large family. Now the single brother thought to himself one day, "it isn't really fair that we divide the grain evenly. I have only myself to care for, but my brother has children to feed." So each night he secretly took some of his grain to his brother's granary to see that he was never without. But the married brother said to himself one day, "It isn't really fair that we divide the grain evenly, because I have children to provide for me in my old age, but my brother has no one. What will he do when he's old." So every night he secretly took some of *his* grain to his brother's granary. As a result, both of them always found their supply of grain mysteriously replenished each morning.

Then one night they met each other halfway between their two houses, suddenly realized what had been happening, and embraced each other in love. The legend is that God witnessed their meeting and proclaimed, "This is a holy place--a place of love--and here it is that my temple shall be built." And so it was. The First Temple is said to have been constructed on that very site. The holy place, where God is made known to his people, is the place where human beings discover each other in love. The absolute is known in the personal.

2) The tension between the known and the unknown

cf. Matt. 13:51   things old and new

All discovery and learning carries with it prior experience, and already established definition and assertions about reality, whether true or false;

Theological thinking proceeds on the basis of axiomatic inquiry. Axioms are formulated out of experience and used to penetrate deeper into the inner logic of that which is to be known

There is no logical bridge from the known to the unknown; there is a "backwards correlation" from the new to the old;

E.g. Moses: Exodus 3: What is your name?

I am that I am, or, I will be for you as I am

but also: I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

3) There is reflection upon experience of God as part of the act of knowing God:

There is no independent criterion of truth or reality by which verification of God's being and reality can be proven;

God is evidence of God!

T.F. Torrance: "We may apprehend God, but never comprehend him"

The difference between certainty and assurance: that which is "certain" may not necessarily be true; absolute certainty is the enemy of love!

What is known with "full assurance" cannot be established objectively on the basis of certainty

e.g. husband and wife relationship

4) There is an act of communication involved in experiencing and knowing God

This introduces the problem of theological language, or the language of faith;

There is a built in "obsolescence" to our thought forms and language which needs to be overcome;

E.g. this is the problem Bultmann seeks to overcome through his program of "demythologization," or existential interpretation. Using the constructs of M. Heidegger, Bultmann seeks to recast biblical statements in such a way that they convey the existential content rather than the logical or semantic function of words and language. In this way, the being of the divine Word becomes detached from its form so that a "mythical" gap is created. The reality of the Word of God thus falls back into the experiencing human subject.

T. F. Torrance attacks this as the "culture split" between explanation (*erklären*) and understanding (*verstehen*). It is the separation of language from being;
cf. *God and Rationality*, p. 32, 104; *Theology in Reconstruction*, p. 18

Theo-logic: not merely concern for "facts" and causal connections, but with a rationality which inheres in the objective reality itself.

The relation of form to being is one of correlation, not mathematical or mechanical determinism:

Cannot state in statements the relation of statements to reality (Torrance)

Cannot "picture" the relation between a picture and the reality which it signifies. An "objectifying" way of knowing destroys the very relation itself by separating being from form.

E.g. Heidegger: in early Greek thought (prior to Plato), there was a succession of logos to being, that truth (*aletheia*) was the "uncovering" or disclosing of logos through being. Following Plato, says Heidegger, logos became abstracted from being and became mere *nomos*, law or custom, and served as a standard of correctness.(*An Introduction to Metaphysics*; cf. also my essay: `Theology as Rationality' in *Christian Scholar's Review*. IV/2, 1974, 132-133).

5) God communicates his being through his Logos

The problem of theological language is solved when the form and being of divine Logos is bracketed in God's event of revelation, finalized in Jesus Christ.

Thus, biblical statements are anchored in an objective reality (revelation) with an inner logic which enables us to apprehend the very being of God through his Word without comprehending this being within our own structure of thought (logos) and language.

T.F. Torrance puts it this way:

> We are unable even to determine the formal-syntactic coherence of biblical statements or passages in any consistent way unless we introduce into the equation at least some **direct reference** to objective realities and intelligibilities beyond the statements themselves, for it is finally through that metasyntactic reference that syntactic systems may be coherently organized. In other words, . . . no syntactics contains its own semantics. When interpretation is prepared to give a pivotal place in the determination of a consistent and coherent connection in biblical statements to their objective semantic reference, many of the difficulties and perplexities that crop upon the linguistic level disappear, . . . Hence we must take great care to preserve the open texture of the inner rational sequence of biblical statements, in virtue of which the intrinsic intelligibility of its objective pole may shine through to us, if we are really to understand and express that inner rational sequence in a consistent way. *(Reality and Evangelical Theology*. Westminster, 1982, pp. 116-117)

From the field of literature, Nathan A. Scott, Jr. says somewhat the same thing (former professor of religious studies and professor of English at the University of Virginia):

> I now marvel at how rapidly over the past decade that faith, too, has become a casualty of the times. For, over these past ten years, as the strange doctrines of structuralist ideology have drifted across the Atlantic from Paris into the forums of American criticism, the

gifted young and many of the gifted middle-aged have learned to specialize in one or another mode of what is called "deconstruction." The new orthodoxy lays it down that the language of literary texts only doubles back on itself, and thence on to the language of other texts to which it is related by the logic of i*ntertextualite*, and thence on to that general **system** of signification (language) of which the given text is merely an epiphenomenon. So, however much the "poem" may seem to promise mediation of the "world," this pledge needs at last to be adjudged something spurious, mired as the poem is in a universe of absolute linguisticality. In short, the figurative impulse leads nowhere beyond sheer figuration itself, and literary art is therefore quite "blind" with respect to the world "out there": it has no "meaning": it exhibits only a play of tropes whose mercuriality "forbids. . [the text] to be read as an "organic unity" organized around some version of the *logos.. . .* It is such notions as these that now make up the "folk mythology" of the more advanced clerks of literary criticism and theory. (*The Christian Century*, October 15, 1980).

In the depiction of the reality of the being of God as mediated through Logos, theological statements must be seen as both:

i) existence statements
   refer to reality beyond themselves, so that the basic pattern (inner logic) comes to us clearly

ii) and coherence statements
   the relation between existence statements, so that the same coherence is produced as exists within objective reality itself

cf. T.F. Torrance, *Theological in Reconstruction*, pp.52ff

In this sense, the Old Testament has "existence" statements which point toward the inner logic (incarnation) which, when given its primary emphasis, gives coherence to its "story" of divine revelation through the acts of God in history. (cf. T. F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Resurrection*, pp. ix,x)

The correlation between existence and coherence statements is not "one-for-one", but through the "event" itself as represented in the "story."

The correlation between Jesus before his death and after his resurrection is not possible at every point; but is correlated through the significant events which point beyond themselves to the reality of the truth: the same Jesus is alive.

The statement: "Jesus is Lord" only has meaning when related to the existence statement: "Jesus rose from the dead--he is alive!"

Statement by Dorothy Sayers: (*Christianity Today*, Vol. XXV, No. 21, December 11, 1981)

A Scientist once asked author Dorothy Sayers to write a letter to his scientific organization, setting forth her reasons for believing in the Christian faith. The letter was not at all what the

scientist had expected. It said: "Why do you want a letter from me? Why don't you take the trouble to find out for yourselves what Christianity is? You take time to learn technical terms about electricity. Why don't you do as much for theology? Why do you never read the great writings on the subject, but take your information from the secular `experts' who have picked it up as accurately as you? Why don't you learn the facts in this field as honestly as in your own field? Why do you accept mildewed old heresies as the language of the church, when any handbook of church history will tell you were these came from?

Why do you balk at the doctrine of the Trinity--God the Three in One--yet meekly acquiesce when Einstein tells you $E = MC^2$? What makes you suppose that the expression `God ordains' is narrow and bigoted, while your own expression `Science demands' is taken as an objective statement of fact? You would be ashamed to know as little about internal combustion as you know about Christian beliefs.

I admit you can practice Christianity without knowing much theology, just as you can drive a car without knowing much about internal combustion. But when something breaks down in the car, you go humbly to the man who understands the works; whereas, if something goes wrong with religion, you merely throw the works away and tell the theologian he is a liar.

Why do you want a letter from me telling you about God? You will never bother to check on it or find out whether I'm giving you personal opinions or Christian doctrines. Don't bother with me. Go away and do some work and let me get on with mine.

II. The Revelation of God

1. The Act of God as Hermeneutical Horizon for the being of God

A. Introduction: If there is a logical gap for the scientist in moving from the known to the unknown, the theological task of apprehending God is qualitatively different. The scientist still moves within the realm of the "conceivable."

God is both inconceivable and incomprehensible in his nature;

Job 11:7 "Can you find out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limit of the Almighty? It is higher than heaven-what can you do? Deeper than Sheol--what can you know?"

Psalm 18:11 "He made darkness his covering around him, his canopy thick clouds dark with water."

Psalm 139:5-6 "Thou dost beset me behind and before, and layest thy hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it."

Ecc. 3:11 ". . . he has put eternity into man's mind, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end."

Isa. 40:12-28; 40:28 "Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary, his understanding is unsearchable."

1 Cor. 2:9 "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him [Isa. 64:4; 65:17] God has revealed to us through the Spirit.

2:16 "For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him. . . but we have the mind of Christ."

Matt. 11:27 "All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

So God makes himself conceivable (election and accommodation) and yet he remains incomprehensible:

Ro. 11:33 "O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!"

T.F. Torrance likes to say: "We can apprehend God, but not comprehend him.

B. In revelation, God acts so as to reveal himself through specific concrete and historical events.

The hermeneutical horizon: the acts of God constitute this horizon, on which the being of God confronts us within the world of time and space.

cf. O. Weber, *Foundations of Dogmatics*, I, pp. 12, 199
1) In the act of revelation, God is identical with himself

Barth: "God's Word is identical with God himself"
        (C.D. I/1, p. 304)

this is a "scandal of particularity": as T.F. Torrance puts it:

`This is something that minds of a certain type, or that are habituated to certain modes of thought, find intolerable, for they have what Professor Alan Cook of Cambridge University has called an "obsessive horror of the unique event."' *The Ground and Grammar of Theology*, pp. 102-3

Revelation is that event in which the being of God itself comes to word.

cf. O. Weber, F.D., I, pp. 35, 171-178

There is a three-fold way in which the act of God is an event of revelation, according to Barth: (C.D. I/1, p. 299)

(1) God is revealer   Subject   Father

(2) God is revelation   Predicate   Son

(3) God is revealedness Object   Holy Spirit

Or, as Barth puts it: the revealing God, the event of revelation, and its effect on the human person.

Revelation is not an "other, over and against God," but a "reiteration of God" (Barth, Ibid.)

In this reiteration of himself in the event of self disclosure, the being of God as it is in his own being becomes recognizable in its **differentiation**.

The doctrine of the trinity thus explicates the statement "God reveals himself as the Lord." (Barth. C.D. I/1, p. 306)
cf. here also E. Jüngel, *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, pp. 15ff.

God in his self disclosure completes the event of revelation, thus ruling out a kind of synergism, or cooperation, in producing revelation.

Revelation thus becomes an actuality before it becomes a possibility for the human subject.

2) The act of God reveals his virtues, which becomes the basis for attributing specific qualities to his nature:

act------------>virtues------------->nature

act: the exodus from Egypt

virtues: "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. . . " (Exodus 34:6
This becomes the standing formula and the liturgical doxology which holds together the O.T. at its core: Num. 14:18; Ps. 103:8; Ps. 86:15; Ps. 145.8; Neh. 9:17; Jonah 4:2

The Lord "performs" mercy (Exodus 20:6; Deut. 5:10), therefore it can be said that he is merciful.

Nature: the nature of God therefore is determined out of his specific actions; whatever attributes can be ascribed to God are first of all derived out of his actions.

This is quite a different approach than the traditional one of beginning with a definition of the abstract being of God and determining attributes which belong to his essential deity **before** exploring the nature of his actions.

For discussion of the attributes of God, see Weber, F.D. I, pp. 397-460.

When we begin with the abstract attributes of God we find it difficult to locate God again within the concrete world of time and spaced. Kornilis Miskotte puts it this way:

When we start from the infinity of God and attempt to reach his particular reality, we destroy the decisive character of the encounters of God in a concrete sense and end up with the theological ambivalence which is characteristic of the silence of the gods. When we start from the omnipotence of God's being, we are merely stating a theory, and then can find no place for the deeds and days which place him in ontic relation with our history. When we start with the equivalence of the so-called communicable attributes, e.g. righteousness, and mercy, we have lost the content of the saving and sustaining work, that is, we have lost the reality of God in his self communication. (*When the Gods are Silent*, p. 218)

The true infinity of God is the infinity of this God--Jahweh--with his attributes, virtues and perfections revealed through his actions:

Psalm 86:5f `For thou, O Lord, art good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on thee. . . there is none like thee among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like thine. . . .For thou art great and doest wondrous things, thou alone art God.'

Psalm 103:8ff `The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. . . For as far as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.'

The true omnipotence of God is the power that brings forth the Messianic Kingdom despite the unending opposition of the separated world.
cf. Weber. F.D. I, p. 414

Genesis 18:14 `Is anything too hard for the Lord?'
(in response to Sara's laughter)

Jeremiah 32:17-27; 36-41 `Nothing is too hard for thee, who showest steadfast love to thousands. . . '

The true omnipresence of God is the way in which the Lord knows his own, is near to them, saves, judges, uplifts, honors, crowns them;
Psalm 1:6 `The Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish'

Psalm 139:14f `For thou didst form my inward parts, thou didst knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise thee, for thou art fearful and wonderful. Wonderful are thy works! Thou knowest me right well. . . '

Jeremiah 17:9ff `The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it? I the Lord search the mind and try the heart, to give to every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.'

Deut. 32:10ff `He found him [Jacob] in a desert land, and in the howling waste of the wilderness; he encircled him, he cared for him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.'

3) We cannot "get behind" the concrete event of revelation in order to determine some aspect of God's being "in and of itself".

As D. Bonhoeffer once put it: "The abandonment of the ontic to retreat along the lines of the ontological is considered inadmissible for revelation." (*Act and Being*, p. 79)

ontological= a theory of being in the abstract

ontic= the encounter with being in the moment

The temptation in Genesis 3: an attempt to "get behind" the concrete command-- do not eat of this tree--in order to render a judgment concerning the Word of God by appealing to an intuitive and abstract knowledge; i.e. the good, the true, and the beautiful!

How do we distinguish the deeds and acts of God from other events?

Not by some general ontology or principle; God is witness to himself in his act.

For example, the name *Jahweh* is self authenticating as the name for God which explains the source of the power in the event (cf. Exodus 3; 6:2-8). *Elohim* is the generic name for God. It is Jahweh who is Elohim, not the reverse. The actions of Jahweh as the covenant making and keeping God constitute the critical content for knowing the only and true God. The formula is always: Know that Jahweh is Elohim (cf. Psalm 100:3). This is irreversible.

It is as Jahweh that Israel knows her God (Elohim). This is the challenge put by Elijah (whose name means: "my El is Jahweh): "If Jahweh is God (Elohim), follow him; but if Baal, then follow him" (1 Kings 18:21). Only Jahweh has the power be Israel's Elohim because only he **acts**--the other gods are silent, and it is Jahweh who reveals their eternal silence.

Thus, the narration of the deeds of Jahweh re-presents the acts as the revelation of God. The Word (story of the deeds) provides the context for interpreting the deeds, even as the deeds constitutes the criterion for the authority and validity of the narrative.

Ps. 78, for example, announces that it will present parables and dark sayings (*chokmah*), but does not then go on to disclose secrets relating to divine being, but rather enumerates the glorious deeds of Jahweh:

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders which he has wrought.

B. The act of God which reveals calls for a corresponding act of hearing, obedience and confession.

1) Revelation is not first of all a mental apperception which is received as an object of thought.

The language of the O.T. has no word for our term "thinking": *chasaab* and *machashabah* signify "purposing to do something." (cf. K. Miskotte, *When the God's are Silent*, p. 194)

The "plans" and "imaginations" of the heart are already understood to be the inception and beginning of the act, and thus are discernable in the "work of the hands."

John Pedersen, for example says: (*Israel: Its Life and Culture*, Vol. I)

For the Israelite **thinking** was not the solving of abstract problems. He does not add link to link, nor does he set up major and minor premises from which conclusions are drawn. To him thinking is to grasp a totality. He directs his soul towards the principal matter, that which determines the totality, and receives it into his soul, the soul thus being immediately stirred and led in a certain direction. In the Hebrew dictionary we look in vain for a word which quite corresponds to our "to think." There are words which mean "to remember," "make present," and thus to act upon the soul. There are words expressing that the soul seeks and investigates; but by that is not meant an investigation which analyses and arranges according to abstract views. To investigate is a practical activity; it consists in directing the soul towards something which it can receive into itself, and by which it can be determined. One investigates wisdom, i.e. makes it one's own. (pp. 108-109)

When modern logicians have characterized the correct manner of thinking as an interplay of simple, i.e. essentially empty but sharply defined space images, then we see at once the contrast between this and the Israelite way of thinking. The Israelite does not occupy himself with empty nor with sharply defined space images. His logic is not the logic of abstraction, but of immediate perception. . . The most important word for thinking contains the plan, the direction of the mind towards action. (pp. 124-125)

Logic is just an organized way of going wrong with confidence. (anonymous)

The proper sequence is : attitude---> act-----> results

2) As God reveals himself (his attitude) through his actions which produce results, so too the response to revelation is through this same sequence.

Here we are reminded again of the sequence:

[1] act-------> virtue-------> nature

[2] Moses: hearing -- obedience -- confession
(burning bush)

[3] community of faith -re-enact

The community of faith becomes the "hermeneutical horizon" which reveals God, through their own hearing, obedience, confession, in which the presence of God is encountered.

2. Knowledge of God as Actuality and Possibility

Introd: Revelation occurs through God's act in which he reveals himself. Thus, God is both the subject and the object in revelation. He objectifies himself through his act, and reveals himself as the subject in that objective event.

A. Primary and secondary knowledge of God

Primary knowledge of God is God's self-knowledge as revealed through Jesus Christ. Our knowledge of that self-testimony of Jesus is secondary knowledge, but real knowledge.

cf. Matt. 11:27 "Only the Father knows the Son, and only the Son knows the Father"

This is the self-knowledge of God, or to put it another way, the self-testimony of Jesus to that primary knowledge.

This knowledge is grounded in God's own being, and is a personal knowledge which is relational in character, and not impersonal or abstract.

This knowledge is also grounded in the humanity of Christ, so that he serves in a "vicarious" way to place all humanity in that primary knowledge.

This opens up the possibility of knowledge of God as the Holy Spirit gives us actual participation in the primary knowledge grounded in the self-testimony of Jesus.

B. Knowledge of God is first of all knowledge of **God**

Here we consider the "being of God in his act"

cf. Barth, C.D. II/1, pp. 322-677

Weber, F.D., I, 407

1) the being of God as the one who lives and creates life

God's being is **life**; only the living God is God. Only the voice of the living God is God's voice (cf. Barth II/1, p.263)

The phrase "living God" is no metaphor. "As I live" or "as the Lord lives" is the significant formula for an oath in the O.T.

In contradistinction to the idols who "have no life" (Jer. 10:14; Acts 14:15), God is the living fountain (Jer. 2:13; 17:13), the fountain of life (Ps. 36:9); the Father has life in himself (John 5:26); Christ is the author of life (Acts 3:15); the Holy Spirit is life (John 6:63; Ro. 8:10).

As the living God, God is not merely the sum total of all that lives, but is distinguished from living creatures as the source of life. As the living one, he is the event in which life takes place.

Thus, God reveals himself as the living One who is the event of all life. From this we make the assertion that God in his nature is not only the source of human life, but human life has its particular source and being in him.

This is the basis for Barth's claim that in God's own being is the basis for humanity itself:

God's deity is thus no prison in which he can exist only in and for Himself. It is rather His freedom to be in and for Himself but also with and for us, to assert but also to sacrifice Himself, to be wholly exalted but also completely humble, not only almighty but also almighty mercy, not only Lord but also servant, not only judge but also Himself the judged, not only man's eternal king but also his brother in time. And all that without in the slightest forfeiting His deity! All that, rather, in the highest proof and proclamation of his deity! . . . In this divinely free volition and election, in this sovereign decision (the ancients said, in His decree), God is **human**. His free affirmation of man, His free concern for him, His free substitution for him--this is God's humanity. (*The Humanity of God*, pp. 46,48)

There is an irreversible relation here between the being of God as living being, and living beings. God's being is self-motivated Spirit which exists as the act in which the event of our life occurs. Thus, God's life includes the event of human life, but human life does not include that of God.

2) The being of God as the one who loves and makes free to love

The content of that life which constitutes the being of God is now defined as love. The life which God reveals as the essence of his being is "being in fellowship." Jahweh is the covenant making and keeping God who chooses Israel, not because of any intrinsic merit in them, but because Jahweh "loves them." Deut. 7:7

Barth says: `He does not exist in solitude, but in fellowship. Therefore what He seeks and creates between Himself and us is in fact nothing else but what He wills and completes and therefore is in Himself' C.D. II/1, p. 275

The assertion: "God is love" must be carefully protected from being a predicate of divine nature based on a determination first of all of the nature of love.

1 John 4:9-10 `In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins.'

And, in this we have knowledge and faith in the love that God has for us, that we confess that "Jesus is the Son of God." v. 15

God's love is not a "relation", but is his own eternal nature.

Barth: `But He is not eternal love because He finds Himself worthy of love. He is worthy of love, and blessed in Himself because in His life as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, He is eternal love.' C.D., II/1, p. 279

Isaiah 49:15 `Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you.'

Jer. 31:3 `I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.'

John 13:2 `Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.'

As eternal love, God loves necessarily (for love is the essence of his being), but free from every necessity in respect of its object. God is sufficient in himself as the object of love--being in fellowship.

`God is means God loves'--Barth. C.D., II/1, p. 283

For a discussion of the problem of positing "personality" in God, see Barth, C.D., II/1, pp. 287-297.

3) The being of God as the one who is free and gives freedom to be.
    cf. Weber, F.D., I, pp. 438ff.

God is distinguished from all else and all others in that he is free in his own being; he is free and sufficient in himself, but he is also free to relate to his creation.

The pronoun "he" when referred to God does not classify him either by gender nor as part of any species; rather, it denotes that which he is in his own uniqueness.

Barth puts it this way:

`Only when we glimpse the depth in which He lives and loves and has His being, have we truly recognized and understood His being as love and therefore as divine.' C.D. II/1, p. 298

In being free and sufficient in himself, he is not contained or imprisoned within his own creative act, nor in his relationship with his creation.

This means that the being of God cannot be "proven" nor can it be an ultimate presupposition of divine being based on an analogy drawn from human beings. Thus, we reject [along with Barth] the concept of *analogia entis* (Aquinas) which attempts to posit divine being as a metaphysical entity.

Nor can we posit divine being as simply the superlative form of human being. Tillich has a fine statement in this regard: "superlatives, when applied to God, become diminutives."

By the freedom of God we represent what was known in classical dogmatics as the *aseity* of God--the being of God in himself.

This freedom of being, is his transcendence, the self determination of a living and loving God, whose transcendence is not a metaphysical abstraction, but a "freedom in relation."

`God's freedom constitutes the essential positive quality, not only of His action towards what is outside Himself, but also of His own inner being.' Barth, C.D., II/1, p. 303.

In his relation with his creation and with humans, he remains what he is , and yet provides the concrete basis for objective knowledge and relation with him. He is unconditioned by his relation with us, and yet we are granted the freedom to live in relation to him and to be conditioned by him.

In being conditioned by divine being as our source and ground of existence, we remain free because we are conditioned by his freedom, not by an impersonal principle or law.

4) The being of God as the one who is holy and produces holiness

Holiness (transcendence) is an attribute which attaches itself to an action of Jahweh.
Exodus 15:11 `Who is like thee O Lord among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders'?

1 Sam. 2:2 (Song of Hannah) `There is none holy as the Lord' (said after she has conceived)

Ps. 77:13 `Thy way O God is holy' --follows a summary of the acts of God

Luke 5:8 Peter to Jesus: `Depart from me Lord, for I am a sinful man' --said after the miracle of catch of fish

The holiness code (Leviticus) is not an ethical demand, but a cultic re-enactment of the transcendent ground for Israel in the action of Jahweh: `Be holy' is a command to be `serviceable' in the fellowship created by God.

Barth: `God's loving is a divine being and action distinct from every other loving in the fact that it is holy.' C.D., II/1., p. 359

This holiness, or presence of the divine being, excludes and annihilates all contradiction and resistance to it. But this "judgment" is also a divine grace. For his holiness is grounded in his freedom and love.

Both grace and holiness rest in the transcendence of God over all that is not himself. When we speak of grace we think of the freedom in which God turns his inclination, good will and favor towards his creature. When we speak of holiness, we think of this same freedom which God proves by the fact that in this turning towards the other he remains true to himself.

Thus, in Scripture, the law is not found alongside or prior to the gospel [contrary to Luther], but within the gospel. For the gospel as well as the law is grounded in the holiness by which grace approaches us in freedom to set us free. (cf. Barth, C.D., II/1, p. 363)

Prov. 3:12 `Whom the Lord loves he corrects' (cf. Heb. 12:6; Rev. 3:19)

Titus 2:11f `The grace of God that brings salvation to all men has appeared, teaching us. . . " This "teaching" is a correcting and training; thus, grace does not merely set us free to do our own thing, but brings us into a structure of relation, which is true freedom.

C. Knowledge of God is a real **knowledge** of God on the part of the human subject.

   1) The role of the human subject in knowledge of God

There is a priority of the divine subject over the human subject in revelation; yet God upholds both sides of the knowing relationship.

The doctrines of *election* and *accommodation* explain this in theological terms.

cf. T.F. Torrance, *Theological Science*, p. 86; *Theology in Reconstruction*, p. 70.

God, through election, determines he specific and concrete instance in which his revelation occurs; this upholds the certainty that the specific historical event can trusted to reveal God; election is God's freedom to act and to reveal himself through his action independent from any other principle;

God, through accommodation, condescends to enter into the historical event and the human sphere without destroying its own character and reality. This means that knowledge of God can be ascertained through the historical and human sphere without resorting to a mythological concept as a bridge between the divine and the human, or the temporal and the eternal.

In Jesus Christ, both election and accommodation take place so that his deity and humanity are bound up in the same person (hypostasis). This is the epistemological significance of the doctrine of the *homoousion* as determined at Nicea.

cf. T.F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconstruction*, pp. 33-38

To know God then, is to respond actively and participate in this relation grounded in Jesus Christ. The gap between human knowledge and divine knowledge is not metaphysical or rational, but spiritual and moral. Thus, reconciliation to God must be one aspect of revelation on the human side. The Word of God which reveals, also renews the mind, and reconciles the person to God by bringing her or him into this relation as established by Christ through the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit operates as the dynamic and transformational aspect of knowledge of God, opening up the rational structures of the human mind to actually apprehend the knowledge of God revealed through Christ.

Here we see the role of the Holy Spirit in epistemology; cf. T. F. Torrance, `The Epistemological Relevance of a Doctrine of the Holy Spirit' in *God and Rationality*, pp. 165ff.

2) The role of faith in knowledge of God

Faith: the rationality of human response to divine Word, made possible and real by the creative and redemptive act of both Word and Spirit.

Faith is not merely "fideism"; that is, faith is not an independent basis for arriving at knowledge of God with no rational and cognitive relation with the general sphere of knowledge as such. The rationality of faith is not determined by

conditions which a human subject places upon knowledge through experience alone; but neither is it cut free from the other levels of rationality by which the human subject knows reality.

Faith is not mere "rationalism", where the human mind gains cognitive control over knowledge as an abstract construct of thought, apart from a knowing relationship through grace.

Both fideism and rationalism could be considered to be a form of "Cartesian" theology, as defined by Thielicke (*The Evangelical Faith*, vol. I, pp. 34ff). Cartesian theology, according to Thielicke, "appropriates" the Word of God to the human subject, either through rational, existential, or moral criteria which stand outside of the Word itself.

A better way to understand the way in which faith knows, says Thielicke, is through the activity of the Holy Spirit upon the knowing subject: "The Holy Spirit directs the one whom he enlightens away from himself to a history which is outside him even though it includes him, and to a word which is again outside him, so that is an external word." Ibid., p. 135

By their very nature, faith statements which reflect true knowledge of God are `propositional statements which involve relation with God and also propositional relations with and between human subjects.' T.F. Torrance *God and Rationality*, p. 190.

Faith is communicable and verifiable, says Torrance, **within** the "ring of faithfulness" which Christ has already thrown around us. Ibid., p. 154.

In faith, we rely not on our own believing as a criterion (fideism) but on Christ's response of vicarious faithfulness toward God. Christ's response (including both his person and work), comes to us in propositional form in the biblical witness, and thus demands **assent** and is an act of rational and cognitive judgment. This intellectual and metaphysical character of faith does not control but rather is controlled by the rationality of the divine Word given through concrete historical and natural events (election and accommodation).

The participation of the believing subject in knowledge of God does not constitute an event of revelation (contrary to neo-orthodoxy, especially Brunner, Tillich), but is itself constituted by the revelatory Word.

Faith is not merely two movements--one intellectual and the other personal or existential--but it is a single movement involving both an informed mind and a consenting will, both of which constitute the rationality of faith; and both of which are necessary for there to be true knowledge of God.

cf. John Drane, *Paul, Libertine or Legalist?* (London: SPK, 1975):

In the Old Testament "faith" was essentially faithfulness to the experienced acts of God in history, coupled with a confidence in his future activity in the same sphere of operation. . . . [the Old Testament] revealed that those who would have an experiential understanding of the spiritual realities of biblical religion needed not *gnosis* but *pistis*, whereby they could share in those same experiences whose validity was vouched for by historical record. (pp. 27, 42)

3) Faith as true knowledge has both objective and subjective reality

The traditional distinction between faith as intellectual assent to the truth of testimony (f*ides*) and a confidence and trust in the person of God as the source of one's own existence (*fiducia*) is not properly the distinction between the objective and subjective character of faith. For the so-called objectivity of *fides* as belief in truth, or true statements, still lies within the pole of anthropology and thus within the control of the human subjected.

Rather, the act of revelation itself includes faith as the self testimony of Jesus to his own sonship and his relation with the Father. Jesus is the man who stands before God in faith; thus the objective possibility of faith as knowledge of God rests in the person of Christ as the man who actually knows God. As T.F. Torrance says, when Jesus took the ultimate questions of humanity on his lips, he `not only determined for us in himself the true mode of religious and theological questioning but constituted himself as the very centre of reference for our questions about God.' *Theology in Reconstruction*, p. 118

Faith does not have to bridge the gap between the conceivable and the inconceivable, by either a reduction of revelation to a set of true statements or by an irrational flight into pure feeling; the bridge has been objectively crossed in Christ and is given to us in the Word itself.

He is in Himself not only God objectifying Himself for man but man adapted and conformed to that objectification, not only the complete revelation of God to man but the appropriate correspondence on the part of man to that revelation, not only the Word of God to man but man obediently hearing and answering that Word. In short, Jesus Christ is Himself both the Word of God as spoken by God to man and that same Word as heard and received by man, Himself both the Truth of God given to man and that very Truth understood and actualized in man. T.F. Torrance, *Theological Science*, p. 50.

From the side of the human subject, the act of faith is necessarily soteriological, because a false objectivity must be overcome through *metanoia,* in which the mind is renewed and conformed to the actuality of God's self-disclosure in Jesus Christ.

"Repent" (*metanoia*) and believe the gospel: Mark 1:15

Acts 20:21 Paul `testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

III. God's Word

1. Revelation and Inscripturation of the Word
     cf. O. Weber, F.D. I, pp. 228-375
     G.C. Berkouwer *Holy Scripture*

  A. Scripture as Noetic and Ontic Revelation

    Introd: Divine self-disclosure, through the doctrines of election and accommodation, can be said to clothe itself in the language and culture of humanity. That is, if revelation includes the human response (Israel, Christ), it does not operate in a vacuum, nor as a timeless principle, but in a historical and concrete human word and language.

> If the Word of God is to enter the forum as speech to man through the medium of human words it must be directed to man in community, and if that Word creates reciprocity between God and man it must create a community of such reciprocity within human society as the appropriate medium of its continuing communication to man. T. F.Torrance, *God and Rationality*, pp. 146-7

    And this, as Torrance says, is precisely what happened with God and Israel, and with Jesus Christ.

> As the Word of God invaded the social matrix of Israel's life, culture, religion and history, and clothed itself with Israel's language, it had to struggle with the communal meaning already embedded in it in order to assimilate it to God's revelation of Himself. For new understanding to take root within Israel, it had to take shape within Israel's language, and therefore it had to remould the inner structure of the society within which that language had its home. . . God had adapted Israel to His purpose in such a way as to form within it a womb for the Incarnation of the Word and a matrix of appropriate forms of human thought and speech for the reception of the incarnational revelation. Ibid., pp. 147, 149.

    cf. also, O. Weber, F.D., I, p. 235

    Thus, the apostles of Jesus were drawn into the incarnational event and their witness and response became part of that history as witnesses to the self-testimony of Christ as the divine Word and the human response.

    1) The structure of revelation

        The very structure of revelation itself, as it occurred in the Old Testament and came to conclusion in Jesus Christ, means that the human response and witness became part of the revelation, and not merely its external form.

        The unfolding of this revelation occurred within the mind and language of the apostolic proclamation as the foundation of the new community. Thus, through the apostolic proclamation (both oral and written) Christ himself continued to testify to the redemption which God the Father had accomplished through his own life, death and resurrection.

While there did remain a qualitative distinction between their witness and his self-testimony (he is the redeemer, they are the redeemed), nonetheless, their human language became bound up into the revelation established through Christ.

The structure of revelation allows for this distinction without breaking the inner connection between the being and form of revelation as God's own Word. The doctrines of election and accommodation account for this theologically. But the structure of it is present in the Old Testament revelation as well as in the revelation through Christ and the apostolic community.

The public record of the self-disclosure of God in Christ constitutes what Bonhoeffer once called the "absolute extrinsicality" in revelation (*Act and Being*, p. 138).

That is, the written word stands in a transcendent relation to the community of faith. This "pole of transcendence" lies within history and forms the cognitive link with the objective reality of divine revelation; thus revelation grounds faith in propositional relations between God and the human subject. cf. T.F. Torrance *God and Rationality,* p. 190. Cf. also, R. S. Anderson, *Historical Transcendence and the Reality of God*, pp. 214ff.

2) The ontic and noetic character of revelation

The ontic character of revelation is the continued presence and activity of God in the act of revelation; the being of God is present through revelation in such a way that the human subject **encounters** the reality of God as the personal being that he is. This is what is meant by ontic.

This ontic dimension was focused in the incarnation, as Christ was encountered as the living Word of God himself. In the apostolic witness and proclamation, Christ is present through the reality of the Holy Spirit. This is why Calvin, for example, said that no one could know Scripture to be the Word of God except through the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit (*Institutes*, Book I, 1.1).

The noetic character of revelation is its objectified form as a phenomenon of historical and public witness

For example, in John 4, the woman at the Samaritan well had an encounter with Jesus (ontic) which produced in her a witness to the fact that he was the Messiah. Upon returning to her village, she gave testimony to this experience and described the place and the person where the encounter occurred. This information provided a basis for a cognitive and reflective act (noetic) through which the people in the village could find for themselves this Messiah; and when they did, they said, `It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.' (John 4:42)

In this way, both the noetic and the ontic combine to reveal Jesus as the Messiah.

B. The process by which divine revelation becomes Holy Scripture

1) Revelation is an act of self-communication on the part of God as subject who is identical with himself in his self-disclosure, and who objectifies himself through Word and deed;

2) Revelation, as God's act of self-communication, becomes concrete in its historical objectivity without becoming <u>merely</u> an object of the human subject's reflective act.

  that is, God continues to be the subject of revelation through its concretion in history (that is its ontic character);

3) Revelation is progressive in its historical concretion; that is, the acts of God are organic to themselves as historical acts of self-disclosure.

  however, revelation cannot "progress" beyond God's activity in history. It cannot be divine self-disclosure simply through the activity of the human subject, even though that activity is the result of experiencing God's Word.

4) Revelation is propositional in its personal concretion as well as historical event;

  That is, the acts of God are inherently rational to the created logos (mind) of the human subject as a believing person.

  Knowledge <u>of</u> God always includes knowledge <u>about</u> God, though this is not reversible (this is the noetic character of revelation).

5) Revelation is redemptive in its spiritual concretion; that is, the act of God in self-disclosure authenticates the true subjectivity of the human person by producing faith;

  This faith produced by revelation may be defined as: the self-communication and expression of the human subject's response, concretized as commitment into community;

  Because the Word of God occurs in the context of human community, its purpose as revelation produces response which is oriented toward community; claims to belief in God which are not productive of this community of faith contradict the nature of revelation.

6) Revelation, therefore, as the self-disclosure of God, is to be distinguished from the self-existing human subject who finds his or her authenticity in knowing and responding (believing in) to this self-disclosure (revelation).

Therefore, revelation has historical and propositional reality through God's act of self-communication (through Word and deed), and not through the act of faith on the part of the human subject.

God's Word is concrete and knowable prior to the act of knowing. Therefore, revelation produces faith and is the verification of faith (cf. John 7:17).

7) Revelation has its authority (its power to compel faith) in its transcendence; that is, the question of authority is the question, **who** is speaking/acting (cf. Exodus 3:13; Acts 9:5).

The authority of the Word of God as expressed in human language, is the authority of revelation as the power and being of God expressed for the specific purpose of producing faith and obedience.

Thus, the question of authority is not an abstract question, but related to the effect of revelation as well as to its source.

8) Revelation stands objectively over and against the human subject (that is, it has transcendence) in the form of divine presence in self-disclosure.

This authority and transcendence resides in the fact that God is the subject and not merely object in revelation, and carries through into God's act of objectifying himself in ways that have noetic quality (can be thought and communicated in the act of thinking).

Therefore, the authority of divine revelation can be rationally apprehended as well as existentially sensed.

9) This theological structure--revelation is the objectifying act of the revealing subject--is the basis for the doctrine of Scripture;

The authority of divine revelation confronts the human person--
            historically
            rationally
            spiritually

This confrontation occurs in the written word's correspondence to the living, eternal Word; that is, through the correspondence between the Word proclaimed, the Word written, and the living Word, Jesus Christ.

Scripture is one component in this three-fold form of the Word of God (Barth); apart from this correspondence, it cannot be Word of God.

But precisely in its own reality as a human word in correspondence to the living Word, it is divine revelation and thus the Word of God.

10) There is a necessary ambiguity between the living Word and the written Word. This ambiguity is not evidence of its untrustworthiness as revelation, but is precisely the situation by which the divine subject maintains control in self disclosure through Scripture.

The line between revelation and the record of revelation in Scripture should not become so thin that the being of God in self-disclosure is subsumed totally under the objective word;

Nor should this line become so thick that the being of Word is separated from the form of Word, or so that truthfulness (external verification) is separated from meaningfulness (inward verification).

Revelation is not a divine "substance" which inheres in Scripture, but is rather the divine Subject who has "breathed" his Word through human witnesses (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:19-21); the divine activity of inspiration results in an authoritative revelation of God as text of Scripture, to which knowing and believing in God through Jesus Christ is bound.

The ambiguity in the relation between the form of the text and the reality of the revelation as objectively present preserves the human and historical character of Scripture; at the same time, it preserves the objective reality of Scripture as Word of God, not merely a special or higher form of a human writing.

11) The "inward testimony" of the Holy Spirit, according to Calvin, is superior to any human judgment and equal to that of an intuitive perception of God himself in Scripture.
cf. O. Weber, F.D., I, pp. 245ff

The proper function of the Holy Spirit must be located in the correspondence between the written text of Scripture and the living Word; this originated in the inspired author of Scripture to produce the actual form of the Word of God in accordance with the divine purpose (election and accommodation);

The Holy Spirit continues to provide illumination and insight into the purpose of God expressed in and through the text through both exegesis and interpretation (hermeneutics);

The science of textual criticism and historico-critical exegesis is an indispensable tool to lay bare the content of the text as the very revelation of God. However, this science is not to be practiced apart from the context of believing worship and prayer, for there is a "theological exegesis" as well which seeks to discern the mind of Christ as the subjective (ontic) content of revelation.

Theological exegesis considers that the three-fold form of the Word of God holds the church accountable to understand the purpose of Scripture in the contemporary context of Christ's presence and activity through the Holy Spirit.

The Scripture does not have an extrinsic authority "in principle" so as to usurp the authority of the living Word as its source and the Holy Spirit in the community as its effect.

cf. R. S. Anderson `The Resurrection of Christ as Hermeneutical Criterion,' in *TSF Bulletin*, Parts I and II, January/February, March/April, 1986.

2. Scripture: Its Nature, Authority and Purpose

A. The Servant Form of Scripture

Cf. G.C. Berkouwer, *Holy Scripture,* pp. 195-212

1) The analogy between the incarnation and the process of inscripturation

Even as the divine Logos "emptied himself" (Phil. 2) and became human, and thus conditioned by the finite, and the ambiguity of the historical realm, so Scripture can be considered as capable of bearing the full weight of divine authority without being elevated above a human word.

This parallel belongs to theological tradition, even though the church did not adopt it in its confessions. It was explicitly used by Bavinck, as well as suggested by Kuyper. Warfield makes cautious use of it as well as Brunner.

Berkouwer reminds us, however, that this parallel cannot be held without some qualifications:

(1) The divine and human in Christ is a "hypostatic" unity, so that one can worship the human person as God; one cannot so treat Scripture without being liable to idolatry;

(2) The personal union of the divine and human in Christ lies quite distinctly in another sphere than the union of Divine Word with human word in Scripture. Therefore, one cannot legitimately use the sinlessness of Christ as a sort of "analogia entis" to argue for the inerrancy of Scripture (an attempt made by Warfield, and criticized by Berkouwer).

cf. Berkouwer, *Holy Scripture*, pp. 198ff.

2) The "incarnational" character of Scripture as Word of God

Notwithstanding the dangers of viewing Scripture in similar fashion to the incarnation, there are some helpful insights which can be gained by looking at Scripture in an "incarnational" way:

(1) Just as the authority of Jesus of Nazareth as divine Son of God was problematical to those who approached him with literalistic and humanistic assumptions, so the divine Word of Scripture will be a stumbling block to such an approach;

(2) Just as one cannot strip away the humanity of Christ in order to get at a divine substance, so one cannot strip away the humanity of Scripture, or elevate the humanity of Scripture beyond its own nature in order to establish a divine revelation;

(3) The tension between the human authorship, words and context, and the divine Word itself can be expressed as "treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Cor. 4:7). Berkouwer cites Bavinck as rendering this passage: `All this has happened in order to show that the transcendent power, **also the power of Scripture**, belongs to God and not to us.' Berkouwer comments: `The words "also the power of Scripture" are added to Paul's reference to the power of God. It obviously refers to the ministry of the human word and human writing.' *Holy Scripture*, p. 206

Berkouwer says:

> It is possible to stop before this human boundary without discovering any perspective in this human word. From Moses to the prophets men have rebelled against this human proclamation of the Word of God. . . This proclamation is a treasure in earthen vessels, and the treasure does not fade and disappear in the fragility of the human instrument. The earthen vessel does not stand in the way of God's voice precisely because the power of God is manifested in it and not because man in his own power has this treasure at his disposal (Exodus 4:14-15). *Holy Scripture*, p. 207

3) Positive gains which result from a doctrine of Scripture as the Word of God in servant form:

A genuine science of theology is made possible; the historical and human character of revelation can be taken seriously;

A normative revelation is placed at the center of the church, not above it, in a Platonic sphere. The believing community has historical connection with its source;

The life of the Spirit has grounds which lie outside of the human subject's historical existence; the humanity of revelation, and of the Spirit's humanity, is objective to our humanity by virtue of the humanity of Christ as living Word

B. Issues concerning the inspiration and authority of Scripture

1) Inspiration: the word which the church has traditionally used to designate the "God-breathed" character of Scripture is inspiration. Paul uses the Greek word *theopneustos* (2 Tim. 3:16) to designate this "God-breathed" character (cf. 2 Peter 1:21).

Warfield has called attention to the difficulty with the word inspiration as the preposition "in" is wholly lacking in the biblical term (*Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, 1948, p. 284).

Berkouwer prefers "God-breathed" (pp. 139ff)

`Thus, *theopneustos* points to an essential relationship between the breath of the Spirit and the *graphe*. This is the mystery of Scripture which the church desired to express in its confession.' (p. 140)

The qualifiers, "verbal" and "plenary" when applied to inspiration convey respectively: extending to the very words and not merely to the general ideas; and covering the whole of Scripture, not merely portions. If one avoids the mechanical-dictation theory of inspiration (i.e., God "whispers" the very words into the ear of the scribe), the purpose of a verbal theory of inspiration can still be realized by refusing to separate thoughts from words. James Orr argued that one should abandon verbal inspiration in favor of "organic inspiration", that is, the concepts are inspired, not the words. However, following Bavinck and Berkouwer, this does not seem necessary when one understands that words have meaning as part of a syntactical structure, and not as discrete entities.

Nonetheless, the mystery as to the relation between the written words and the living Word remains; precisely how the human authors were enabled by the Holy Spirit to produce human writings which have the character of divine revelation in the sense in which we have discussed it earlier, remains ambiguous. It is not susceptible to reduction to a "theory" or mechanistic explanation.

As Berkouwer puts it, `*Revelation* finds its end in *inspiration* and therefore cannot be explained by means of a general "instrumentality", because it is related to "theophany, prophecy, and miracle", which precede the God-breathed character itself.' *Holy Scripture*, p. 161

What a doctrine of inspiration assures us as a doctrine of the self-testimony of Scripture to revelation of Christ is the continuity of revelation between the living Christ and the written words, as God-breathed.

2) Infallibility: the question of infallibility is the question of liability to lead one to error or out of the truth of knowledge of God.

The inherent ambiguity of a human word is not evidence of fallibility. The question of infallibility (inability to lead to untruth) is not assured by raising the level of human authorship to its highest level, but is assured by the control of the divine subject through the Holy Spirit upon the human authors in such a way that the words continue to bring to bear a divine subjectivity (and thus, authority), upon all who read and hear this word.

The "time-boundedness" and "culture-boundedness" of Scripture preserves the historical character of revelation, but also require an interpretation which preserves the original intent and purpose through translation and proclamation. The matter of translation is already included within the phenomenon of Scripture as Word of God, as the words of Jesus are recorded through translation from Aramaic (and Hebrew) into Greek. Translations of the original manuscripts through "dynamic equivalence" can replicate to a large degree the original text of Scripture so that infallibility can be assumed to be a characteristic of the translated Word of God as well as the original.

Proclamation will ordinarily require and permit a greater range of freedom in the use of the concept of "dynamic equivalence" as long as a distinction is made between translation and communication. Infallibility rests with the former and not with the latter. The question of infallibility is quite clearly related to the use of Scripture in giving authority in proclamation and teaching, rather than for a technical doctrine of Scripture alone. It relates to what Berkouwer calls the *scopus* or purpose of Scripture (pp. 184ff). That is, the words of Scripture in their entirety are related to a direct goal, and cannot be separated from that goal and considered abstractly. While there are real dangers here for theology (not the least of which is a dualism between the concrete words and general truths and teachings), it is a danger which cannot be avoided and still be faithful to the truth that Scripture continues to be as touchstone for the absolute demand of Christ upon us in an always new and relevant way.

3) Inerrancy: the question of inerrancy is a question which the Scripture does not raise as a technical problem.

The concept of the inerrancy of the original autographs can neither be proved nor disproved. No theologian claims inerrancy for subsequent translations of Scripture. If inerrancy is held as a formal concept of truth (i.e., God cannot speak truth through error), it introduces a presupposition of rationalistic logic into the concept of Scripture as Word of God, and seeks to absolutize the form rather than the content.

Berkouwer holds that the Scripture's concern for error is not a technical or scientific precision with regard to reporting, but a reliability in witness. Error is "swerving from the truth" and upsetting the faith (2 Tim. 2:18). Ibid., p. 181.

Formal doctrines of inerrancy which are unable to distinguish between limited and finite human knowledge (lapses of memory) and a false and untrue witness to God's self-revelation violate what Berkouwer calls the "naturalness" with which Scripture speaks.

The Samaritan woman did not have to be mathematically and exactly precise in giving directions to her fellow villagers, but had to be "close enough" to being correct in order to place her friends in the proximity of Jesus. Scripture does not convert, edify and inform us of God's will and purpose merely through precision

and technical accuracy, but through the reality of Jesus Christ himself as the living Word of God.

IV. God's Creation

1. Covenant as the Inner and Eternal Basis for Creation

Weber, F.D. I, pp. 463-501

A. Creation as external form of the covenant

`The history of creation is a great cosmic prelude and example of that history of Israel which is the proper theme of the Old Testament. Creation is the outward basis of the Covenant (Genesis 1) and the covenant is the inward basis of creation (Genesis 2)." Karl Barth, C.D., IV/1, p. 27; cf. also III/1, pp. 94ff; pp. 288ff; esp. pp. 231-232.

1) The existence of God as Creator

The first article of the Apostle's Creed affirms: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

These words point us to the distinction made within Scripture itself, between the reality of God and the reality which is distinct from God--his creation.

Yet, the theological priority is that God is first of all known as Redeemer and secondarily as Creator.
cf. O. Weber, F.D., I, p 465

(a) Creation is contingent upon God as Creator for its own existence. cf. Weber, F.D., I, pp. 494, 496, 500.

Creation is "ex nihilo" (2 Macc. 7:28)--God himself is the only antecedent of creation.

This contingency destroys the possibility of a necessary relation between the world and God by which the Creator can be considered a predicate of creation.

Creation is an act of grace, since it occurs as an act of freedom on God's part, not of necessity.

Heb. 11:3 `By faith we understand that the world was created by the Word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear.'

(b) Creation has no intrinsic purpose of its own--there is no teleology within creation apart from the divine purpose given to it. There is no cosmology in Scripture in a technical sense, no "theistic world view" which serves as the presupposition for divine revelation, nor for an argument for the existence of

God as he is revealed to Israel. There is no ontology of a created order leading to divine being as a predicate.

(c) The biblical perspective is directly opposed to that of the mythical, where the gods and human creatures have a common nexus, or connection, which is rooted in a timeless and non-historical cycle.

cf. H. Thielicke, *The Evangelical Faith*, Vol. I, pp 84ff.

The structure of classical myth posits an "empty finitude" which is construed as the contentless cause of the recurring cycle of nature and creaturely existence. Thus the essence of myth is "nothingness", but this is no threat to the human subject who is oriented toward God as creator as the "beginning" of historical existence.

Kerygmatic myth as we understand it is myth in its original and proper form as found in Babylonian and Greek antiquity. This myth contains anthropological, cosmological, and theological statements. If myths present genesis of the world in terms of becoming in which the gods are also implicated in the form of conflicts and mutual slaughter, this only shows that they are not really transcendent. The point is that destiny rules the world. This carries with it an understanding of man, since man is surrendered to this trans-subjective fate that is there from the outset. Myth, then, contains a kerygma in thus saying something about the nature and origin of the world. This world that surrounds man is his destiny; he is part of it. H. Thielicke, *The Evangelical Faith*, I., p. 85

(d) The genesis account of creation cuts across the structure of this mythical world view;

Myth says that the world is made of existent material, which has its own history; in contrast, the God of Scripture creates the world out of nothing. He is thus apart from his creation. His creative action does not follow trends already immanent in existing material.

Mythical perspectives interpret guilt as a result of the seeds of the curse already set in the world--thus guilt is fate. Tragedy, with its equation of guilt and fate is as legitimate daughter of myth. However, when God creates out of nothing, guilt cannot be traced back to supra-personal trends already posited in the structure of the world. There is no primal history or material to accuse.

The Genesis account of the fall cuts across this mythical connection between guilt and fate, and relates the human predicament directly to the creative freedom of God (Genesis 3).

This non-mythical view of God and human existence entails responsibility, freedom, and possibility. Adam has to give an answer to his creator. There is judgement, but also grace and hope.

The kerygma of redemption and creation "disarms" the kerygma of the mythical view of creation, though the biblical account uses the mythical

language to express this radically new kerygma (Ps. 19:5; Isa. 14:12ff). cf. Thielicke, Ibid., pp. 100ff. So also Barth, C.D., III/1, pp. 158ff; III/2, pp. 4ff; O. Weber, F.D., I, pp. 467ff.

2) The focal point of revelation is the human person who exists in the cosmos.

While certain existing cosmological views are taken up into the creation account as a witness to revelation, the kerygma of creation remains free from their essential forms.

In this respect we might go so far as to say that faith is radically disloyal to them. In the last resort it has never taken them seriously, even though it has fiercely opposed them or intimately allied itself to them. . . It easily tires of them. It touches them only lightly and if need be can leave them as easily. . . . It moves within their territory but cannot be detained at their frontiers. Barth, C.D., III/2, pp. 8-9.

The Word of God has a cosmological border, but not a cosmological center. Heaven and earth is the sphere in which God's glory dwells and in which he concerns himself with the human person. The doctrine of creation confines itself to the limits of the covenant.

3) The creation story sets the stage for the drama of redemption.

The sequence of the creation reflects a polemic against prevailing cosmologies and mythical views.

(a) The human persons are both on the earth and under heaven, and yet "more" than the cosmos (Ps. 8);

The cosmos surrounding the human person is not an alien force, but is set in place by the same God who calls forth human life and sustains it.

(b) The cosmos itself is "disarmed" of any supernatural or mythical powers.

For example, the creation of light is prior to the creation of the sun (4th day), suggesting that contrary to prevailing theological views (e.g. Egyptian cosmology), the sun is not divine, nor the source of light, but rather is reduced to the role of mediating light in the cosmos. (cf. Barth, C.D., III/1, p. 158)

(c) The creation is not itself given a "consciousness", but rather the creation anticipates a created consciousness (the human subject) who will interpret and "read" the face of creation (cf. Psalm 19)

Astrology is therefore set aside in principled as mediating a knowledge of human events. The Israelite clearly was aware of this judgment. (cf. Deut. 4:19; 17:3; Jer. 8:2; 19:13; Zeph. 1:5; 2 Kings 17:16; 21:3,5,12; Ezek. 8:16; Job 31:26-28)

> The decisive fact is that the heavenly bodies are to "rule" in a way corresponding to the destiny given them in their creation, and that this not the case when they are worshipped or even consulted by man. In both cases an objective order of God's creation is disturbed when man erroneously alienates the heavenly bodies from their specified destiny as images of the divine creation of light. . . when what they should depict is not sought in the grace and judgment of the Word of God but in a supposed disclosure of other, arbitrarily invented necessities of human life. Barth, C.D., III/1, p. 166.

> Paul says (Ro. 8:39) that neither the zenith nor the nadir (using astrological terms) of the stars can separate believers from the love of God; no known or unknown forces of nature intervene between us and God.

B. Covenant as the internal form and meaning of creation

cf. O. Weber F.D., I, pp. 479ff

1) Genesis 1 and 2 portray the relation of covenant and creation

Genesis 1: the external form of the covenant; that is, creation considered from its empirical, temporal aspect, from its beginning in time. Thus the sequence is progressive toward its completion;

Genesis 2: the internal form of creation; that is, creation considered from its beginning in God, from the seventh day. The sequence is reversed, human persons are considered first, then animals and then the world.

The formula, "Jahweh is Elohim" places the covenant making and keeping God at the very heart of creation.
> Barth, C.D., III/1, p. 224

2) As God precedes creation, and eternity time, so does the seventh day precede the sixth day:

> We must understand that God is the measure of all reality and propriety, understand that eternity exists first and then time, and therefore the future first and then the present, as surely as the Creator exists first and then the creature. He who understands that need take no offense here. Barth, C.D., I/1, p. 531

(a) The ultimate and the penultimate.
        cf. D. Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, pp. 120-185

One does not know the sixth day is the penultimate, the next to the last, unless one knows that the seventh day is the last.

The seventh day is the day of God's own eternal life, into which human persons are summoned to participate with all of their creatureliness.

Thus, God himself is the "end of history" (*eschaton*), the omega as well as the alpha. Through Jesus Christ, God has entered history as the eschaton, yet not

so as to destroy the next to the last. We live in that "eschatological tension" between the last and the next to the last. However, it is not a time of dread and uncertainty because the ultimate has been spoken (Heb. 1:1ff).

(b) Israel becomes the bearer of the covenant, and thus portrays this eschatological tension.

The events which determined the life of Israel were not factors which arose simply out of the present; rather, her destiny was determined through God's eschatological purpose to create a people for himself;

Israel was oriented toward a prophetic futurism rather than the sacred past. While the prophets recall the past, it was only to point to the faithfulness of the One who was their future. The "Day of the Lord" lay ahead of them, summoning them to faith and hope;

There is an apocalyptic realism which pervaded the life of Israel; revelation "broke into" the present from the future, making a radical intervention into the rhythms of nature and the course of natural and historical events.

The covenant thus portrays God's final purpose as constitutive for their present existence; this provides ethical instruction and insight as to existence within the created order:

> Every truly creative act of man must . . . be regarded as an eschatological act which "ends" this world and inaugurates a new one. "If you feed the hungry,: writes Nicolas Berdyaev, "or free the oppressed, you are committing an eschatological deed, and you are `ending' this world so full of hunger and oppression." Each truly creative act is a historical fulfillment, a coming of the End, a transcending and transforming of this spellbound, stricken world of ours. E. Lampert, *The Apocalypse of History*, London, 1948, p. 59. Cited by William Coats, *God in Public*, p. 46.

(c) The technical term for covenant (*berith*) is not found in the creation account; yet, the ingredients of the covenant relation which exits as the presupposition of this account can be found there.

God who creates and sustains by "speaking" corresponds to the human person who exists by virtue of "response."

The image of God as a dia-logical relation exhibits a reciprocity of limit and response;

The human creatureliness is unique amidst all other creatureliness. There is the solidarity of the sixth day

And yet for the human, there is the freedom of the seventh day.

The human, as God's act of creative freedom, is provided both a gracious limit and a gracious response

(d) Reconciliation as covenant love, precedes and provides a context for creation;

Grace is thus the presupposition of nature, not the reverse; love is the inner logic of covenant, and is the ground of creation as well as its purpose, with the human as the focal point;

N.B. it is at this point that the scholastic controversy over infra- and supra-lapsarianism took place: cf. Barth, C.D., II/2, pp. 127-145

supra: predestination precedes the decrees of creation, providence and redemption;

infra: the decrees of creation, providence and redemption logically precede the decree of predestination and election.

What is at stake is whether or not the love and mercy of God is at the origin and center of God's action toward his creature, or only subsequent to his intention to create.

When the human person is the focus of creation, one could say that God, from his eternal being as love, wills that the human person stands against evil (even as God does) and that God will stand with persons in that struggle. Thus, following Barth, one can assume a modified supra-lapsarian view.

2. Humanity: Created in the Image of God

cf. R. S. Anderson, *On Being Human*, Chapter 6, and appendix B
G. C. Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God*
E. Brunner, *Man in Revolt*
I. Barth, C.D., III/1, pp. 191ff
David Cairns, *The Image of God in Man*

A. Issues concerning the doctrine of the image of God

The biblical material is limited and ambiguous.

The basic O.T. texts: Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6

Not too much can be made of the plural subject, "let us create man in our image" (Genesis 1:26); Barth does say that this indicates that human persons did not emerge out of the solitariness of God, but out of his intra-divine communion (III/1, p. 183).

Other scholars question the reference of the text to any such intra-divine relations. Cf. N.W. Porteus, in his article on Image of God in *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*.

In considering the rest of creation, the biblical account suggests nothing in for which God himself is the proto-type. Even though Ps. 8 speaks of the heavens as the work of God's fingers, and Ps. 19 of the heavens telling the glory of God, there is no image or likeness mentioned in Scripture concerning creation. Thus, the uniqueness of the human rests in this counterpart to divine being.

B. Effects of the fall on the image

   1) For Augustine (5th cent.), the image was located primarily in the faculty of knowledge of God; the fall darkened this faculty necessity supernatural grace from above the enlighten the soul and restore the image;

   2) Thomas Aquinas (13th cent.); developed the concept of the *donum superadditum*, a supernatural endowment received by Adam and Eve and lost through the fall, to be restored only through sacramental infusion of grace. He held that there was a natural form of the image preserved in human rationality after the fall, but it was weakened, and unable apart from divine grace, to reach the religious potential of the soul.

   3) Luther (16th cent.) denied this ontological concept of the image, as well as the concept of the *donum superadditum*, and held that the image is not so much a faculty in the human as an orientation of the will toward God, which was totally lost through the fall and must be restored by grace.

   4) Calvin, retained certain aspects of the image in the fallen person, to which he attributed a natural humanness and morality made possible by common grace. However, Calvin attributed a total depravity to this natural humanness; i.e., a total inability to come to knowledge of God and salvation apart from saving grace.

C. Contemporary theology tends to avoid the substantive categories of the image as a faculty inherent in the human person, and stresses the relational aspect.

   1) Brunner, while maintaining a strictly relational view of the image makes a distinction between a formal and a material image. The formal image is continued beyond the fall in the form of human relationships, while the material aspect of the image--relation with God--was lost and must be restored through redemption;

   2) Barth (and Bonhoeffer) interprets the image as the relational aspect of human personal being, ground in the differentiation of human sexuality.

> Is it not astonishing that again and again expositors have ignored the definitive explanation given by the text itself [i.e., Genesis 1:26-27)], and instead of reflecting on it pursued all kinds of arbitrarily invented interpretations of the *imago Dei*?--the more so when we remember that there is a detailed repetition of the biblical explanation in Gen. 5:1. . . . Could

anything be more obvious than to conclude from this clear indication that the image and likeness of the being created by God signifies existence in confrontation, i.e., in this confrontation, in the juxtaposition and conjunction of man and man which is that of male and female, and then go on to ask against this background in what the original and prototype of the divine existence of the Creator consists? Barth, C.D., III/1, p. 195

Thus, Barth is not satisfied merely to state that human sexuality is a manifestation of the image of God, but wishes to say that this constitutes a genuine *analogia relationis* between this mark of the divine being and the human being. God exists as I-Thou relation, says Barth, and so the mark of the human is this same co-relation grounded in sexual differentiation as male and female.

Is it not palpable that we have to do with a clear and simple correspondence, an *analogia relationis,* between this mark of the divine being, namely, that it includes an I and a Thou, and the being of man, male and female? The relationship between the summoning I in God's being and the summoned divine Thou is reflected both in the relationship of God to the man whom he created, and also in the relationship between the I and the Thou, between male and female, in human existence itself. There can be no question of anything more than an analogy. C.D., III/1, p. 196

Analogy, even as the analogy of relation, does not entail likeness but the correspondence of the unlike. This correspondence of the unlike is what takes place in the fact that the being of man represents, in the form of the co-existence of the different individuals of male and female, a creaturely and therefore a dissimilar repetition of the fact that the one God is in Himself not only I but also I and Thou, i.e., I only in relation to Himself who is also Thou, and Thou only in relation to Himself who is also I. C.D., III/1, p. 196

Criticism of Barth's view can be found in *Human Spirit and Holy Spirit,* by Arnold Come (pp. 85-86); and Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God* (pp. 93ff).

Come argues that in Barth's view, human persons lose their own authentic subjectivity in the divine I-Thou relation; Berkouwer accuses Barth of constructive interpretation rather than exegesis.

D. Summary concepts on the image of God in Scripture:

1) Taken as a whole, Scripture does not seem to support the concept of the image as a self contained faculty, stamped upon the essence of human nature;

The relational view is more strongly supported, as long as it is made clear that the relation is not the image but a making visible of the image. This avoids a "functionalism" where the relation itself is termed the image, and there remains no way of speaking **essentially** of humanness as a unique being created in God's image;

2) It seems clear that the Scriptural texts which speak specifically of the image are ambiguous and probably not meant to provide an analytical distinction between image and likeness;

3) The central theme of the image can hardly lie in the command to have dominion over other creatures and thus in the rational faculty, or self conscious personality by which the human is distinguished form the non-human creature. Although it must be said that both rationality and self consciousness are an immediate consequence and making visible of the image; (note here the objection of Carl Henry to all relational motifs as inherently existential philosophy and thus destructive to the essential faculty of human reason (*Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, article on Image of God).

If we listen to the texts themselves, as Barth reminds us, we will hear of a correspondence first of all, not a rational and autonomous mind.

`Man is not created to be the image of God but--as is said in [Gen. 1] vv. 26 and 27, but also in Gen. 5:1 (and again in the command not to shed blood, Gen. 9:6)--he is created in correspondence with the image of God. His divine likeness is never his possession, but consists wholly in the intention and deed of his Creator, whose will concerning him is this correspondence.' C.D., III/1, p. 197

V. God's Providence

1. God's Promise, Care, Will, and Preservation

cf. Berkouwer, *The Providence of God*; O. Weber, F.D., I, pp. 502-525
Barth, C.D., III/3, pp. 3-288

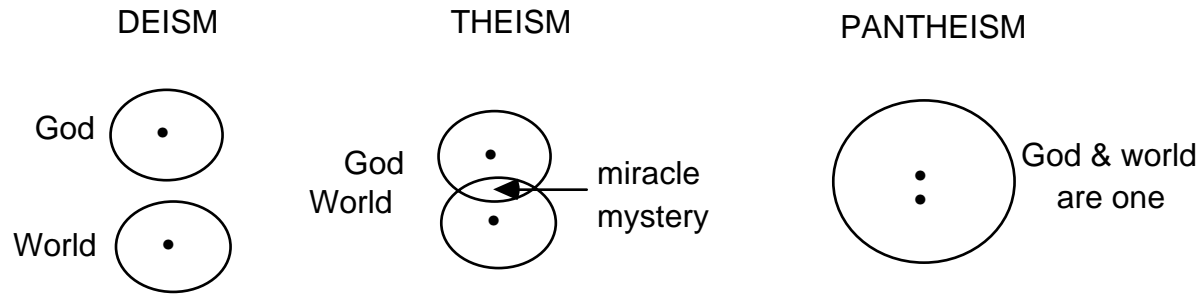A. God's Continued Activity in and for His Purpose in Creation

1) providence as distinct from creation

pantheism: creator and creation are part of a whole constituting an un-divided continuum

panentheism: the special view of some process theologians, following A.N. Whitehead, where God is viewed as both the initial intention as well as the consequent end of the process.

Deism: God created the universe but then left it to its own laws and process without intervention.

Three Views of God's Relation to the Created World

DEISM   THEISM   PANTHEISM

God   God   God & world
                               World   miracle   are one
World   mystery

The View of Process Theology

For a description of process theology, see: *The Openness of God*, Clark Pinnock *et al*, editors, pp. 138ff.

Panentheism

Process

God as initial   God as
intention   consequent end
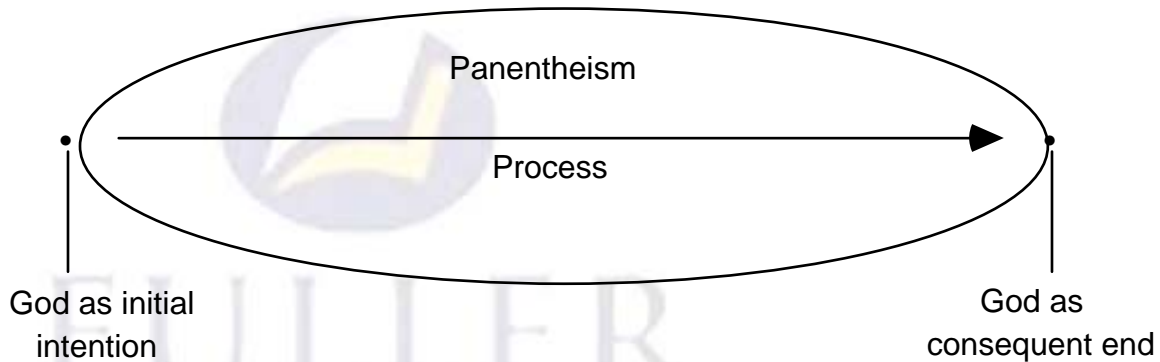
Process theology denies ontological independence, maintaining that God needs the world as much as the world needs God. This drops out the crucial distinction between God and the world so central to the scriptural portrayal. It makes God too passive, able only to experience the world and to organize the elements that present themselves to him. The Bible describes God as more present to the world than that, as a deity working out salvation in history and moving all things forward to a new creation. The relation of God and creation is asymmetrical. The Creator gives life and freedom to the creature and voluntarily limits the exercise of his power in relation to it. God's openness to the world is freely chosen, not compelled. Process theism deserves commendation for opposing a static concept of God and for seeking a dynamic model, but not just any dynamic model will do. It is important to have a dynamic model that is biblically and theologically sound. Social trinitarian metaphysics (a relational ontology) gives us a God who is ontologically other but at the same time is ceaselessly relating and responsive. Clark Pinnock, in *The Openness of God*, Clark Pinnock *et all*, editors. InterVarsity Press, 1994, p. 112.

A Christological Perspective
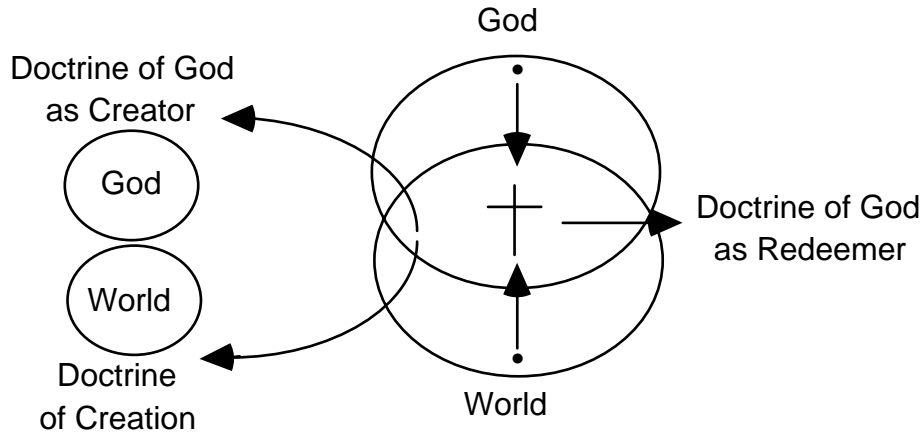
2) providence in traditional orthodoxy

    (a) Medieval theologians made distinctions between:

        general providence: God rules over the events in the entire universe;

        special providence: God exercises his will on behalf of human persons as a special form of care and to accomplish his redemptive purpose.

        singular providence: within God's general providence, he exercises personal care and concern for his elect, so that the believe may rest with absolute confidence upon God. Calvin devotes an entire chapter in his *Institutes* (I, xvii) to this special application of providence.

    (b) The three-fold division of providence in later Orthodoxy (found in Karl Barth, C.D., III/3; see also Weber, F.D., I, pp. 514ff)

        (1) Conservation: God's faithfulness toward his creation preserves and upholds it in its on-going order and existence as he intended it. Providence as conservation is more than natural law--it is the miracle of God's faithfulness and finally, as miracle of redemption as an eschatological liberation from bondage (Ro. 8:21);

        (2) Concurrence: God's providence is related to the spontaneity and freedom of human actions. This view of providence allowed for contingent human actions, but was unable to solve the problem of two different results, one from God's action and one from human actions.

        Reformed theology tended to put ontological brackets around both God's providence and human actions (Weber, F.D., I., p. 518); this eventually led to concepts of divine omni-causality in all human actions as well;

Lutheran orthodoxy tended to avoid putting human actions and divine providence in the same sphere of being (ontological brackets) and, instead, limited divine causality at the level of history and nature, but gracious causality with regard to the benefits available **in Christ**. Karl Barth suggests that this view is closer to the biblical concept of a covenant partnership through which God effects his redemptive purpose (cf. C.D., III/3, p. 146);

(3) Governance: this concept of providence focuses more on the "laws" which God uses to effect his control over creation and to produce his desired results. God grants to human persons "permission" to participate in his providentially ordering of the world and all of the events which take place in it. God in his providence orients these actions and events toward the "good" which he has determined as the goal of creation. The "good" as God's will, depends on the nature and character of the God who wills it.

`If God Himself has no form nor face nor history, if in the name of God we can only look at the empty framework of a concept of the original being and activity of a chief Monad, then the truth that God rules the world is at bottom a dispensable and superfluous luxury." Barth, C.D., III/3, p. 191.

If we look within the biblical tradition, says Weber, we will see that the "good" is not a general term but is realized in the special event of God's covenant with Israel and in his redemptive act in Jesus Christ.

'We are not to understand God's rule as a general governance of history toward a general good end, but as the powerful arrangement of all events toward one event in the midst of history. . . in this event, God takes mercy on man. . . As the "governor" God is the Merciful.' O. Weber, F.D., I., p. 522

3) Providence as an answer to the question of fate

  (a) God is neither the relentless mechanics of the law of the created order, nor sheer coincidence--both are fatalistic.

  Determinism leaves no room for either the freedom of God nor freedom for human decision;

  Indeterminism promises freedom in the form of arbitrariness and autonomy of human decision, but surrenders the individual to the fate of actions, whether right or wrong, good or bad.

  (b) Christian belief in the providence of God differs from an attempt to interpret the necessary or random events of nature and history as meaningful in themselves. Rather, providence is belief in the freedom of God's "yes" expressed in his promise and confirmed in his revelation of Jesus Christ.

History remains ambiguous, but not opaque and sinister. God's will does not come through events in a mechanical way, nor as a solution to the puzzle; rather, God's will "comes to us in the puzzle itself." (Weber, F.D., I., p. 510)

<u>To be a Christian and to believe in God's providence means to be able to endure the uninterpretability of events in a cause and effect kind of way.</u> This frees the believer from fates and opens one to the freedom and purpose of God.

The biblical concept of creation and events is that both are contingent upon God as their source and meaning. Cf. T. F. Torrance, *Contingent and Divine Order,* Oxford, 1981)

4) Providence as a confession of God's faithfulness and power to accomplish his promise and will.

 (a) The confession of belief in God's providence is a rejection of the omnipotence of sin and the tyranny of nature.

God accomplishes his gracious will in spite of human sin and failure

God, through Jesus Christ, has "taken sides" for me against all assembled "powers" whether above or below (cf. Ro. 8:31-39);

(b) For the Israelite, as well as for the Christian, God's providence is attached first of all to promise, with promise embodied in God's participation in our struggles and in our ambiguous existence for the sake of the ultimate realization of his purpose.

Faith in God the Creator is not different from every interpretation of the course of events in a linear fashion, but categorically. It does not need the interpretation of event because it lives on the revelation of the grace of God in Jesus Christ, which is unambiguous, even though it is not predictable. It looks in an entirely new direction. It does not ask about the ground of all things, but it answers to the self-disclosure of the One who is good to us in all things, who makes "everything work for good" for us (Ro. 8:28). It is not the course of events which is good, nor its "meaning," but God who is good. Weber, F.D., I., p. 511

(c) Providence and the will of God.

God's plans are not cast-iron molds to which the course of history passively and perfectly conforms. They are goals that God pursues over time and in different ways. At times, God acts to bring things about unilaterally, as it were. Some Things God wants done, so he does them. . . At other times, however, God interacts with creaturely agents in pursuing his goals. He works in and through situations where people are variously receptive and resistant to his influence. . . The will of God, therefore, is not an irresistible, all-determining force. God is not the only actor on the stage of history. Other agents, too, play a role. Creatures who bear the image of God are capable of deciding and acting, and God takes their decisions and actions into account as he determines what course to follow. To a significant extent, then, God's actions are reactions--different ways he responds to what others do as he pursues his ultimate purposes. For the most part, the

fulfillment of God's will represents a genuine achievement rather than a foregone conclusion. Richard Rice, in *The Openness of God*, Clark Pinnock *et al*, editors, InterVarsity Press, 1994, pp. 38-39.

B. Providence as God's alignment with his people, not with nature

1) The Hebrew concept of providence is not concerned with divine power, but with covenant promise.

Providence is not a matter of divine "law" as interpreted through events, but a *krisis*, a judgment which suspends the teleological process with both its determinism and its ultimate hopelessness.

Providence is a matter of result, not a principle of power; it is the consequence of Jahweh's action of self disclosure both as an act of history and a promise to history.

The wrath of Jahweh is not a principle of judgment which places God over and against the world, but "being in act" is also "being in fellowship" and this is what kindles the strife; the battle of God for his people necessarily involves his struggle against their own apostasy. God's anger is directed against that which seeks to destroy the covenant, and it is primarily his faithfulness in being that makes God such as warrior; he acts and strives in order to create a new peace in righteousness. Thus, the controversy between Jahweh and his own people is waged in deeds, in the history in which nature merely participates as a spectator. K. Miskotte, *When the Gods are Silent*, p. 197

cf. Micah 6:1-2

`Hear what the Lord says; Arise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the Lord and you enduring foundations of the earth; for the Lord has a controversy with his people, and he will contend with Israel.'

2) the modern preoccupation with God and nature

(a) Contemporary persons tend to link God and nature;

e.g. "act of God" used by insurance companies to identify a casualty loss for which there is no other cause and thus no personal liability!

The point of reference for modern persons is still the universe, nature, the great power of natural law, and therefore, providence is considered to be an interpretation of God's actions through these laws.

`Modern man has basically forgotten how to orient himself upon history, how to think of himself as a recipient and doer of history. How then can he understand a special history in which God gives himself up to be his master and companion? Miskotte, *When the Gods are Silent*, p. 195

(b) The contemporary person tends to feel that in the triangle: God--nature--
persons, God is in league with nature over and against persons; i.e.,
providence becomes a matter of determinism, where "acts of God" are equated
with blind and purposeless events; what results is resignation (fatalism) or
rebellion (existential atheism).

GOD
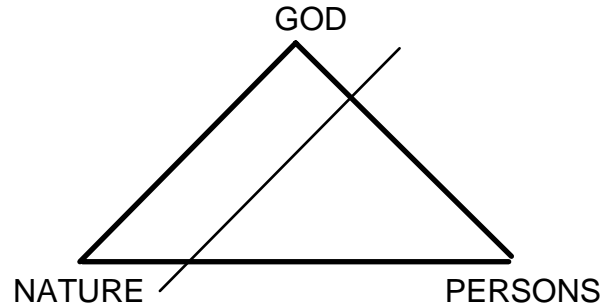
NATURE   PERSONS

The true way of arranging the triangle, is with God aligned with the human person
over and against nature, with covenant as the inner logic of that relation:

GOD

[covenant]

NATURE   PERSONS
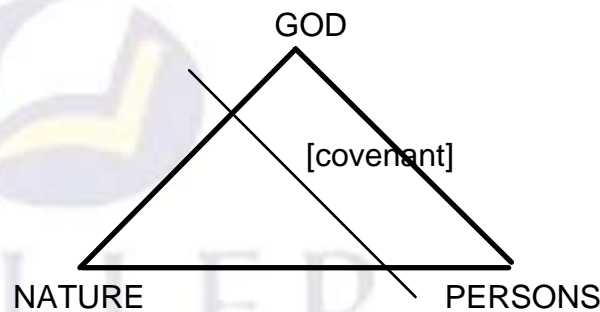
C. Providence and the Kingdom of God

1) The Kingdom of God as the "event" in which God displays his power through
presence;

God's rule is thus not the controlling of events, but the "event" of his rule in
which the entirely of the created and human realm is grasped.

This avoids putting God in a causal relation with events, and yet puts events
within God's rule;

This means that even events which result in evil are within God's "Kingdom"--
that is, the event of his rule by which all is within his grasp.

This means then that we are not able to resolve the riddle, even in faith, but rather that faith
can only live in the tension of the unresolved riddle. In Luther, the riddle is described in such
a way that the devil on the one hand is "God's devil" and on the other his opponent against
whom God constantly is in struggle. If this is the case, then there cannot be an intellectual
solution of the contradiction, for the very reason of faith itself. . . God's will does not yet "get

done" in the here and now, and that its not being carried out is in accordance **with** his will in the most incomprehensible manner. Weber, F.D., I., p. 523

2) God's kingdom as the Person through whom he prevails, so that his promise perseveres.

Jesus is not only the herald of the Kingdom, but is the one who brings the Kingdom as the event of his own life, death and resurrection.

This event of Jesus Christ has within it the paradox of suffering and evil (the cross) and yet in such a way that paradox is not the final answer to the question of providence.

The event of the Kingdom is concealed on the cross, but revealed in the resurrection. Thus, providence itself must be viewed "through the cross" of Christ; but this view is itself not hidden from us.

`The shadow of this cross spreads itself out over the remnant "of this age." But the lordship of God concealed in the mystery of the cross is, for the believer who is baptized into Jesus' death and thus participates in his resurrection (Rom. 6; see also Eph. 2), the reality now believed which is for him certainty and the definition of life now "in the pneumatic reality" (see Rom. 14:7 and then Gal. 5:22ff). Weber, F.D., I., p. 525

2. The Problem of Evil

Blocher, Henri, *Evil and the Cross*, InterVarsity Press, 1995
Becton, Randy. *Does God Care When We Suffer and Will He Do Anything About It?*. Baker, 1988
Beker, J. Christiaan, *Suffering and Hope*, Fortress Press, 1987
Carson, D. A. *How Long, O Lord? Reflections on Suffering and Evil* . Baker, 1990
Davis, Stephen, Ed., *Encountering Evil.* John Knox Press, 1981
Hick, John. *Evil and the God of Love.* Macmillan, 1977, 2nd Edition
McGill, Arthur C. *Suffering: A Test of Theological Method.* Westminster, 1982
Timmer, John. *God of Weakness.* Zondervan, 1988
Towner, W. Sibley. *How God Deals with Evil.* Westminster Press, 1976
Vieth, Richard F. *Holy Power and Human Pain.* Meyer Stone Books, 1988
Walsh, James and Walsh, P.G. *Divine Providence and Human Suffering: Message of the Fathers of the Church.* Michael Glazer, 1985
 Weber, F.D., I., pp. 580-587

A. The philosophical problem:

If God is all powerful, but has not the will to prevent evil, then he is a cruel and malicious God;

If God is loving and good, but lacks the power to prevent evil, then he is a weak and impotent God;

If God has both the will and the power to prevent evil, then whence evil?

In the face of this philosophical problem, some have advocated simply submission to what is:

> `Cease then, nor ORDER Imperfection name:
> Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.
> Know thy own point: This kind, this due degree
> Of blindness, weakness, Heaven bestows on thee.
> Submit.--In this, or any other sphere,
> Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:
> Safe in the hand of one disposing Power,
> Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.
> All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
> All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see;
> All Discord, harmony not understood;
> All partial Evil, universal Good:
> And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,
> One truth is clear, whatever is, is RIGHT.'
> Alexander Pope (1688-1744) *An Essay on Man*

B. The crisis of faith

Habakkuk 1:13 `Thou who art of purer eyes than to behold evil and canst not look on wrong, why dost thou look on faithless men, and art silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?'

2:1-2, 4 `I will take my stand to watch, and station myself on the tower, and look forth to see what he will say to me, and what I will answer concerning my complaint. And the Lord answered me: . . Behold, he whose soul is not upright in him shall fail, but the righteous shall live by his faith.'

1) The biblical tradition has no view of evil as a problem outside of the concept of God's providence; as a crisis of faith, it leads directly to God as the one to whom one must ultimately take responsibility; and in his taking responsibility through participation in the dilemma of evil, he provides redemption from evil, not a solution to it as a problem.

> The other great problem [of creation and providence] is raised by the fact of evil. How is God, in his preserving, accompanying, and ruling the creature (to use K. Barth's expression), to be seen in relationship to the evil which is also the evil in the creature? God's providence must cope not with something neutral, nor with something created good, but with the creature who is resisting God's will. The fact of sin makes our thinking about God's providence fraught with profound tension. If faith states that God's will happens, then it cannot avoid the riddle that God's will does not in fact take place in our lives, and so it can then only speak of God's providence in the petition which is confident of its own fulfillment, "Thy will be done."
> O. Weber, F.D., I., p. 505

2) Evil and human suffering

(a) Does God cause events which produce human suffering?

> Jess Moody, pastor of First Baptist Church Van Nuys
> (L. A. Times, October 5, 1985)

`Q. O.K. Reverend, explain Mexico City (earthquake)
A. Three views:
1. God did it. If so, His moral standards are lower than mine
2. Physics did it. Atheistic or deistic idea. Not good enough
3. Satan did it. My view. If you don't believe in Satan, you must be an atheist or believe in a sadistic God. I choose neither.

Satan causes tragedy. God stirs our goodness out of tragedy: When I was at Oxford, I remember C.S. Lewis saying, "God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain. It is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."'

Does God intervene to prevent evil in some cases, but not in others?

e.g. a pastor (EFC Rose Hill, Newman Grove, Neb.) was traveling in California when he was assaulted leaving his motel room. Hit on the head with an iron bar, he received 23 stitches to close the wounds, which cut through to his skull. He attributed his survival to divine intervention. `I believe the Lord was watching over me,' he said. (*The Evangelical Beacon*, 9/22/86)

Well, a little earlier would have been even better!

(b) Is a weak but good and loving God an answer to human suffering?

See: *Los Angeles Times,* October 19, 1982 `Process Theology: God's Power Over Evil Questioned'

The case of Rabbi Harold Kushner: *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*

`I can worship a God who hates suffering but cannot eliminate it more easily than I can worship a God who chooses to make children suffer and die.'

His son died at the age of 14, following extended illness due to progeria, the "rapid aging disease".

Process theology tends to think of God as participating in the struggle against evil with assurance that he will eventually triumph over it, but will himself be changed in the process.

Response to Oct. 19th article, by John B. Cobb, Jr., and David Ray Griffen, School of Theology, Claremont. Cobb is director and Griffen executive director of the Center for Process Studies.

The problem of God's relation to evil is usually couched in terms of the first image of power. People want to know, therefore, why God does not snatch a child out of the way of a backing car, stop a bullet that is about to kill an innocent person (or stop the finger that was about to pull the trigger), or prevent the operation of the Nazi death camps. Superman is pictured as doing things like that. If God is even more powerful than Superman, why does God stand idly by? We would despise Superman if <u>he</u> did so. . . . We should not think of God as a super-Superman, out-coercing the coercive forces of the world. Rather, God has the evocative, inspiring, transforming power needed by the all-pervasive, loving, creator of the universe. This is the power to evoke order out of chaos, life out of inanimate matter, consciousness out of mere life, love and concern for justice out of hate and indifference, global consciousness out of tribalism, and a resurrected life beyond death. *Los Angeles Times,* Nov. 6, 1982, part II, p. 2

A more traditional response by Stephen Arnold Larson, Pastor, Beverly Orthodox Presbyterian Church:

As a Calvinist, I feel compelled to respond, both from practical and theoretical considerations. From a practical standpoint, any view of God which denies that He controls all things and events makes God very quickly irrelevant. If God does not control all things, how can we be sure that we will even be around to enjoy the good things He has in store for us? . . . Process theology would answer that question by trying to redefine God in a more acceptable manner. People want a real God, or none. The real question is not "Why does God allow suffering?" but rather, "Why does God show mercy at all?" God loves some of us, and he doesn't love others in the same way, and that's why there is suffering for some, and salvation for others. *Los Angeles Times,* October 23, 1982, Part II, p. 2

(c) does God permit evil in order to work good?

While God may not directly cause a natural disaster which results in human suffering, some feel that he permits it as instructive of his power and for the purpose of teaching a moral lesson. This was the conclusion reached by the Rev. Ronald Allen, pastor of a church in Grand Island, Nebraska, after a tornado destroyed almost 1,000 homes on June 3, 1980.

Insofar as our tornado demolished homes and businesses of persons of all economic and religious strata, it took away all claims to pretentiousness. . . [It is untenable to claim as some do] that the devil was responsible. . . and some radio preacher claims that it was God's punishment for sin (Is our sin so much more worse than that of Omaha or New York that we should be singled out?). *The Los Angeles Times*, October 19, 1982.

Evangelist Billy Graham was quoted as saying:

We may not fully understand why God--who is all powerful and loving--permits evil in this world. But whatever else we may say, it must be stressed that man, not God, is guilty for the evil of the world. It is man that bears the responsibility, because man was given the ability to make free moral choices, and he chose deliberately to disobey God. The world as it now exists is not the way God intended it to be. Ibid.,

If, as many Christians believe, God *did* normally determine, cause, and control our circumstances, His fruits would reveal Him to be morally ambivalent at best and malevolent at worst—not our living Father, but our most fearsome enemy. The idea that He might determine the outcome of something while leaving us free to produce that outcome is nonsense. He can't cause an ultimate effect without causing the *cause* of that effect. If He did determine all outcomes, He would also be causing such obvious evils as rapes, child abuse, and wars, but He would also be defeating His own purposes by causing events calculated to push people away from Himself and destroying their faith. He would be causing all the very misery He wants Christians to alleviate. There would be good reason to fear Him, but no reason to love or worship him. (John Boykin, The Gospel of Coincidence—is God in Control?. Zondervan, 1996, p. 201)

(d) do those who suffer perform a vicarious function for the benefit of others?

Graham Monteith, minister in the Church of Scotland, and himself physically disabled, questions the logic which makes the one who suffers a source of inspiration to others. He cites a quotation from a paper prepared by the Church of Scotland:

Without the experience of suffering, a man's nature remains shallow. Pain that has been lived through gives to character a depth that seldom comes from the experience of happiness. No one dare speak glibly of the spiritual consolation of such experience, yet the strong have often to confess to seeing in the less fortunate, a fortitude and a beauty that they cannot understand. . .

Montieth responds:

The earth seen as a "vale of soul-making" seems to be to be good in intention, but cruel in actual fact. It is difficult to ague that any good comes out of disability. It may, in fact, be true, but the disabled, myself included, do not wish to hear it. . . . Thus far I have said that I have not been sustained by a mission, or by any mitigating circumstances, or by the challenge of suffering for Christ, nor indeed that I merit a particular place in the Church because of my disability. So what has sustained me? . . . Christ suffered vicariously. What He did for us was not of His own asking. . . . Therefore, in His sufferings Christ suffered for and with man because the parameters of suffering were set by man. . . . At no point did He abandon God's mission to save us by the sacrifice of His own son. I believe that this is the message which has sustained me and is the beginning of any understanding of the theology of the disabled. *New College Bulletin,* University of Edinburgh, Sept., 1981.

(e) Evil and the created order.

God brings forth creation out of a divine eros for life and love. Creation emerges as real alterity, as really other than God. It has its own power, its own freedom. Its created perfection lies in its autonomy, just as the perfection of divine love and power lies in God's capacity to bring about a reality that is other than Godself. Created perfection is fragile, tragically structured. The tragic structure of finitude and the human capacity for deception and cruelty together account for the possibility and actuality of suffering and evil. Because of its independence, history constitutes a "surprise center" even for God. If creation is authentically other than god, it evades complete determinism at the hands of

divine power. It is the risk and folly of the power of love to create that over which it has only relative control. And yet without creation, divine eros remains merely potential, inarticulate. The fragility of creation and the nonabsolute power of God culminate in the tragedy and rupture of history. (Wendy Farley, Tragic Vision and Divine Compassion (Westminster JohnKnox Press, 1990, p. 127)

C. Christ as the bearer of evil, and the mediator of grace and hope

1) The theological question with regard to evil, is "what does it mean to say that God takes responsibility for evil?"

Martin Luther attempted to answer this question by absolving God of ultimate responsibility while, at the same time, allowing him to control all things for his purpose:

Since God moves and works all in all, He necessarily moves and works even in Satan and wicked man. But he works according to what they are and what He finds them to be, i.e., since they are perverted and evil, being carried along by that motion of Divine Omnipotence, they cannot but do what is perverse and evil . . . when God works in and by evil man, evil deeds result. Yet God cannot do evil Himself, for He is good. He uses evil instruments, which cannot escape the sway and motion of his Omnipotence. The fault which accounts for evil being done when God moves to action lies in these instruments which God does not allow to lie idle. . . We are subject to God's working by mere passive necessity. . . He cannot but do evil by our evil instrumentality, although He makes good use of this evil for His own glory and for our salvation. *Erasmus-Luther: Discourse on Free Will*, 130. [Cited in: John Boykin, The Gospel of Coincidence—is God in Control?. Zondervan, 1996, p. 49)

God's providence is expressed through the event of the Kingdom of God in which evil is grasped as part of the totality of the life which God created, and for which he gives himself as redeemer;

God's providence is expressed through the event of redemption in which he takes evil upon himself so as to deliver, once and for all, human persons from the power of evil to separate persons from his covenanted purpose and goal;

God's providence is expressed through his partnership with human persons in suffering, which is the divine power to be present as advocate in the context of suffering and for the purpose of redeeming those who suffer. This power is as miracle and mystery of divine love.

Wendy Farley leans toward a process theism approach with regard to the relation of God to creation. In other words, she views God as intrinsically involved with creation in a di-polar sense. This preserves, in her mind, the differentiation of God from creation (avoiding pantheism), while at the same time viewing God as working through creation as a redemptive power enabling creation itself to overcome its intrinsic tragic structure of finitude and evil. She does say that 'creation is authentically other than God' but at the same time, 'evades complete determinism at the hands of divine power.' (Tragic Vision, p. 127). Thus, she is left

with a 'nonabsolute power' of God woven into the struggle of divine eros to evoke order out of chaos and meaning out of suffering.

While I agree with her view of creation as intrinsically tragic due to its finite and temporal nature, I do not regard creation as being evil (Barth would say that evil has no ontological status, God never said, "Let there be evil."). The tragic as Farley defines it is not by itself evil, though it can be the precondition of evil. That is, the freedom of creation in its own authentic nature as differentiated ontologically from the Creator, is only tragic from the perspective of human beings who are endowed with a spiritual nature (imago Dei) which promises a destiny beyond that of its own creaturely nature, as I like to put it. For all creatures but the human, their nature determines their destiny. For the human creature, their destiny lies beyond the power of a creaturely nature, though humans 'suffer' from the exigencies of a creaturely nature. In this way, as I have put it, love is 'intrinsically tragic' for it is an investment of the self (the power of personal, spiritual being) in the face of the powers of nature, over which it is, at times, powerless. The power of love to risk itself in the course of a history over which it has no absolute power is a different kind of power. It is what I call a 'third dimension' of power which operates in our two dimensional world (physical and social) with spiritual intentionality, concrete commitments, and eschatological hope. This is the kind of suffering which is not due to evil, but rather due to the contingencies of the created order which is only fragile because human beings are 'fragile creatures' due to their spiritual nature.

Perhaps Farley would be better to speak of the fragility of human kind rather than the fragility of creation, for the kind of fragility I have just described is peculiar to human beings. We may think it tragic to watch our nonhuman pets suffer and die, but this is a projection of the human tragic sense onto and into the created order. Evil, then, is the intensification of the tragic measured by its power to attack and destroy the good that God intended. Without granting ontological status to evil (it is real even though it does not 'exist'--Barth) in its attack on the good that God impressed into the human spirit, it is the 'final enemy' that must be destroyed as the author of Hebrews writes (2:14-15), and that over which God has already achieved the final victory (1 Cor. 15:54-56). The only 'absolute power' that can be attributed to God is thus grounded in his love which 'suffers' the fragility and fate of humanity under sentence of death, and which has overcome this tragic state through resurrection.

T. F. Torrance reminds us that God does not attack evil with the kind of power which would destroy it, but through the power of suffering love attacks it from within and from below:

> This movement of God's holy love into the heart of the world's evil and agony is not to be understood as a direct act of sheer almighty power, for it is not God's purpose to shatter and annihilate the agents and embodiments of evil in the world, but rather to pierce into the innermost centre of evil power where it is entrenched in the piled-up and self-compounding guilt of humanity in order to vanquish it from within and below, by depriving it of the lying structures of half-truth on which it thrives and of the twisted

forms of legality behind which it embattles itself and from which it fraudulently gains its power. Here we have an entirely different kind of and quality of power, for which we have no analogies in our experience to help us understand it, since it transcends every kind of moral and material power we know. . . . (Divine and Contingent Order. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1981, p. 136)

Torrance goes on to suggest that only through the cross of Jesus Christ can we see and understand how God deals with evil in this world.

Yet this is only at the cost of an act, utterly incomprehensible to us, whereby God has taken the sorrow, pain, and agony of the universe into himself in order to resolve it all through his own eternal righteousness, tranquillity, and peace. The centre and heart of that incredible movement of God's love is located in the Cross of Christ, for there we learn that God has refused to hold himself aloof from the violence and suffering of his creatures, but has absorbed and vanquished them in himself, while the resurrection tells us that the outcome of that is so completely successful in victory over decay, decomposition, and death, that all creation with which God allied himself so inextricably in the incarnation has been set on the entirely new basis of his saving grace. . . . The Cross of Christ tells us unmistakably that all physical evil, not only pain, suffering, disease, corruption, death, and of course cruelty and venom in animal as well as human behavior, but also 'natural' calamities, devastations, and monstrosities, are an outrage against the love of God and a contradiction of good order in his creation. (Ibid., pp. 138, 139)

2) The pastoral question with regard to evil is, "How can we mediate this presence and divine power in the face of evil and with those who suffer?"

God's providence is seen through the cross--but is clearly seen and is no illusion;

Faith knows this reality to be stronger than the power of evil; upon this belief rests the entirety of the biblical witness to the power and goodness of God.

For those who believe in specific sovereignty--who deny that human decision-making can ever thwart or hinder in any way God's perfect plan--all evil must be considered nongratuitous. That is, all evil must be viewed as a necessary means to a greater good in the sense that it is something that God causes or allows because it is a necessary component in his preordained plan. . . . And we, like process theists, believe that much of the pain and suffering we encounter may well be gratuitous--may well not lead to any greater good. Moreover, viewing evil in this manner has practical significance. For instance, it means that we, unlike proponents of specific sovereignty, need not assume that some divine purpose exists for each evil that we encounter. We need not, for example, assume when someone dies that God "took him home" for some reason, or that the horrors many experience in this world in some mysterious way fit into God's perfect plan. We can justifiably assume, rather, that God is often as disappointed as are we that someone's earthly existence has ended at an early age or that someone is experiencing severe depression or that someone is being tortured. . . We remain free to assume that such evil was an undesired byproduct of misguided human freedom and/or the normal outworking of the natural order. David Basinger, in *The Openness of God*, Clark Pinnock *et al*, editor, InterVarsity Press, 1994, pp. 169f.

God is indeed sovereign, but His sovereignty does not require that He exercise total control of everything everybody does. It is diminished not a whit by granting autonomy to creatures, who make their own decisions, reap the consequences of what they sow, and thereby create their own

circumstances. For God to "send" circumstances would be a clumsy, ineffective way to accomplish His purposes since most do *not* learn spiritual lessons from their experiences. (John Boykin, The Gospel of Coincidence—is God in Control?. Zondervan, 1996, p. 201)

3) Omnipotence, sovereignty and evil.

Omnipotence is the power to do whatever can be done absolutely, that is, whatever is logically possible. But to overcome the tragic structure of finitude, to be free animate beings from all suffering, to determine finite freedom so that it will always love the good and have the courage to pursue it—these things are not possible. The potential for suffering and evil lie in the tragic structure of finitude and cannot be overcome without destroying creation. The power to create must therefore include the power to redeem. The fragility of creation of creation requires the continual presence of divine power to resist the evils resident in history. But it is the virtue of this power that it is not absolute, it is interactive. If this mutuality is construed s a limitation upon divine power, it is the limitation that is entailed by the alterity of finite existence and by the nature of love. It is the nature of love to desire the freedom and well-being of the beloved rather than domination. Omnipotence is not *limited* at all, but its power is to shape life and mediate love. Yet because of the inexorable fragility of creation and the potential for sin, the infinite abyss of divine power and love is destined to disappointment. Wendy Farley, Tragic Vision and Divine Compassion (Westminster JohnKnox Press, 1990, p. 125)

The ways God operates in our lives mesh perfectly with the ways He designed us to operate. He does not normally determine, cause, and control our circumstances, because He could do so only by controlling *us* to the *n*th degree. He does not, for instance, give us jobs or customers, rig elections, or cause certain people to be in certain places at certain times. Circumstances are people's doing, not God's. He *can* intervene in them, He *has*, and on occasion He may choose to—but He normally does not. His kingdom is not of this world. (John Boykin, The Gospel of Coincidence—is God in Control?. Zondervan, 1996, p. 201)

A different kind of power.

"God is not the supreme will-to-power over others but the supreme will-to-community in which power and life are shared. To speak of God as that ultimate ;power whose being is in giving, receiving and sharing love, who gives life to others and wills to live in community, is to turn upside down our understandings of both divine and human power. The reign of the triune God is the rule of sovereign love rather than the rule of force. A revolution in our understanding of the true power of God and of fruitful human power is thus implied when God is described as triune. God is *not* absolute power, *not* infinite ego-centrism, *not* majestic solitariness. The power of the triune God is not coercive but creative, sacrificial, and empowering love; and the glory of the triune God consists not in dominating others but in sharing life with others. In this sense confession of the triune God is he only understanding of God that is appropriate to and consistent with the new Testament declaration that God is love (1 John 4:8)." Daniel Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1991, pp. 63-64.

For a response to the proponents of Open God Theism, see: *God Under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents God*, Douglas S. Huffman and Eric L. Johnson, editors. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002, Norman L. Geiseler, and H. Wayne House, , editors. *The Battle for God: Responding to the Challenge of Neotheism*. Grand Rapids, Kregal, 2002

Open God Theism, as viewed by Clark Pinnock and others, challenge the traditional concept of God described as Classical Theism. In response to Pinnock and the concept of Open God Theism, theologians and philosophers who defend classical theism argue that God must have perfect foreknowledge of every event and must remain immutable and not subject to change. They defend the concept of God's omniscience and specific sovereignty as essential to a doctrine of God which preserves God's total otherness from the world while, at the same time, allows for God's determination of every event that actually and possibly takes place in the created order. The fact that future events are contingent upon human agency and other factors and forces in the world does not alter the fact that God 'knows' these future events in the same way that God 'knows' past or present events. In order to sustain this view, proponents of classical theism argue for God's divine 'eternality.' That is, God does not relate to past, present and future as chronological events but as 'timeless' events. From this perspective the term divine foreknowledge is really not an apt expression. We think of God as knowing things 'before they happen' as we are bound to time. God, however, in the view of classical theism, is not related to chronological time as a sequence but from the perspective of 'eternality.' How this can be understood from our perspective of being in time' cannot be explained by proponents of classical theism, but must be asserted for the sake of preserving what is claimed to be a biblical concept of God as sovereign, immutable, and with perfect knowledge of every event which we think of as contingent but for God is non-contingent. For example, William Lane Craig argues, that a perceptualist model of divine foreknowledge construes divine knowledge on the analogy of sense perception. God 'looks' and 'sees' what is there. "The perceptualist model of divine cognition does run into real problems when it comes to God's knowledge of the future, for, since future events do not exist, there is nothing there to perceive." Craig then proposes an alternative—a conceptualist model of divine knowledge. "His knowledge of the future is not based on his 'looking" ahead and "seeing" what lies in the future. . . Rather, God's knowledge is self-contained; it is more like a mind's knowledge of innate ideas. As an omniscient being, God has essentially the property of knowing all truths; there are truths about future events; *ergo* God knows all truths concerning future events. "What does God Know?" In *God Under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents God*, Douglas S. Huffman and Eric L. Johnson, editors. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002, p. 155.

With regard to God's relation to evil events, proponents of classical theism argue:

 "It is logically possible that God has a morally sufficient reason for permitting every evil there is, including heinous inscrutable evils. This we may know even if we do not know that there actually are morally justifying reasons for God's permission of the evils that exist. Still less are we required to know what reasons actually do justify God's permission of each instance of evil, if indeed they are justified. . . . It is the existence of inscrutable evils that make it seem to us that there are gratuitous evils. But inscrutable evils may or may not be actually gratuitous, just as evils that appear gratuitous may or may not be actually gratuitous. . . .Evidence for the existence of God is evidence that no inscrutable evils are genuinely gratuitous. The existence of inscrutable evil implies that if the God of classical theism exists, then such a God must have morally sufficient reasons for permitting inscrutable evil." R. Douglas Geivett, "How Do We Reconcile the Existence of God and Suffering," in *God Under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents God*, Douglas S. Huffman and Eric L. Johnson, editors. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002, p. 186

A book published by Baker (March of 2003) includes a debate between Christopher Hall (a classical theist) and John Sanders (a proponent of Open Theism) titled: *Does God Have a Future: A Debate on Divine Providence*. The book is a compilation of a series of email discussions between the two and will provide a clear argument from both sides of the issue. For a discussion of divine foreknowledge and free will see, Michael R. Saia, *Does God Know the Future: A Biblical Investigation of Foreknowledge and Free Will*. Fairfax, VA: Xulon Press, 2002. For a display of quotations from Orthodox and Open Theism see: House, H. Wayne. *Charts on Open Theism and Orthodoxy*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2003

VI. A Theological Paradigm for Personhood

On Being Human, Ray S. Anderson, pp. 1-68, and appendix B
Weber, F. D., I., pp. 529-579
Barth, C.D., III/2, pp. 222-231; 243-274
H.W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*

1. The Self as Personal Unity

A. The functional unity of the self

1) Soul and body as a unity of experience

The human person is both body and soul; embodied soul and besouled body; the person is not just a soul who has a body, but rather exists as a body/soul unity.

The body is the soul in its outward form, while the soul is the body in its mode of personal experience; Barth says: `I cannot express or represent myself without the participation of my body and without its co-responsibility for the manner and genuineness of my expression and manner.' C.D., III/2, p. 378

While the Greeks viewed the individual as primarily a soul encased within a temporal body, the Hebrews view the body and the soul as the reality of the person; the only expression for the soul is its life in the body; and the body has no life except that of the soul.

(a) The soul is the vitality of the body

While the body is necessary for the expression of the soul and is the soul in its outward form, the soul is the primary agent who acts through this particular body;

That which affects the life of the body affects the live of the soul; in the same way, without the soul as its source of life, the body has no life of its own.

(b) The life of the soul (*nephesh*) is its orientation toward God; all creatures have soul, but the human soul is qualitatively different in that it is given directly by God through the divine breath (Gen. 2:7);

The human soul (*nephesh*) is not determined by the general principle of creaturely, natural life, but is life oriented toward God in a special sense (cf. Prov. 8:35f);

(c) *Nephesh*, as the human soul, denotes both the inward and outer life of the person.

It denotes not only "breath" of life, but also the place where the activity of life takes place; the particular "features" which characterize a person's soul, are thus features which are expressed as an embodied soul.

(d) Spirit enlivens the soul/body unity

Like *nephesh*, *ruach* does not determine the difference between the human and the non-human. Even animals have the spirit of God (Ecc. 3:18-21).

Yet, the human spirit is unique in its orientation of the body/soul unity toward God in a special relationship determined by God. The whole person is spirit since the spirit is the principle and power of life in its orientation toward God (cf. W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, vol. 2, pp. 131-32)

The spirit of a person is the very life of the soul/body unity, and not a third factor in the human personality.
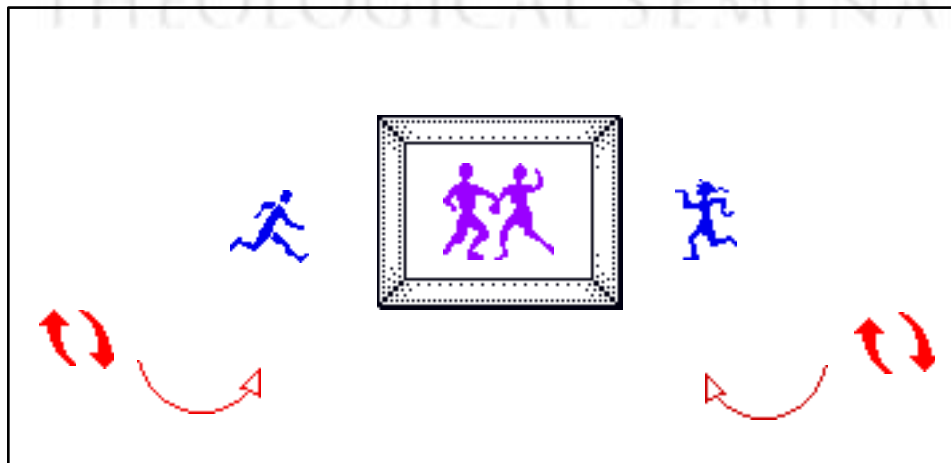
2) The heart (*leb*) as the center and unity of the self

(a) The heart is the totality of the soul/body unity as the character and operating power of the self; the heart is the direction of the person's activities and actions; It is the seat of the intellectual and volitional activity of the soul;

(b) The will is a function of the heart as an expression of the direction that the self takes in the expression of its life in the world and before god;

Without this volition, the soul has no expression of its own; Jahweh wants a priest who shall `do all according to that which is his heart and soul' (1 Sam. 2:35).

When Pharaoh resisted the will of God, his heart is said to have turned against the people (Exodus 14:5), meaning that his will was turned in a different direction than he originally expressed. When God "touches a heart," he determines its will (1 Sam. 10:26)

(c) An intelligent person is said to "have a heart" (Job 34:10), while a foolish person "lacks a heart" (Prov. 24:30,33);
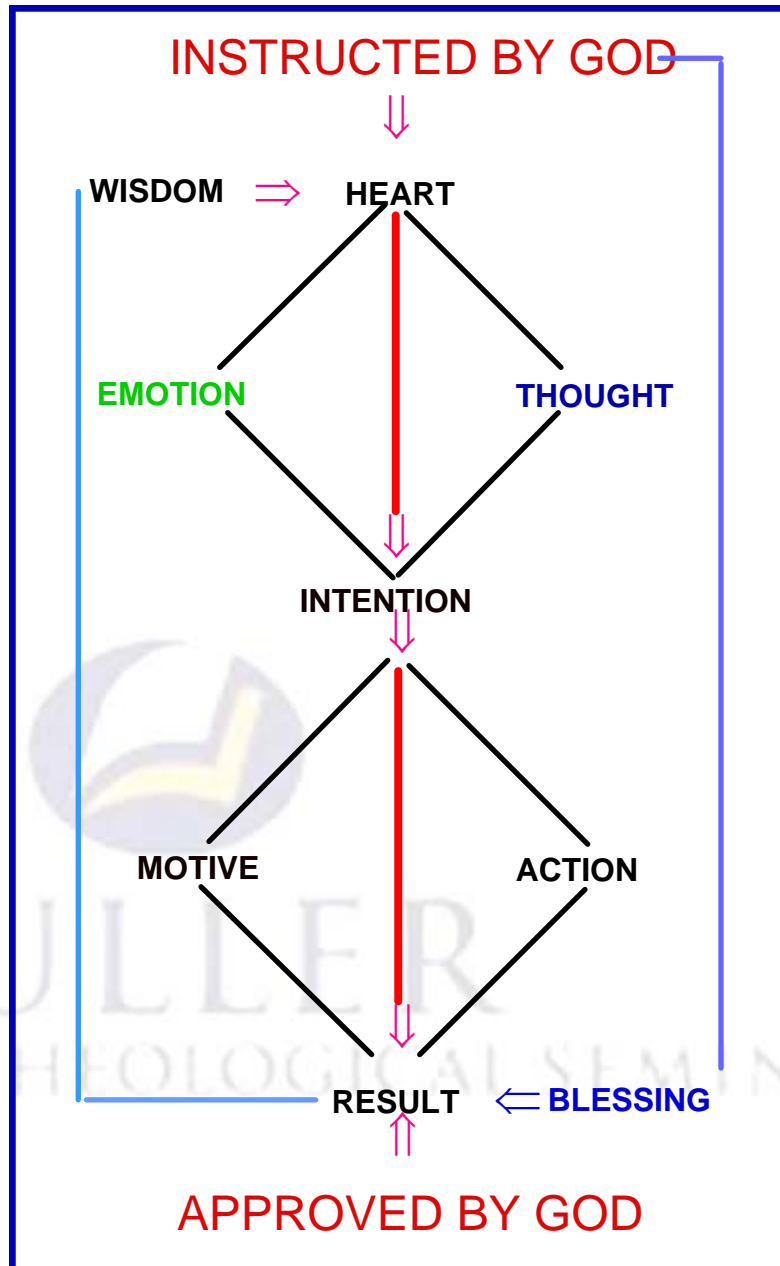
Because the heart is the seat of the intellectual and moral live of the person, it should be guarded with the greatest vigilance:

`My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. For they are life to him who finds them, and healing to all his flesh. Keep your heart with all vigilance; for from it flow the springs of life.' Prov. 4:20-21.

B. The personal unity and freedom of the self

  1) The self as determined by the Word and grace of God

    The unity and continuity of the self which persists through the contradictions of sin, repentance, and renewal are due to the "invariable being" of the self as an object of God's determination;

    The ontological status of the self is thus not a predicate of creaturely or historical existence, as though one could cease to be the self that God determines one to be;

    As an object of divine grace in being created to be a human person, the self experiences **freedom**, **responsibility**, and **differentiation in unity**;

    (a) Freedom in dependence

      Creatureliness and humanity are not an antithesis, as though opposed to each other;

      This is the construct of the human self as defined by R. Niebuhr, drawing upon S. Kierkegaard (cf. *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, vol. 1); Niebuhr posits a dialectical struggle between freedom and necessity, between the self as infinite and the self as finite;

      The freedom of the self is not one aspect of the self set against another aspect (e.g. the mental [spirit] as against the flesh [dust]).

      Freedom is the destiny of the self as an orientation of the body/soul unity toward God and his determination for the life of the person.

      The human person is a "sixth day" creature summoned to participate in the "seventh day" (cf. Barth, C.D., III/1, p. 178); as such, human life is an eschatological reality, not merely a teleological possibility arising out of some natural or creaturely possibility;

      Freedom is thus not a human "attribute" as such, but a divine determination; this is a freedom for God, as well as a freedom "for the other" person:

        This means that if we are to embrace human nature as such, as created and given by God, then we must grasp as its motivating element the decisive point that man is essentially determined to be with his fellow-man gladly, in the indicated freedom of the heart. By nature he has no possibility or point of departure for any other choice. If we have to maintain that he has this choice in fact, it does not derive from his nature. For we cannot make God his Creator responsible for this fatal possibility. And it is even worse if we praise the Creator for obviously giving man the possibility of a different choice. For this is to praise Him for allowing and enabling man to choose in his heart inhuman as well as human, or both perhaps alternately. And we then ascribe to human nature the strange

distinction of a freedom for its own denial and destruction. We should not call this freedom nature, but sin. K. Barth, C.D., III/2, p. 273

This freedom is thus, a freedom "in dependence", for only as the human person is dependent upon both God and the other person is one free. Freedom **from** the other is not the freedom granted by God; this freedom in dependence is what we call "human nature". For Barth's discussion of human love and erotic love, see C.D. III/2, pp. 279-285.

(b) Responsibility in hearing

In the creation account (Genesis 1-2), the human person is the only creature addressed by God and the only creature to respond;

Behind the expression of the human self in words, lies the original **word** which has been spoken, and which speaks the human self into being, and causes it to hear and respond.

Before and beyond it [poetry] there was prose, and it was non-poetry; it was non rhythmical, unbound but not disengaged speech, unmeasured but not extravagantly fulsome (*masslos übermässiges*) word. All poetry which has since come into being within the circle of its light is inspired by its prose spirit. **Since that time** in the dark silence that surrounded the beginnings of mankind the door which separates each from every other and all from the Outside and the Beyond **has been broken** and never again will it be altogether closed: the door of the Word. Franz Rosenzweig, cited by K. Miskotte, *When the God's are Silent*, p. 204.

The response-ability of the human person is grounded in God's determination that the human self should be a covenant partner with God, and a fellow human to others (cf. Barth, C.D. III/2, p. 276); this responsibility is thus ontological (an essential aspect of being human), and not merely ethical (a moral possibility);

Refusal to hear is disobedience, and thus there is no authentic human disobedience; there is no escape from the Word (cf. Psalm 139:5-12);

The man who is threatened with becoming deaf and dumb must fear for his very humanity. It is the hearing, the hearing above all [Ps. 38:13,14] that makes man--that, and the corresponding opening of the mouth, the being able to answer (vv 13b, 14b). From a quite different aspect, the wisdom writings recognize the hearing as being the root of true humanity. . . It is not in a mirror that a man recognizes himself truly; it is in the call that comes to him and in the promise that he receives. . . . Self-knowledge does not come about through self-reflection but through the call which opens up a new vista. The man who, having closed his ears, takes himself as starting point and never moves away from himself not only loses his humanity among men; he also sets himself up as God in opposition to God; thus he becomes godless even in his piety (Prov. 28:9): . . . Thus the mouth, which expresses what ear and eye had perceived becomes the organ which distinguishes man above all other creatures. The animal also has an ear as such, as well as an eye. It is in man's speech that his ear evinces itself as being a truly human ear

and his eye as being a human eye. (H. W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, pp. 74,75,77)

The inhumanity of disobedience--not hearing--is more cruel and destructive than the "natural" bestiality of the other creatures; the grounds for human accountability thus lie in knowledge of one's own disobedience, denying the truth of revelation (cf. Romans 1).

cf. Isaiah 6:9ff "make the heart of this people fat, and their ears heavy"

  Matt. 13:14 cited by Jesus as the purpose of his parables

 John 12:39 cited by John in explanation for the unbelief which Jesus' ministry produced;

Acts 28:26 cited by Paul to those who disbelieved his testimony

Ro. 11:8 cited by Paul again in explaining why Israel was hardened through the very revelation of the Word.

(c) Differentiation in unity

(1) The unity of the self as a history of self enactment

`Being in the sense of human being is a process of self enactment.' (Barth, C.D., III/2, p. 126)

Freedom and responsibility are not static attributes of the self, but the "rationality" of self enactment; that is, the self becomes and is a self through a process of interaction with others.

cf. Genesis 2, where it is said concerning the solitary man, "it is not good for the man to dwell alone." Adam is not differentiated as a self in naming the animals and in his activity regarding other creatures as objects.

Only when his undifferentiated unity is differentiated so as to create a unity of being with the other is the image of God completed.

(2) The self is not merely a cluster of personality characteristics;

cf. Barth on the ambiguity of terms like personality, person, and personalism, III/2, pp. 93f.

The personal nature of the self is upheld through encounter with other persons;

This is one aspect of the image of God as a relational reality, with the I-Thou differentiation a construct of the unity of the self in relation.

(3) The self acquires a history through interaction with other persons; this is a history which has subjectivity as the core of personal being;

History, therefore, does not occur when the being is involved in changes or different modes of behavior intrinsic to itself, but when something takes place upon and to the being as it is. The history of a being begins, continues and is completed when something other than itself and transcending its own nature encounters it, approaches it and determines its being in the nature proper to it, so that it is completed and enabled to transcend itself in response and relation to this new factor. The history of a being occurs when it is caught up in this movement, change and relation, when its circular movement is broken from without by a movement towards it and the corresponding movement from it, when it is transcended from without so that it must and can transcend itself outwards. Barth, C.D., III/2, p. 158

The loss of this "history" as a reality of encounter and fellowship at the personal level is a loss of emotional and mental health; we institutionalize persons who cannot sustain personal and social relations as a "history" of encounter;

"Self enacting" apart from relation to God and others is a kind of "death" to the self; the self retreats into its own world with autonomous feelings, perceptions, and actions;

It is to sink into the "sixth day", where nature becomes destiny, freedom and responsibility are lost, and the self no longer has a history of covenant partnership;

God's own being, is a "history" of self enactment through the inner relations of God, who is differentiated in his unity of being;

Thus, a history of salvation (heilsgeschichte) is not a meta history, but real history, where God constitutes the basis for the authentic history of human persons through his owns interaction and encounter with those who are "lost" and whose personal history has become "death"; As Barth says, it is the man Jesus who teaches us that the being of man is history (C.D., III/2, p. 157)

Therapeutic approaches to the healing of persons who suffer emotional and spiritual breakdown therefore should seek to restore the "historical" dimension of the self as a construct of spiritual and social unity.

2.The Self as Social/Spiritual Unity

A. The openness of the human "soul" as personal being

1) Openness towards other souls is part of the fundamental nature of the human soul;

The soul as the expression of the life of the body is an orientation toward the other; thus, the human soul, or self, is not a self contained entity;

The "individual" is only self consciously distinct in relation to others; individualism as a philosophy of the human person is a restriction of the self, and can become a distortion of the self;

2) The growth of the person into a self identity takes place in a context of social and spiritual interaction, with intentionality of love as the motive force;

The integration of the various components of the self into an I-Self reality, is part of the construct of an I-Thou experience;

The mental and physical dimensions of the self are correlated through the openness of the self toward a transcending subject (self):
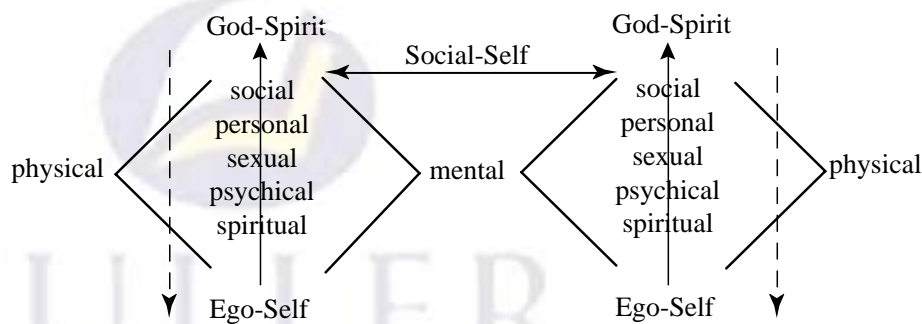
3) The life of the soul becomes "singular" in its union with other souls;

When souls are united, they achieve a common will and thus form a psychic and spiritual unity. The word <u>nephesh</u> rarely occurs in the plural, because souls which are together are generally taken as a unity. When confronting Jahweh the Israelites invariably say, `our soul waits for Jahweh' (Ps. 33:20). The community becomes a "collective person."

The soul is partly entire in itself and partly forms an entirety with others. Thus, wisdom warns against being a companion with fools, for one's very soul is united with them leading to destruction.

Starting from its center as an integration of the self as a soul/body unity, the life of the soul as an orientation of the spirit seeks its boundaries in others, in parents, siblings, friends, community;

The life of the person is thus fluid to some extent, as these boundaries of the soul expand and shrink, going through changing and shifting commitments; yet, the center of the soul as the essential person that one is remains constant, even in its growth and change.

This accounts for personality and behavioral changes with no loss of continuity of the core self;

B. The social nature of the self as an objective basis for personal subjectivity;

cf. here, John Macmurray, *The Self as Agent*, and *Persons in Relation* (often bound together in one volume, *The Form of the Personal*)

1) The existence of the self as "resistance" to other persons

I need you to be myself. This need is for a fully positive personal relation in which, because we trust one another, we can think and feel and act together. Only in such a relation can we really be ourselves. If we quarrel, each of us withdraws from the other into himself, and the trust is replaced by fear. We can no longer be ourselves in relation to one another. We are in conflict, and each of us loses his freedom and must act under constraint. There are two ways in which this situation can be met without actually breaking the relationship--which, we are assuming, is a necessary one. There may be a reconciliation which restores the original confidence; the negative motivation may be overcome and the positive relation re-established. Or we may agree to co-operate on conditions which impose a restraint upon each of us, and which prevent the outbreak of active hostility. The negative motivation, the fear of the other, will remain, but will be suppressed. This will make possible co-operation for such ends as each of us has an interest in achieving. But we will remain isolated individuals, and the co-operation between us, though it may appear to satisfy our need of one another, will not really satisfy us. For what we really need is to care for one another, and we are only caring for ourselves. We have achieved society, but not community. We have become associates, but not friends. Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, p. 150.

The active opposition, or resistance of the other is a form of subjectivity which we experience in others, either in a positive or negative form;

This resistance provides an objective basis for our own subjectivity, so that we are based on a practical and not merely theoretical experience of the self;

2) The resistance of the other in either a negative or positive form, grounds my own self consciousness in an objective relation;

The consciousness of the self, therefore, is not primarily an act of cognition, but of feeling;

`Touch, therefore, as a special sense, is the awareness of contact and therefore of the distinction between Self and Other, and all cognition by means of touch is a tactual discrimination which presupposes this.' Macmurray, The Self As Agent, p. 123

`There are special nerves for pain, but not for pleasure.' ibid.

Yet, pleasure and pain are both feelings. At the level of sensory consciousness there is no distinction between the sensing and what is sensed. What takes place is a distinction between sensing and feeling.

The feeling of pleasure is an interpretation of feeling which has its basis in the "will to meaning" which lies within the self;

Intensification of feelings of pleasure, for example, can lead to sensations of pain; in this case, sensation overrides the capacity of the self to experience pleasure as an interpretation of the self with regard to itself and others;

3) The achievement of community of persons is grounded in actions which embody intentionality to share a common "soul" or a common history and a common destiny.

`The inherent ideal of the personal is a community of persons in which each cares for all the others, and no one cares for himself.' Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, p. 159

Thus, love integrates the self objectively, not subjectively. Emotions as a form of feelings, are rational in that they are directed toward the objective reality of the other subject. cf. Macmurray, *Reasons and Emotions.*

cf. Barth, C.D., III/2, pp. 250-265, on the four aspects of the self as a "being in encounter"

(a) look the other in the eye

(b) mutual speech and hearing

(c) mutual support in the act of being

(d) on both sides, all of this done "gladly"

VII. Human Life as Male and Female

Anderson,*On Being Human*, Chapter 8
Atkins, Anne. *Split Image--Male and Female after God's Likeness,* Eerdmans, 1987
Barth, C.D. III/1, pp. 183-206; III/2, pp. 132-152
Douglass, Jane Dempsey. *Women, Freedom and Calvin*, Westminster, 1985

Jewett, *Man as Male and Female*
Micks, Marianne H. *Our Search for Identity--Humanity in the Image of God,* Fortress, 1982
Trible, Phyllis. *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality.* Fortress, 1978

1. Sexuality as Differentiation and Complementarity

A. Sexuality and the image of God

1) There is a divinely determined order of sexuality intrinsic to the image of God;

Genesis 1:27 `So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.'

cf. Barth, C.D., III/1, pp. 195f; Barth argues that sexual differentiation as male and female, male or female is the primary differentiation of humanity as co-humanity, and thus is rooted in the divine image it self; for a criticism of Barth's view, see, G.C. Berkouwer, *Man--the Image of God*, pp. 93ff.

(a) There is thus an essential order to humanity grounded in co-humanity--the one with and for the other;

(b) This essential order is a polarity of being experienced through creaturely humanity as male and female;

2) Human sexuality is grounded in co-humanity as essential differentiation and complementarity

(a) Sexual differentiation as male and female, male or female, points to an essential differentiation which is constitutive of personhood itself;

Barth argues that sexual differentiation as male or female is the only differentiation for human persons, and that this is not the case with animals; cf. C.D., III/l, p. 186f.

Animals remain "undifferentiated" in the solidarity of their species; sexuality does not become a history of personal identity for them as it does for humans.

Because God is differentiated in the unity of his being, so too humans, created in his image, are differentiated in the unity of being; the concrete form of this differentiation for humans is expressed through male and female sexual differentiation;

There is no being of a person "above" the differentiation, says Barth, but only in the differentiation (III/2, p. 289);

O. Weber does not totally agree with Barth at this point, but nonetheless concludes in much the same way:

> All the other relationships can be interchanged: the father is also the son, the mother is also the child, and in the differentiated society the "master" can also be the "slave," and the "king" can easily become a component of the "nation." But the man will never become woman, nor the woman become man. It is an unmistakable trait of the mythological self-exaltation of man that this differentiation is denied as a fundamental and essential one (the androgynous myth). . . . But if God is the covenant God who grants us community and determines us for this community, then that polarity is established between us men, between I and Thou, which takes on its most concrete form in the predetermination of man for sexual duality. Weber, F.D., I, pp. 575-6.

The polarity of personal being which is constituted by the image of God in humans, is expressed through the sexual duality and reciprocity of male and female; that is, human personhood is experienced as concrete, creaturely existence, so that biological factors are the means of expressing personal attributes of being;

(b) Complementarity of personal being as an I-Thou construct of co-humanity is experienced through sexual polarity and identity;

Complementarity entails difference, but a difference which "matches" the difference in the other; a symmetrical relation (like peas in a pod) is quite unlike a complementary relation (like cogged wheels in a gear box--or differential);

The fundamental differential between God and humans who bear his image and likeness constitutes a relation between the "unlike", not an exact identity; thus, the differentiation of human person also entails an "unlike" but in a relation of reciprocity and unity.

The Roman Catholic theologians, Lawler, Boyle and May also support the concept of differentiation and complementarity:

"This differentiation does not indicate a difference in human dignity but rather points to an inherent complementarity and mutuality in the very apex of visible creation." (*Catholic Sexual Ethics: A Summary, Explanation, and Defense*. R. Lawler., J. Boyle, Jr., and W. E. May. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Inc., 1985, pp. 18-19)

In 1981, Pope John Paul II, in a document on the Christian Family states that "in creating the human race 'male and female,' God gives man and woman an equal personal dignity, endowing them with the inalienable rights and responsibilities proper to the human person." (*Familiaris Consortio: The Christian Family in the Modern World*. See, *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post-conciliar Documents. Vol. 2).*

3) Human sexuality as male and female is contingently related to personal humanity;

(a) Integrity of sexual "mating" is contingent upon integrity of personal "meeting";

(b) This is not reversible: integrity of personal meeting is not contingent upon mating;

This means that sexual cohabitation is not essential to sexual differentiation as an order of co-humanity; what is essential is that:

    (a) Personal identity and orientation toward the other carry with it sexual identity as either male or female;

    (b) And that sexual cohabitation carry with it a promise of openness and trust as person to and with person;

The contingent relation between biological sexual differentiation and personal relation as an I-Thou encounter means that the two are experienced as a unity of personal being, but that biological sexual polarity is not determinative of personal value or fulfillment in a kind of "cause and effect" relation;

4) Gender identity is orientation toward a goal, not merely a determination of a creaturely nature;

This is contrary to Stephen Clark (*Man and Woman in Christ*) who argues that the true order of male and female is "created into the human race" as a natural, biological determinism (pp. 440ff). Thus, in his view, the biological nature of woman has been created in a subordinate relation to the biological nature of man; grace cannot change nature, but only enable it to fulfill its divinely intended purpose.

Orientation toward a goal, means that the determining factor in human personhood is not creaturely or biological nature (which is largely shared with animals) but rather the purpose of God for humans to be covenant partners with him as well as with each other; this is an eschatological perspective which bears directly upon the present situation of each person, and yet which preserves the contingent relation between creaturely humanity and personal humanity;

5) Marriage is a unique event of co-humanity which has its own purpose and value, and which is an eschatological sign of the goal of humanity (cf. Genesis 2:23-24; Eph. 5:22-23);

Thus, sexuality as a component of co-humanity makes marriage a possibility, but not a necessity, for personal fulfillment is created in the divine image;

Sexuality is not made sacred by marriage (contrary to Brunner), but is sanctified by true humanity--i.e., co-humanity (Barth) [see *On Being Human*, p. 124 where this distinction is discussed];

The New Testament christian community already anticipated this eschatological reality in viewing the brother/sister relation as the primary one; but even here we should note the sexual differentiation and gender identification involved;

6) Sexual disorder results from breaking of the contingent relation between human sexuality and human personhood experienced as differentiation;

(a) Sexual disorder is thus first of all a confusion of the essential order of differentiation experienced as co-humanity;

Sexual differentiation as essential to personal being has implications for same sex relationships; where sexual union is attempted without differentiation, this can be understood as a source of confusion and contradiction to one's essential order of being; cf. Barth, C.D., III/4, pp. 166f

Relationships which "conceal" sexual differentiation or sexual identity through attempted intimacies can lead to confusion of personhood and a breakdown in the integrity of the I-Thou relation itself; cf. Barth, C.D., III/4, pp. 154ff; *On Being Human*, pp. 125ff.

(b) Sexual disorder occurs wherever heterosexual relations are experienced without the openness and commitment of personal being, one to the other, even, and especially, within marriage;

(c) Treatment of sexual disorder should then be located in the healing of personal and social structures of individual lives.

B. The Implicit Tragic Dimension of Human Sexuality

Tragedy places evil within a context that is more inclusive than human fault. This is not to say that sin, guilt, cruelty, and indifference have no role in evil. But all human action occurs in an environment that is not entirely shaped by human decision or desire. Tragic vision is theistic and repudiates the metaphors of a savage god or malevolent cosmos. But finitude itself seems to be tragically structured: the conditions of finite existence include conflict and fragility. This tragic structure is not evil, but it makes suffering both possible and inevitable prior to any human action. (Wendy Farley, <u>Tragic</u> <u>Vision</u> <u>and</u> <u>Divine</u> <u>Compassion</u>, Westminster JohnKnox Press, 1990, pp. 31-32)

Human beings do not experience themselves as complete or fulfilled. A perennial restlessness and yearning dogs our steps. Human beings are constituted by desire. Desire should not imply only selfish longing for personal satisfaction. It is also a faculty that permits human beings to orient themselves toward various goods such as beauty or family or work. Nonetheless, desire accentuates the fragility and unsteadiness of freedom. It is the nature of desire to be in principle unfulfillable. . . There never comes a time when I have everything I desire. There is no job, no security, no affection, not even an enlightenment that would so perfectly satisfy and complete me that nothing more could be desired. If nothing else, I would continue to desire the well-being of others. Further, no concrete desire ever perfectly coincides with its possible fulfillment. My love for my husband, however intense and delightful, does not exhaust my desire to love and be loved. Finally, the content of desire is ambiguous. People long for spiritual happiness, but they also would like a good meal. People desire private satisfactions as well as affection and respect. Happiness and pleasure are not in principle mutually exclusive, but neither do they exist in natural harmony. The

restlessness and conflict in desire reinforce feelings of unease and dissatisfaction. (Wendy Farley, <u>Tragic Vision</u> <u>and</u> <u>Divine</u> <u>Compassion</u>, Westminster JohnKnox Press, 1990, pp. 35-36)

An internally tragic structure to the power of love and to finitude thwarts divine creativity. Desire symbolizes the manifestation of divine power in creation. But, as I have suggested. . . finitude is fragile in ways that make conflict, suffering, and distortion inevitable. Divine love is universal, but particular creatures are in conflict. Creative power empowers the tiger to feed its hungry young, as well as the gazelle that tries to flee the tiger. (Wendy Farley, <u>Tragic</u> <u>Vision</u> <u>and</u> <u>Divine</u> <u>Compassion</u>, Westminster JohnKnox Press, 1990, p. 106)

2. A BIBLICAL/THEOLOGICAL PARADIGM OF HUMAN SEXUALITY

A. A CONTEMPORARY--IDEOLOGICAL APPROACH TO HUMAN SEXUALITY

The figure that follows presents a schematic diagram of a contemporary approach to human personal and sexual relations based on the ideological premise that human personal sexual relations are not grounded in created sexual/biological differentiation.

In this view, the sexual identity of persons created in the image of God does **not** include biological sexual differentiation as determinative of human sexual relations. Same sex relations are considered to be natural and normal in the same way that heterosexual relations are. The biological and the personal do not overlap, as the diagram shows.

CONTEMPORARY - IDEOLOGICAL

PERSONAL

[SEXUAL
NON-DIFFERENTIATION]

IMAGE OF GOD ———— ———— HUMAN

I ←—— THOU

CULTURAL ——— ——— ETHICAL

M (F) ←— F (M)
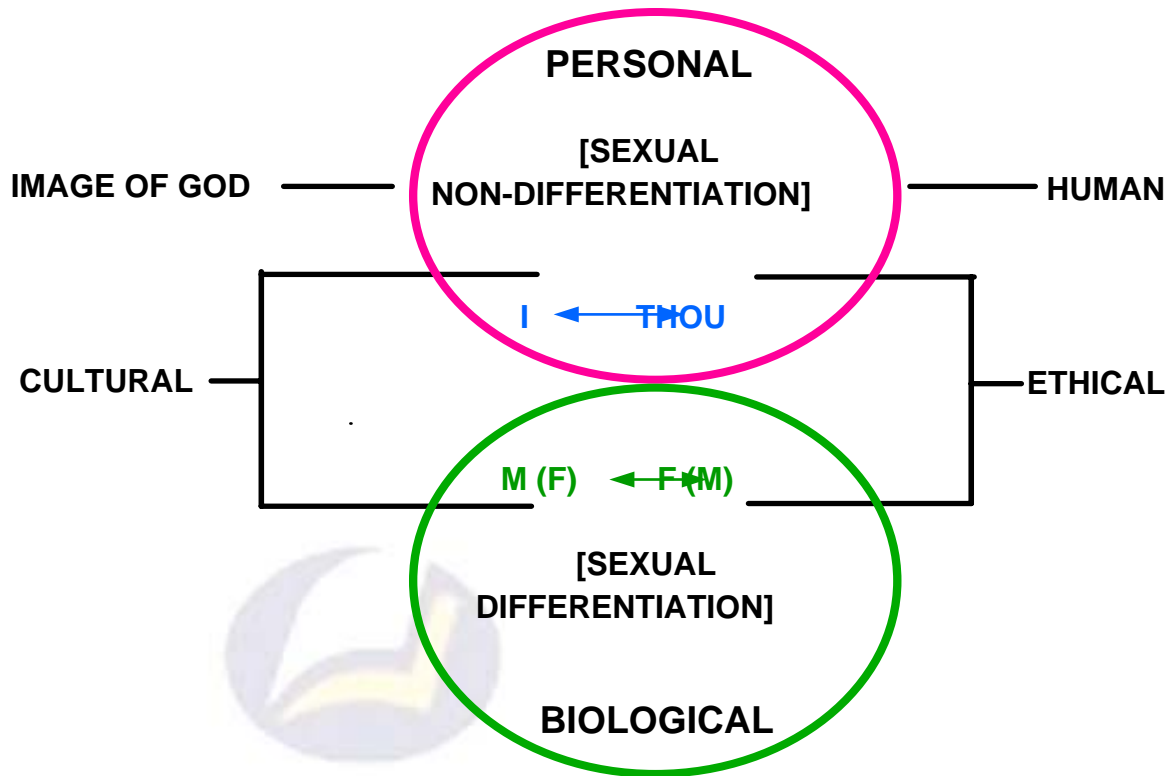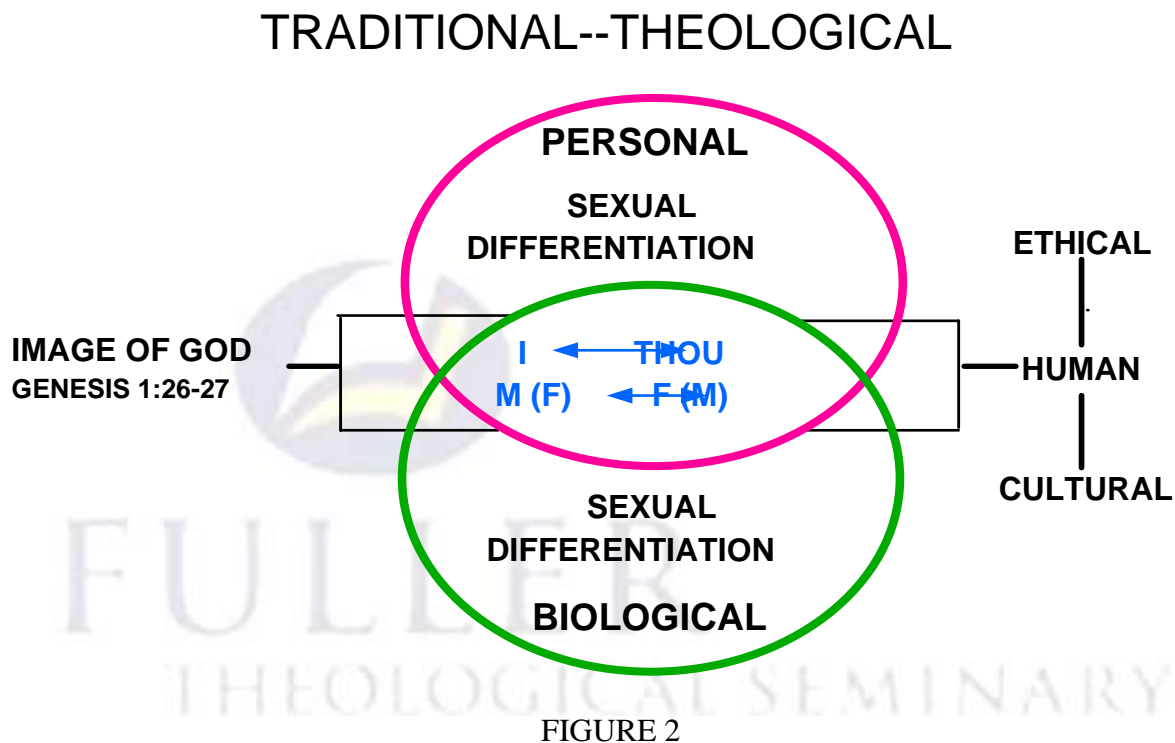
[SEXUAL
DIFFERENTIATION]

BIOLOGICAL

FIGURE 1

- As a result, the personal I-Thou sphere is only linked with the male/female biological sphere by cultural and ethical structures of society.

- This understanding leads to the claim that sexual orientation and behavior are a matter of human and civil rights (ideological) in the same way that racial and ethnic aspects of humans are based on "rights" rather than "nature."

- In this view, to judge same sex orientation and relations as inappropriate or wrong, is to discriminate against the basic rights of individuals to express their personal sexual orientation freely and with the full social acceptance and affirmation as those of differing skin color or ethnic origin.

- A theological antecedent for the above view can be found in the work of the Swiss Reformed theologian, Emil Brunner, who suggests that the erotic sexual impulse is an "unbridled biological instinct" which can only be consecrated through marriage, or the ethical demand of abstinence [*Love and Marriage*. London: Collins. Fontana, 1970, pp. 183, 195].

B. A TRADITIONAL--THEOLOGICAL APPROACH TO HUMAN SEXUALITY

The second figure presents a schematic diagram of an approach which grounds the personal and biological differentiation of male and female, male or female, in the image of God as created and intended by God as determinative of essential humanity.

TRADITIONAL--THEOLOGICAL

PERSONAL

SEXUAL DIFFERENTIATION

ETHICAL

IMAGE OF GOD
GENESIS 1:26-27

I ← THOU
M (F) ← F (M)

HUMAN

SEXUAL DIFFERENTIATION

BIOLOGICAL

CULTURAL

FIGURE 2

- As a result, the personal sphere overlaps with the biological sphere so that the image of God as constitutive of humanity includes biological sexual differentiation.

- This understanding leads to the claim that cultural and ethical norms are grounded in the "ordered ontology" of human personhood as sexually and personally differentiated, as male and female, male or female.

- In this view, sexual differentiation at both the personal and biological level is one aspect of the structured being (ordered ontology) of human life, while skin color and ethnic distinctives are related solely to the biological and cultural. The **only** differentiation at the personal and social level with ontological (created being) status is thus human sexuality [See, Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, III/1, pp. 186f; 195f; III/2, p. 289].

• It is a violation of human personhood (and human rights) to treat people as less than human on **any** grounds, including sexual orientation and behavior. At the same time, in this view, it is a violation of personhood and thus the essential humanity of persons to confuse their essential sexual and personal differentiation as male and female, male or female.

• A theological antecedent for the above view can be found in the work of the Swiss Reformed theologian, Karl Barth, who argued that human sexuality is a manifestation of the image of God as co-relation (co-humanity) and that the mark of the human is this same co-relation grounded in sexual differentiation as male and female, male or female [*Church Dogmatics*, III/1, pp. 195ff].

C. COMMENTARY.

1. Discussion of a theological view of same sex orientation and relationships (homosexuality) must first of all identify the basic assumptions on which a biblical view of human sexuality is held. Both of the above views are held by theologians who are committed to biblical revelation, but one is radically different from the other. Unless there is basic agreement as to which view of human sexuality is held, the discussion will often prove to be fruitless.

2. The biblical/theological view presented here is one which takes Genesis 1:26-27 as the foundational text for understanding human sexuality as rooted in the divine image in the form of male and female, male or female differentiation and complementarity. In this view, human sexuality is both a personal and biological differentiation expressed through the "ordered ontology" of male and female, male or female.

3. The relation between the biological order and the personal order is a contingent one. This means that to be human one must necessarily express that humanity through the biological and created order, though the biological order is not itself sufficient to determine human personhood. The ontological differentiation of personhood (I and Thou) is intrinsic to the divine image as the "ordered ontology" of human nature. This essential human differentiation is what corresponds to the divine differentiation of personal being. The biological differentiation of male and female is an **expression** of the divine image as differentiation of personal being through the necessary form of embodiment at the creaturely level. The contingent relation between the biological and the personal prevents the biological and gender factor from being inserted into the being of God while, at the same time, determinative of human expression of that image through the temporal and created order.

4. In God's purpose, revealed through the redemptive form of the covenant, the eschatological determination of the created order affirms and upholds the personal form of the human through its temporal embodiment as biological existence. The eschatological order of redemption does not replace the "ordered ontology" of created human personhood, but affirms and preserves it through the temporal and

created order until such time as the created order gives way to the "new heavens and earth" in which "they neither marry nor are given in marriage" (Matt. 22:30).

5. The "ordered ontology" of human personhood expressed through biological sexual differentiation in the temporal life-span, is not an "ordinance of creation" expressed through natural law or through institutions founded on those ordinances; rather, the laws which society develops for the good of humankind are grounded in this "ordered ontology" of human existence, as male and female, male or female.

6. A biblical/theological perspective on homosexuality thus does not rest alone upon biblical texts which speak against homosexuality, but also upon the foundational biblical texts which set forth a view of human sexuality as an "ordered ontology" of personal and biological differentiation. If there were not a single text in the bible which mentions homosexuality, there would still be a basis to discuss the ethical aspects of homosexuality in the biblical doctrine of the image of God as a created order of personal being, expressed through the biological differentiation of male and female, male or female.

D. PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. There is ample Scriptural authority for establishing both God's **preference** with regard to human relationships and God's **presence** with persons in their struggle to fulfill God's purpose for them through the labyrinth of confusion, failure and brokenness that often attends such a struggle. The Old Testament is replete with God's expressed preference for his people, but also contains a multitude of examples of God's presence as one who graciously forgives, restores and empowers within the limits and constraints of consequences and conventions.

2. God quite clearly prefers that marriage be monogamous, but also expressed a purposeful presence through the sometimes confusing and problematic social structure of polygamous marriage. The blessings of the covenant intended through Abraham for all the families of the earth unfolded through God's gracious presence to bless the offspring of Jacob and the four women who produced the twelve patriarchs.

3. God prefers that marriage be a life-long commitment and "hates divorce" as Malachi expressly stated. Yet, God's presence in the lives of persons who have experienced the tragedy of a marriage that has failed leads many to conclude that remarriage for divorced persons is a witness to God's gracious presence. The ministry of affirming God's presence as a source of reconciliation and healing does not annul God's preference as intended for the human good.

4. If one holds that God's preference for human sexual relationships follows the created order of male and female rather than same sex cohabitation, this does not rule out God's gracious presence in the lives of those who find it impossible to live by that divinely created preference. The church as the body of Jesus Christ,

expresses both divine preference and divine presence in the lives of its members. All members of the body of Christ fall short of God's preference, including homosexual Christians. The church must be as inclusive as Christ's outreach into human society and as clear headed as Christ's vision of the created purpose for humans as bearing the image of God.

5. It is therefore no contradiction for the church to trace the pattern of divine preference in its teaching and, at the same time, to follow the contours of divine presence in receiving and affirming the lives of all who seek the Kingdom of God, not on the basis of natural rights, but on the basis of divine grace.

6. At the same time, it would be a source of great confusion and grave error for the church to make God's presence the only means of grace and God's preference as the law which died with Christ. Both preference and presence are grounded in the grace of God, and both alike must be upheld in the teaching and practice of the church's ministry.

7. If homosexual Christians are members of the body of Christ on the same basis as all others--how could we say otherwise?--does this not grant them the same right to be ordained along with others? Not necessarily. Discrimination within the body as to who should be set aside for the teaching office entails both wisdom and discernment on the part of the church taking into account many criteria, including maturity, domestic stability, personal integrity and spiritual giftedness. Might not these criteria also include sexual orientation as well as sexual practice measured by the responsibility to uphold both divine preference as well as divine presence?

8. Can the church discuss this issue, painful though it might be, with pastoral sensitivity and theological humility without "biting and devouring one another" (Gal 5:15)? This kind of discussion would seem to be God's preference and, we might pray, also a discovering of God's presence.

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"Concerning Homosexuality," *Our Dignity as Human*, P. K. Jewett/M. Shuster. Eerdmans, 1966, pp 290ff

3. Gender Identity and Role Relationships

A. The adjunctive nature of roles between men and women

The biblical account of creation (Gen. 1-2) adds an oblique reference to roles in concluding the creation story: `Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his woman and they become one flesh.'

> The description employs the explicitly sexual terms <u>ish</u> and <u>isha</u> that have just been introduced into the story. To this vocabulary the narrator adds the terms for parental roles, achieving a juxtaposition of relationships: man and woman contrast with father and mother. Each couple is a unit of equality--one, equality of creation; the other, the equality of roles. Interestingly, however, parents are not part of God's creative activity. They appear in the story as adjuncts to the creation of woman and man. In other words, sexuality makes father and mother possible; parental images are subordinate to and depended upon sexual images. Roles, then, are secondary at best; they do not belong to creation. Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, pp. 103-4.

The essential differentiation of man and woman can find fulfillment in roles, but is not characterized by these roles; where disorder occurs in relationships, cultural and traditional role orders may be used to express the command of God (e.g. Paul, in 1 Tim. 2); but the sexual differentiation itself at the biological level through which roles are identified, is already being transformed (cf. Paul, Gal 3:28);

B. The relative nature of gender characteristics and attributes

1) Attempts to develop typologies and stereotypes of gender identity are only relatively useful, and not determinative of social role order and function;

The attempt by E. Brunner is typical of such depictions:

> The man is the one who produces, he is the leader; the woman is receptive, and she preserves life; it is the man's duty to shape the new; it is the woman's duty to write it and adapt it to be that which already exists. The man has to go forth and make the earth subject to him, the woman looks within and guards the hidden unity. The man must be objective and universalise, woman must be subjective and individualise; the man must build, the woman adorns; the man must conquer, the woman must tend; the man must comprehend all with the mind, the woman must impregnate all with the life of her soul. It is the duty of man to plan and to master, of the woman to understand and to unite. Man in Revolt, p. 358

Barth, in commenting on this says:

> Why should we not be content with these characterisations? Why should we not agree that there is a good deal of truth in them? Why should we not even accept the view that in the antithesis between Apollo and the chthonic-telluric divinities, man represents the former and woman the latter? Yet how is it that we can hardly resist a certain levity in the face of such

antithesis, as though seeing in them, however serious their authors, a rather malicious caricature on the one side or the other, or perhaps both? These things obviously cannot be said or heard in all seriousness.

On what authority are we told that these traits are masculine and these feminine? And how can we be even sure that the last thing which can be said of the sexes on this plane will not be fatally identical with the first, namely, the hostility of the sexes? Who can say whether the imperatives thus acquired, even if they command notice, will not be simply challenges in that conflict whose unhappy beginnings we observed in the world of the hamster. . . What then is the point of these typologies? They may have value in other directions, but they are certainly not adapted to be a valid law for male and female, and we can only cause the greatest confusion if we try to exalt them into such a law and use them as such. It is for this reason that we for our part refuse to do so. Barth, C.D., III/ 4, p. 153.

Yet, Barth will not abandon an attempt to depict some kind of essential order to which male and female must be true. Though he resists casting this order into the form of typologies, he does characterize it is a "precedence" of male and female:

A precedes B, and B follows A. Order means succession. It means preceding and following. It means super- and sub-ordination. But when we say this we utter the very dangerous words which are unavoidable if we are to describe what is at issue in the being and fellowship of man and woman. Barth, C.D., III/4, pp. 169-70.

Barth valiantly attempts to defend this order of "precedence" by which the male is determined to be first, and the woman second, by insisting that this entails no inequality nor advantage and disadvantage. His ground for this is the divine trinity, where he sees subordination and ordination, precedence and succession, without ontological inferiority or inequality.

In the end, Barth simply resorts to saying that the nature to which both male and female must be true is that in which they experience and fulfill the command of God.

Thus it is the command of God itself which tells them what here and now is their male or female nature, and what they have to guard faithfully as such. As the divine command is itself free from the systematisation by which man and woman seek to order and clarify their thoughts about their differentiation, so, in requiring fidelity, it frees man and woman from the self-imposed compulsion of such systematisation. C.D., III/4, p. 153

If, in fact, the command of God is independent of any role definition or gender typology, then perhaps Barth has undermined his own attempt to set forth a structure and order of precedence and succession which has any practical consequence.

2) Are gender differences "wired" into the brain?

James B. Ashbrook, "Different Voices, Different Genes: 'Male and Female Created God *Them*'," in Christian Perspectives on Sexuality and Gender, Adrian Thatcher and Elizabeth Stuart, eds. Eerdmans, 1996, pp. 98-109.

"As early as the sixth week of pregnancy the crucial crystallization of sex difference begins. Until that 'moment' the embryo is undifferentiated, neither female nor male; it is simply 'human potentiality.' Physician anthropologist Melvin Konner suggests that 'the basic plan of the mammalian organism is female and stays that way unless told to be otherwise by masculine hormones.' Around the sixth week, fetal androgens begin 'organizing' the neuroanatomy of behavior for future reproductive activity. These androgens 'tune' certain cells to the hormones which will flood the body at puberty. Specifically, the androgen 'tuning' suppresses the capacity for monthly cycling in males." p. 102

"As birth approaches, the masculinizing hormones, primarily testosterone, have so affected the development of the brain that a 'trained observer, holding a microscope slide [of the hypothalamus] up to the light, can tell the sex of the brain with the naked eye." p. 102

"Male brains in general and the left hemisphere in particular are more likely to malfunction. A higher percentage of 'autism, schizophrenia, and psychopathy' appear in the male population, along with a tendency toward aggression. If a man suffers right side paralysis and loss of speech, the effects are more likely to be permanent.

"Female brains present more right hemisphere malfunctions, especially mood disorders, along with a tendency toward affiliation. If a woman suffers right side paralysis and loss of speech, she is more likely to recover her ability to move and speak. Further, sex-related difficulties are overrepresented and underrepresented in such various areas as 'eating disorders; sexual/physical violence; incest, alcoholism; premenstrual syndrome; pregnancy and childbirth; body image; issues of power, entitlement, self-esteem; and decisions regarding career, lifestyle, and family.' Sex-gender differences make a difference that is a difference *because the cultural contrasts are derived from biological substrata*!" p. 103

3) Gender specific roles due to natural and biological distinctions often become culturally and traditional fixed;

The biblical tradition reflects many of these cultural role patterns for men and women, but like all cultural forms which become embedded in divine revelation, the cultural form may become the servant of revelation, but not thereby made an essential determinant of human life under the liberation of divine grace;

There is therefore a hermeneutical criterion within the biblical revelation which "disarms" the kerygmatic content of the cultural and traditional forms embedded within Scripture itself;

The kerygma of divine revelation is grounded in covenant love which has as its goal the restoration of human life to the eschatological goal, not to its original

earthly nature; there is therefore a progression from design, through purpose, to goal implicit in the history of salvation:
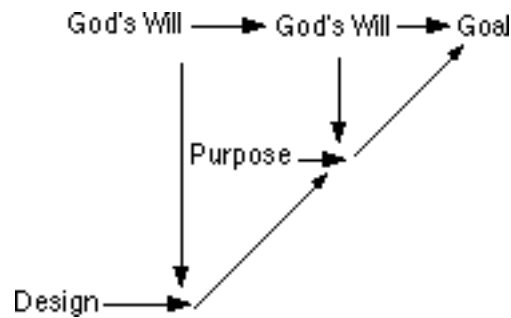
Design, whether through creation or through adaptation to culture, will always give way to purpose, and purpose reaches out toward the goal;

Thus, the patriarchal structure embedded in Scripture as Word of God is intended to be a servant of revelation in that particular time and place--that is its design;

Hermeneutical responsibility is more than a task of re-stating the explicit design of revelation in the text; it involves seeking the true purpose and goal of the text in light of the kerygma of redemption in Jesus Christ;

C. Aspects of the creation of man and woman with respect to sexual equality and role relationships

   1) *'adam*: the undifferentiated human creature

   Phyllis Trible has pointed out that the original designation of the first human creature in Genesis 2 was the generic term for "man"--*'adam*;

   `As presented in this first episode, with the definite article <u>ha</u>- preceding the common noun *'adam*, this work of art is neither a particular person nor the typical person but rather the creature from the earth (*ha-^{a}dama*)--the earth creature. The very words that differentiate creature from soil indicate similarity. . . . More important, this creature is not identified sexually. Grammatical gender (*'adam* as a masculine word) is not sexual identification. . . In other words, the earth creature is not the male; it is not "the first man."' *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 80.

   It was this "man" of whom it was said: "it is not good that the man [*'adam*] should be alone" (2:18)

   Only after the story tells us that the man (*'adam*) was put to sleep and the woman was fashioned out of one of his ribs, is this "earth creature" differentiated sexually as male, and not merely "man."

`Only after surgery does this creature, for the very first time, identify itself as male. Utilizing a pun on the Hebrew word for woman, "*issa*, the earth creature refers to itself by the specific term for man as male, '*ish*. . . . The unit '*ish* and '*issa* functionally parallels *ha-'adam* and *ha-ᵃdama*.' Ibid., p. 98

Trible, therefore, concludes that the creation of human persons as "male and female" (*'ish* and' *issa*) occurs simultaneously, not sequentially. `His sexual identity depends upon her even as hers depends upon him. for both of them sexuality originates in the one flesh of humanity.' Ibid., p. 99.

Rabbinical exegesis of this passage tended to interpret the creation of woman as sequential to the man, as reflected in Paul's statements in 1 Tim. 2. (cf. Paul Jewett, *Man as Male and Female*, for a discussion of Paul's use of this tradition);

The Apostle Paul's christological identification of the "one flesh" source for both male and female as stated in Genesis 2, however, gives kerygmatic and hermeneutical priority to any attempt to establish the ontological status of male and female persons (cf. Eph. 5:32-32);

2) The disintegration of the "one flesh" source for male and female identity

Trible points out that following the disobedience of both the man and the woman, *'adam* as the creaturely basis for their differentiation as male and female persons, reverts back to dependence upon the earth, *ha-ᵃdama*. `For dust you are and to dust you shall return' (Gen. 3:19). Ibid., p. 132

In the judgment to the woman (3:16) the sexual term *'ish* (man) is used for the last time in describing the breakdown and disintegration of their unity as male and female. Now *adam* (man) will rule over the woman.

Now, *ha-'adam* (man) `becomes a generic term that keeps the man visible and renders the woman invisible (3:22-24). . . . Generic *ha-'adam* [man] has subsumed *'issa* [woman].' Trible, ibid., p. 135

Following the original act of disobedience, and as a result of the curse and condemnation, both the male and the female lose the balance and reciprocity of their mutual creation out of sheer creatureliness--*ha-'adam*. What God had purposed as a reflection of his own being, differentiation in unity, has now become division and hostility, with creaturely nature expressed as a hierarchy of power, dominance, and manipulation of the other.

The original goal and purpose now belongs to the creative act of redemption and grace, fulfilled through Jesus Christ, who assumed the form of *ha-'adam* (man) as subordinated to the dust (death), and in putting to death this defiant and deviant "man" (*'adam*), a new humanity is introduced as the basis for all human relationships, where the dividing wall, with its ordinances and commandments, with its hostility and destructiveness, is abolished (cf. Eph. 2:14-16). The

kerygma is now reconciliation, peace, and unity of life with its authentic differentiation in which both men and women are simultaneously re-created in Christ.

`And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.' Eph. 2:17

D. The Ordination of Women.

See: Ray S. Anderson, "The Resurrection of Jesus as Hermeneutical Criterion--A Case Study for Sexual Parity in Pastoral Ministry," *The Shape of Practical Theology*, Intervarsity, 2002, Chapter Six

From a Roman Catholic Perspective, Edmund Hill writes:

Are there any doctrinal, theological, revealed reasons why women should not, and indeed cannot, be validly ordained? I confess I have never come across any. all the reasons that have been put forward have been based on the premiss of the natural subordination and inferiority of women--which we have been at pains to see is by no means a premiss of revelation. The only reason of any strength that can be put forward is that this has never been done in the Catholic Church or the Orthodox Church or any of the ancient churches. This argument from custom is a powerful one. But in the light of what may be regarded as the revealed doctrine of the Church on the equality of the sexes, one needs to ask *why* women have never been ordained. and on examination all the reasons why they have not turn out to be cultural, not doctrinal. As I have suggested above, these reasons boil down to a prolonged and regrettable cultural inheritance from Israel and Judaism, which really has no place in the universal Catholic people of God of the future. Being Human: A Biblical Perspective--Introducing Catholic Theology (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1984), p. 178.

The lay Roman Catholic scholar, Michael Novak, argues for the more traditional position regarding ordination of women when he writes:

The Catholic priest is a representative figure selected according to the conditions of embodied, enfleshed persons in concrete human history. The choice was made from all eternity. The selection of males alone as Catholic priests is a sign (a sacrament, bearing grace) of several important revelations about God: about the Trinity, about the Incarnation, about the relation of Christ and His people, and about the importance of gender differentiation. . . .The priest is male because gender differentiation is significant to the self-revelation of God in history. . . . Why is the priest male? It figures. It fits. The priest's maleness is a reminder of the central role played in our salvation by the sacramentality of human flesh--not flesh-in-general, but male flesh. "Women, Ordination, and Angels," *First Things* , April, 1983.

For some contemporary protestant views see: Jewett, Paul K. *The Ordination of Women.* Eerdmans, 1980; Hull, G.G. *Equal to Serve: Women and Men in Church and Home*, Old Tappen, N.J.: Revell, 1987; Gundry, P. *Neither Slave nor Free: Helping Women Answer the Call to Christian Leadership*, San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987; see also, Ray S. Anderson, *Ministry on the Fireline--A Practical Theology for an Empowered Church* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993), pp. 87-98.

VIII. Human Life as Contradiction and Hope

Weber, F.D., I, pp. 580-628
Anderson, *On Being Human,* Chapter 7
Becker, *The Denial of Death,* pp. 1-124

1. Human Life as Creaturely and Contingent Existence

A. Human life as contingent creaturely being

1) Humans share with non-human creatures in what Thielicke once called, "the solidarity of the sixth day."

   "Being human" is necessarily to have creaturely existence; i.e., to have bodily existence in somewhat the same form as the non-human creatures;

   "Being human", however, is not a predicate of creaturely existence; i.e., one's bodily, or creaturely existence cannot of itself produce or sustain what we mean by "human being" in the sense of being a person;

   The biblical phrase, "image and likeness of God" specifies the qualitative difference between the human and the non-human creature.

2) "Being human" is therefore contingent upon a source and power of life outside of or beyond creaturely existence itself--this is a theological assumption grounded in the doctrine of creation "in the image and likeness of God."
   `Thus the fact that I am born and die, that I eat and drink and sleep, that I develop and maintain myself; that beyond this I assert myself in the face of others, and even physically, propagate my species; that I enjoy and work and play in fashion and possess; that I acquire and have and exercise powers; that I take part in all the work of the race, either accomplished or in process of accomplishment; that in all this, I satisfy religious needs and can realize religious possibilities; and that in it all I fulfill my aptitudes as an understanding and thinking, willing and feeling being--all this as such is not my humanity. It is only the field on which human being either takes place or does not take place as history. As the encounter of the I and Thou; the field on which it is revealed or obscured that "I am as Thou art." That I exist on this field, and do so in a particular way, does not of itself mean that I am human. K. Barth, C.D., III/2, p. 249

   Barth surely does not mean that one may or may not be human, depending upon the circumstances; what he means is that the **source** of my humanity is not found in activities or events which take place merely on the creaturely plane or realm.

   On the positive side, this also means that the continuity and value of my personal being and humanity is not dependent upon factors which reside totally in creaturely existence, as these are subject to distortion and even destruction.

B. Human life as destiny, history and freedom

   1) Elements of a non-theological anthropology

   NATURE (sixth day)---------->DESTINY----------->NATURALISM

   BEHAVIOR-------------------->HISTORY------------>EMPIRICISM

   DEVIATION------------------->FREEDOM----------->EXISTENTIALISM

      Without the theological assumption of contingency upon the life and power of
      God as source of personal being, a non-theological anthropology answers the
      question of destiny with nature; the question of history with behavior, and the
      question of freedom by deviation from nature;

      The first two answers tend to be more scientific, while the third tends to be
      philosophical;

      A non-theological anthropology cannot explain the phenomenon of human life
      except by reference back to a concept of nature or a concept of existence;

      `In the last resort, there is something tragic in every non-theological
      anthropology.' Barth, C.D., III/2, p. 429

   2) elements of a theological anthropology

   IMMORTALITY (seventh day)------>DESTINY--------->HUMANITY

   COVENANT-------------------------->HISTORY--------->COMMUNITY

   GRACE------------------------------>FREEDOM-------->RESPONSIBILITY

      (a) Human life is contingent upon God's gift of life, and so the destiny of
          humanity is immortality--eternal life shared with God (the seventh day is the
          metaphor for this)

      (b) The history of human life is not a series of events or behaviors, but the
          covenant act of God through which he enters into partnership with humanity;

      History does not occur when the being is involved in changes or different modes of behavior
      intrinsic to itself. But when something takes place upon and to the being as it is, history of the
      being begins, continues, and is completed when something other than itself and transcending
      its own nature encounters it, approaches it, and determines its being in the nature proper to it,
      so that it is compelled and enabled to transcend itself in response and in relation to this new
      factor. The history of a being occurs when it is caught up in this movement, change and

relation. When its circular movement is broken from without by a movement towards it and the corresponding movement from it. When it is transcended from without so that it must and can transcend itself outwards. Barth, C.D., III/2, p. 158

(c) The freedom of human life is not a "freedom from" (.e., a contingency away from God), but a "freedom for" (a contingency toward God and others);

`Our believing is conditioned at its source by our belonging' Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, p. 322

Thus, freedom is an ontological dimension of selfhood which includes our creatureliness, not excludes it;

The grace of God is the very source of our being (this gives us "belonging" ontologically, not merely conditionally);

Thus, grace precedes sin, and is the presupposition of sin; cf. Barth, C.D., III/2, p. 35

(d) The difficulty of a theological anthropology

A theological anthropology must begin at the same point as a non-theological anthropology, with a recognition of the reality of human life as creaturely being, and at the phenomenological level, exhibiting many variations and even distortions.

And the difficulty which confronts us is this. In these circumstances how can we possibly reach a doctrine of man in the sense of a doctrine of his creaturely essence, of his human nature as such? For what we recognize to be human nature is nothing other than the disgrace which covers his nature; his inhumanity, perversion and corruption. If we try to deny this or to tone it down, we have not yet understood the full import of the truth that for the reconciliation of man with God nothing more nor less was needed than the death of the Son of God, and for the manifestation of this reconciliation of man with God nothing more nor less than the resurrection of the Son of Man, Jesus Christ. But if we know man only in the corruption and distortion of his being, how can we even begin to answer the question about his creaturely nature? Barth, C.D., III/2, p. 27

Yet, Barth says, even in "his radical depravity there is necessarily hidden his original form." Ibid., p. 29

This cannot be grasped directly, however, either scientifically or speculatively; e.g. we cannot "infer" a true nature, or a whole nature from a sick nature; the absence of disease is not health;

Thus, for Barth, Jesus reveals to us the true nature of humanity as creaturely being (the Word became flesh);

C. Human life as existential dilemma

1) The existential anthropology of Søren Kierkegaard
   cf. *Sickness unto Death*, and *The Concept of Dread*

   (a) The human self is a dialectical relation between freedom and necessity; i.e.,
      between physical existence and mental existence;
      The self exists as the self conscious relation between necessity (the finite) and
      freedom (the infinite)
      But in this self consciousness, there is dread (*angst*); in the face of this dread,
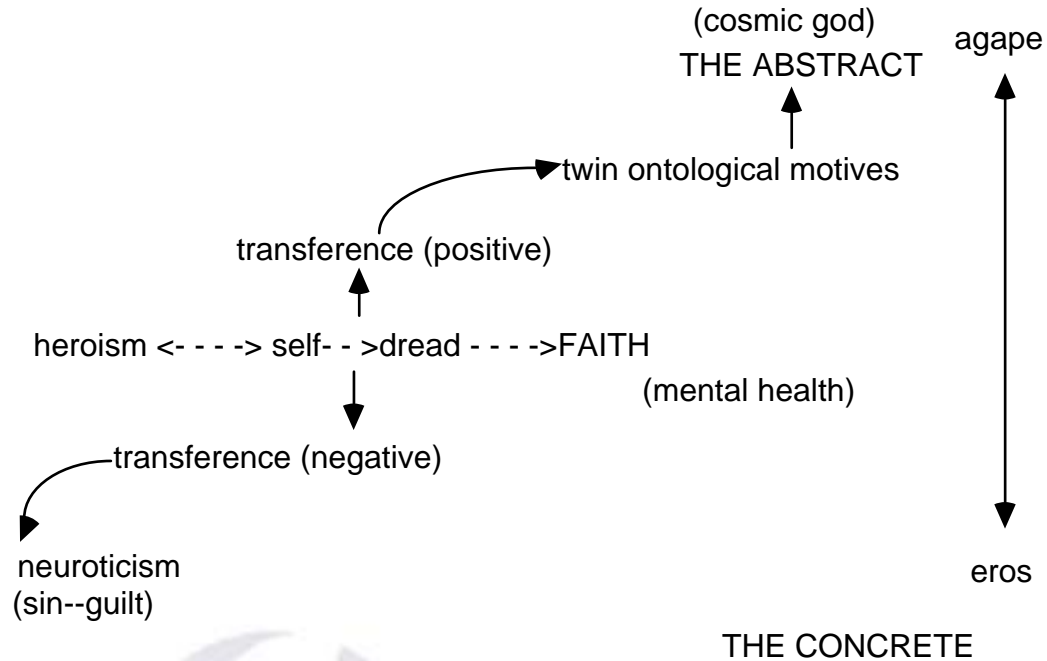   the self must either pass through to faith (in God), or fall back into despair;

   (b) The self in its "impossible possibility" (Kierkegaard)
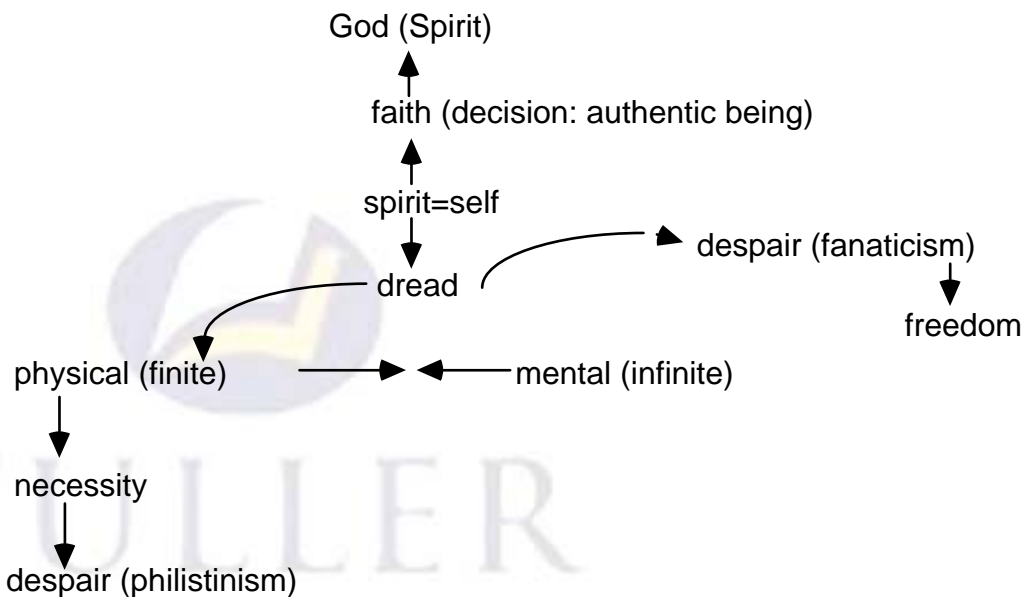
b) The existential analysis of Ernest Becker (*The Denial of Death*)

(1) Becker's basic thesis: the root of all neurosis and pathology of the self is located
in Kierkegaard's concept of dread, which Becker interprets as existential fear of our
own mortality. In compensating for this fundamental anxiety, persons adopt
"character armor", project themselves into a "heroic" posture or identity; or make
transference to an object or person which gives the semblance of immortality;

(2) The options of the self in Becker's model

(cosmic god)   agape
THE ABSTRACT

↑

→twin ontological motives

transference (positive)

↑

heroism <- - - -> self- - >dread - - - ->FAITH

(mental health)

↓

transference (negative)

↓

neuroticism   eros
(sin--guilt)

THE CONCRETE

(c) Faith (mental health) is achieved through "life enhancing illusion" (cf. *Denial of Death,* pp. 158, 199, 202, 204).

> Ana-Marie Rizzuto argues that in the transitional space where the self's identity is formed in relation to the objective reality of parents, "illusory and real dimensions of experience interpenetrate each other to such an extent that they cannot be treated apart without destroying what is essential in the experience'. . . Illusory transmutation of reality . . . is the indispensable and unavoidable process all of us *must* go through if we are to grow normally and acquire psychic meaning and substance. . . Man is always playing with reality either to create himself through illusory anticipation, to sustain himself through illusory reshaping of what does not seem bearable, or simply to fool himself through illusory distortion of what he does not like." (Ana-Marie Rizzuto, *The Birth of the Living God: A Psychoanalytic Study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979, pp. 227, 228)

> In commenting on this, Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger says: "Rizzuto differentiates her use of the term 'illusion' from its use in ordinary or everyday language, where 'illusory' is understood to be antithetical to 'reality.' Illusion, in this sense, is closely akin to the ordinary meaning of the word imagination, with the important qualification that one engages in illusory transmutation of reality because of pressing psychological wishes and needs. Rizzuto does not consider such reshaping of reality to be pathological except in those cases where it 'goes beyond immediate need'" (*Theology and Pastoral Counseling: A New Interdisciplinary Approach*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, p. 112).

The transference (pp. 139f) seeks to "immortalize the self" (p. 142)

The project of the self, is to "tame the terror of being alive" (p. 145)

The twin ontological motives (pp. 151ff; 182ff) are another way of looking at the positive and negative forms of transference;

Neurotic behavior can take forms of fetish control (p. 142), or can work its way out through forms of sexual behavior:

> Sex is an inevitable component of man's confusion over the meaning of his life, a meaning split hopelessly into two realms--symbols (freedom) and body (fate). . . . Sex is also a positive way of working on one's personal freedom project. . . . The person attempts to use his sex in an entirely individual way in order to <u>control</u> it and relieve it of its determinism. (pp. 44,45)

2. The human dilemma of sin and its consequences

A. The phenomena of sin as a form of human experience

1) The equation of sin and sickness;

For non-theological anthropology, behavior which might be called immoral or sinful, is usually attributed to some pathological aspect of the self or the social environment.

In this case, one's nature, or environment, <u>causes</u> the problem (sin); it becomes impossible to separate creaturely being and finite existence from sinful life and behavior;

`Sin and neurosis are two ways of talking about the same problem.' Otto Rank, cited by Becker, pp. 196f)

2) Sin as an independent principle of evil or sickness;

The principle of wrong behavior becomes impersonal and alien to the self; ultimately, the self becomes subject to this impersonal and alien power (evil) and either succumbs in a fatalistic way, or goes into depression over not being able to "atone" for the "guilt" that is felt;

This was recognized by O. Hobart Mowrer as an unhelpful therapeutic assumption (*The Crisis of Psychiatry and Religion*); Mowrer stated that the concept of sin as behavior for which one is personally responsible is more hopeful than the concept of sickness for which one cannot assume responsible--it is simply a "condition". (cf. also, K. Menninger, *Whatever Became of Sin?*)

3) Sin as a threat to human destiny, history and freedom

      NON-BEING   BEING

      nature as fate   <-------------destiny --------> immortality as
      (naturalism: death)   goal

      behavior as repetition <------history -------> interaction as
                                              community

      deviation as individuality<---freedom ------> love as creative
        (existential absurdity)   self expression

B. The relation of sin to selfhood
    cf. B. Ramm, *Offense to Reason--A Theology of Sin*
        O. Weber, F.C., I., pp. 581-628
        G.C. Berkouwer, *Sin*

   1) Sin as a defection from grace; i.e., as a personal and not merely ethical disorder;

> Not that it is grace which leads or compels him to sin. Sin resists grace; it affronts it and betrays it. It has no basis in grace. It is in fact so terrible and infamous because it can have no basis in the grace in which God acts as Creator and in which man has his being in His creature. But its inconceivable reality can be grasped only when we see it as rebellion against grace. [cf. here Brunner, *Man in Revolt]* Thus the one complaint of Old Testament prophecy is that Israel sins to excess and beyond all other peoples in the very position of privilege which it has before all peoples on the basis of its election, in the covenant which God has made and faithfully maintained with it alone; that it has become adulterous in its marriage with Jahweh. The whole witness of the Bible shows that sin does not originate in the void, as the transgression of a universal law, but in rebellion against the concrete reality which sums up all the divine laws, i.e., that God is gracious to man and that man is the being to whom He is gracious. Sin originates in wanton rebellion against the God who has given Himself to mankind in the person of His Son. To this extent it has to be said that sin is impossible without grace; that is has its perverse origin in the grace of God. Man robs the gracious god of his honour, and in so doing he casts into the dust his own honour, the honour of the creature whom this God has created. He would not sin if God were not this God and man were not this creature. Barth, C.D., III/2, p. 35

   2) Sin as existential deviance from faith

     (a) R. Niebuhr, following Kierkegaard, posits sin as the pre-supposition of the self
        in a dialectical manner (see, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, vol. 1)

This dialectic produces anxiety (*angst*), which is not sin, but is the pre-condition of sin. It is "the eternal description of the state of temptation" (Niebuhr, p. 182);

The human person only knows himself or herself existentially as a sinner; thus the story of the fall symbolizes the truth of every person's existential condition (in the form of a myth); sin is inevitable but not necessary (p. 250); sin "presupposes itself" (p. 251); "man could not be tempted if he had not already sinned" (p. 251);

for Niebuhr, the freedom of the self is not destroyed by the inevitability of sin, for the self can contemplate this inevitability and acknowledge its own self deception (p. 255). This paradox "man is most free in the discovery that he is not free" (p. 260), is at the heart of a doctrine of the self, according to Niebuhr;

(b) Barth, however, calls this existential depiction of sin merely the "symptom" if the real person, and not the person "himself." (III/2, p. 201); for Barth's critique of Brunner's concept of sin, see, C.D., III/2, pp. 128-132; in essence, Barth feels that Brunner, while "breaking the closed circle" of existential thought, nonetheless seeks to establish a neutral freedom for the human person as a "formal" possibility; Brunner too, says Barth, has made sin an integral part of the concept of the self, rather than an alien aspect;

For Barth, the self is grounded in grace as its only ontological possibility; thus, sin is an "ontological impossibility" for the human person (C.D., III/2, p. 139).

Nonetheless, says Barth, the sinner is still human:

`The fact that man sins does not mean that God ceases to be God and therefore man man. In this context, too, we must say that man does not accomplish a new creation by sinning. He cannot achieve any essential alteration of the human nature which he has been given. He can only shame this nature and himself. He can only bring himself into supreme peril.' C.D., III/ 2, p. 227

(c) Sin has no necessary relation to selfhood;

The fundamental human condition as created by God is not anxiety (*angst*), as depicted by Kierkegaard, followed by Becker and Niebuhr;

As the object of grace, the human person is distinguished from all other creatures--there is only one possibility, one choice, **actually** to be the creature God determines;

> Sin, indeed, then is an "impossible possibility"; for it cannot be a possibility willed by God and grounded in the nature of the human self; nor can it be a new possibility created by the act of sin itself;
>
> Thus, sin can be taken seriously as the consequence of the self "willing not to be itself" in relation to God's grace, but the person has no need to be determined by sin as either cause or effect of one's own personhood.

C. Christ "brackets" sin with creatureliness in order to restore persons to their authentic existence within grace.

> Through the incarnation, the divine Word brought sin as alien to human selfhood into alliance with the flesh, for the sake of "condemning sin in the flesh" (cf. Heb. 2:14; 9:26);
>
> By taking human nature under the power of sin as his own personal being, the divine Son demonstrated that sin has no necessary part of human nature, ontologically or existentially; yet, in bracketing sin with his own flesh, he destroyed the power of sin and freed humanity to be restored in grace to its original form;
>
> Jesus reveals the true nature of creatureliness, subject to anxiety, emotional stress, physical weakness, and limited to finite space and time, and yet under no necessity to sin;
> Here we see that the deterministic principle is broken, existentially, behaviorally, and through nature; sin is not the "last word" concerning the human person.

IX. Human Life as Marginal and Meaningful

> Anderson, *On Being Human*, chapters 9 and 10
> Becker, *The Denial of Death*, pp. 127-285

1. The Value of Persons and the Right to Life

A. Human life from a biblical perspective

> Man [humanity] in an absolute sense cannot be found empirically. It is certainly possible to describe biologically those anatomical characteristics which belong to homo sapiens. But it is not possible to say with certainty whether the manifold variations of the human race are concluded now, and the discoveries of any new day can lead us to shift further back the boundaries of the groupings of living beings which we ascribe to the species "man." What we do know is a grouping which is extremely varied in its internal subdivisions, and whose boundaries in all directions are open. "The" man would then be everything which can be identified between the oldest discoveries and the most recently developed types. . . . Does not our talk about "the" man always represent a violent extrapolation? Do we really even know the essentials about the person closest to us? Is not the very idea of humanity in fact merely the expression of the self-understanding of a specific man, breaking into the concrete situation, be it the man of the late classical period or of the European Enlightenment? All these questions confront any anthropology which claims universal validity. And all of these questions point out that it is only possible to perceive "the" man from the perspective of an opposite who is contrasted to every man. O. Weber, F.D., I, pp. 534-5.

The biblical perspective on the nature of human life and human persons is not derived from any qualities which are inherent in persons as experienced and observed universally or concretely. Rather, the biblical perspective of human life which gives the idea universal meaning and concrete reality is that of the human person "before God."

Only after God has confronted specific human persons and summoned them into covenant relationship does there emerge a story of creation which purports to depict the nature of human life;

Thus, the Genesis account of the origin of human life is conditioned by a knowledge of God as the redeemer and sustainer of life through his covenant actions of love.

B. The ecological spheres of human life
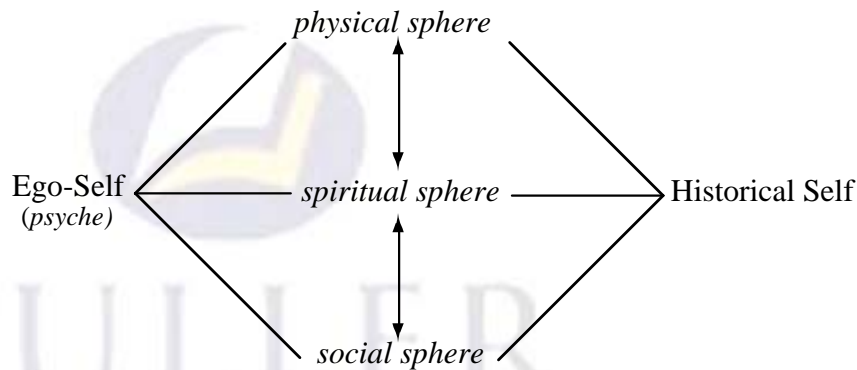
1) Human life as a psychical/physical reality

Human persons have a creaturely nature which is necessary for human life, but which is not itself the source of human life;

cf. Genesis 2:7 `Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.'

Human life is thus contingent upon a source outside of the creaturely nature itself;

`His nature consists in the fact that he is creature. Whether and in what way this man exists, whose nature is to be creature, whose being is to be for God and from God, is a question which must still be dealt with. But there is no theological anthropology which could begin with any other thesis than this, that man is creature.' Weber, F.D., I., p. 550

The creature aspect of human life is psychical as well as physical. That is, it is a life of the "soul" as well as a life of the "body."

2) Human life as a psychical/social reality

The biblical story renders a negative judgment against attempts to define human life in terms of a single psychical/physical life--"it is not good that the man should be alone" (Gen. 2:18). Other psychical/physical creatures (the animals) were not adequate partners to define the full extent of human life;

Here we see that human life is also contingent upon a "being-with" and "being-for" others who define the quality of human life for each individual person;

3) Human life as a psychical/spiritual reality

Human life is oriented toward God as the one from whom life comes and by whose determination life continues to be upheld.

The biblical story of creation renders a negative judgment against any attempt to make human life autonomous and self-determining; the consequence of such attempts will be "death";

Thus, human life is contingent upon a relation with God which is necessary to uphold life in its destiny to share in the life of God himself--that is, to experience immortality.

C. The value of human life in its unity and differentiation

1) The image of God is expressed through each of the three ecological spheres, but only as a unity of the self as a human person.

2) The value of life is always a value of self as a unity of life in its three-fold ecological orientation;

I-it (world)

I-self (identity)

I-thou (humanity--community)

The self has value as an "I-it" reality--human life has value as creaturely existence on the earth and part of the earth;

The self has value as an "I-self" reality--human life has value as a unique and unrepeatable self conscious "will to live" and "right to live";

The self has value as an "I-thou" reality--human life has value as each part has relationship to the whole;

3) The value of life is contingent upon the functional inter-relationship of all three ecological spheres;

Human life is not "sacred" in the sense that there is intrinsic "holiness" in the psychical/physical organism which constitutes the natural life of the person.

For the other creatures and for his fellow man, man is for God's sake and because of God not a thing but "something" holy (*sacrum*). This is also the background of 1 Corinthians 7:11f. But that "holiness" is not inherent in man but resides in the special relationship to himself which God the Creator has granted. Weber, F.D., I., p. 560

Human life is not attached to a biological form of life as the sole source of value or meaning. Quality of life cannot be determined solely by extending the biological life of human persons.

The New Testament concept of human life is expressed more directly as *zoe* rather than *bios*. *Zoe* refers to a person's life made abundantly full, and this life is inseparable from Jesus Christ as the source of life (cf. John 10:10; 1 Tim. 6:11, 12, 19). Robert Nelson, in his book, *Human Life--A Biblical Perspective for Bioethics* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), suggests that we might better speak of "zoe-ethics" rather than bio-ethics (pp. 107ff).

In 1984, in Melbourne, Australia, the world's first baby developed from an embryo that was frozen, thawed and then implanted in her mother's womb was born. The baby was named "Zoe"--gift of life! (*L.A. Times,* Saturday, April 21, 1984

D. Human life may often be experienced under "marginal" conditions

1) The "marginal" condition of human life results from an insufficient or pathological form of life at the psychical/physical level.

In a sense, all human life is marginal due to the fact that the psychical/physical sphere is liable to "error" (e.g. genetic abnormalities), to sickness and trauma, and finally, to death.

cf. On Being Human, pp. 152ff

In the face of the ambiguity in such situations, some are tempted to determine the value of human life as solely residing in the maintenance of the psychical/physical organism;

In so doing, the freedom and responsibility for making "decisions" with regard to withdrawing "life support" mechanisms are denied to the person as well as the community.

2) The ethical implications of such issues as suicide, abortion, and euthanasia all bear upon this question of quality of life.

cf. my discussion in *Theology, Death and Dying* (Blackwell, 1986), Chapter Seven, "Christian Perspectives on Death and Dying", pp. 124-142.

For a recent and helpful discussion of these issues see: John B. Wong, *Ethics Today for Ministers and Health Professionals: Problems and Some Practical Answers*. Loma Linda, CA: Loma Linda University Press, 2003

From the biblical perspective, human life is not an absolute value in terms of survival as a mere psychical/physical organism;

This does not mean that such creaturely existence has no value; it has the full value of human life as long as there is the possibility for human life as determined in its total ecological structure of reality.

3) The biblical perspective of resurrection of the body answers to the question of the ultimate and real value of the psychical/physical aspect of human personhood; the transformation of the psychical/physical through resurrection provides continuity of personhood while, at the same time, allows the discontinuity of the psychical/physical to occur without violation of the integrity of personhood.

Human life is an inviolable endowment; because it is a contingent form of life, and not determined solely by creaturely nature, it is not destroyed by the destruction of the flesh, though what torments the flesh afflicts the person in a real sense;

E. Human life as gift and task

It is generally characteristic of the Old Testament that it does not make statements about "nature" and "being" but statements about "the task" or a "relationship." As the being who is like God, man is supposed to do something. . . . [The image of God} endows him with a "gift" and a "task" (*Gabe and Aufgabe*.) Weber, F.D., I, p. 560.

1) The "right to life" is qualified by the gift of life;

This means that no individual has an absolute right of disposal over one's own life; this "right of disposal" or "right to determine" one's own life violates the ecological structure of life;

E.g. in the biblical story, Adam receives his own humanity as a gift in the form of the woman who is created out of his own "non-human being"; he has no right of disposal or determination over her being, for her life in its concrete form, represents the possibility of his own;

Nor does he now have the right to absolute disposal or determination over his own life, for her humanity is now also contingent upon his existence as the "gift" which constitutes her humanity;

2) quality of life is qualified by the psychical/social as well as by the psychical/physical;

This means that disorder at the "I-thou" level of the self is capable of diminishing the quality of life as much as at the "I-it" or "I-self" dimension.

Even as it could be a violation of the value of human life to be forced to live merely at the biological level, so it would be a violation of the value of human life to be forced to live in a role structure (economic, social, or political), which has as a consequence the deprivation of life as a gift to be with and for the other in a relationship of parity and reciprocity.

"Human rights" are thus grounded in the ecological construct of humanity itself, not in an abstract principle mediated through self-determination; the other person has a right to my responsible action in upholding her own humanity; but not the right to kill me for failing in this responsibility;

The "right" to be free from a person or persons who diminish my own quality of life is qualified by my need of persons to uphold the gift of life which constitutes my humanity;

3) The meaningfulness of human life is more related to life as task than as gift;

   (a) Life can lack meaning for the self while still possessing value as personal human life;

   E.g. a sense of despair, or a period of depression, can produce suicidal thoughts where no sense of value is seen from an existential perspective;

   In this case, therapy must restore the ecological construct of the self as a functional reality;

   Appeals to value of life in the face of existential meaninglessness will have little positive effect.

   (b) On the other hand, a sense of meaningful existence through a perception of life as a purposeful task carries with it a strong sense of value;

   E.g. severe disability at the psychical/physical level for some persons appears to be compensated for by meaningful task orientation;

   The psychical/social and psychical/spiritual spheres of the self are the most direct source of meaning through a task orientation toward life;

   E.g., this seems to be the basis for the "logo therapy" approach of Victor Frankl, where "will to meaning" is experienced as the key to survival and function of the self under affliction, distress, and some level of incapacity at the psychical/physical level; (cf. *The Doctor and the Soul*)

(c) From a Christian perspective, faith can be understood more as the task of life in its orientation to the world, to others, and to God than as an existential experience and value.

The "task" of believing in God includes the task of living in real symbiosis with the world as creature and in real "sym-zoesis" (to coin a word!) with others as a gift of life to life;

Faith exists as a task of life in opposition to our experience and often "under attack" by experience; for this reason, the meaningfulness of life is not an empirically derived value, nor is it susceptible to loss merely through empirical or experiential resistance;

The voice of our own heart is as such not the voice of faith. That "I" am the person in the new constitution of existence is an immediate given of experience just as little as the reverse, that I cannot deduce from experience that "I" am a sinner. This opposition, which certainly exists in Christian experience, can only be understood on the basis of the Word addressed to us, as the opposition of our existence before God. Weber, F.D., I., p. 547

So, the Apostle Paul, when contemplating the alternatives of continued life on earth under distress as compared with life with Christ (which, he stated, "is far better" Phil. 1:23), found his answer in his life as a task of living out faith for the sake of others, and "fruitful labor" for Christ (Phil. 1:19-26; cf. 2 Cor. 5:1-10)

2. The Value of Persons and the Right to Die

A. Assessing the criteria for determining quality of life

1) The life of persons has value to the extent that it can be willed to survive in its concrete situation by the self and others as a totality;

2) The value of life as psychical/physical existence is relative to the degree of health and/or trauma to the total self as a result of biological incapacity to support life;

3) Upholding life as personal value may entail a decision to release persons from the torment to the total person by the trauma to the body; in any case, a decision that death has occurred is a decision <u>for</u> and not against the value and dignity of persons;

4) The so-called "right to die" is not absolute, any more than is the "right to life." Living and dying take place as events which involve the whole person in an ecological structure of humanity;

5) The "border-line" of human existence can never be reduced to absolute boundaries, on which abstract principle and technological capability can be squarely placed; the criteria by which quality of life is to be assessed can be found in the human

community's self understanding as life endowed with a meaning and destiny beyond its creaturely power and potential;

6) Decisions on this "border-line" of human existence are not decisions which attempt to "play God", but rather, are decisions which seek to uphold God's purpose for this life and his provision for human life beyond death.

B. Prolonging life through technology.

"A so-called 'vegetative' state of bodily existence is virtually a form of death, and can itself become an indignity if artificially prolonged as a monument to medical technology. When a machine and a body have more of a necessary relationship that do the soul and the body, what is missing is being sustained is not life, but a process of dying." Theology, Death and Dying, Ray S. Anderson (New York: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1986), p. 142.

The issue of prolonging life with the insertion of a feeding tube in the case of person with a terminal illness is discussed by Joanne Lynn and Joan Harrold (M. D.s) in a book titled, Handbook for Mortals. Web site: http://www.growthhouse.org/educate/flash/mortals/mor0.html

The following are some excerpts from this Handbook.

"Why is it sometimes so hard to let a patient go without eating? In all cultures and throughout all history, offering food has been a sign of caring and hospitality. Our mothers made sure we were well fed. Most people enjoy eating with family and friends, especially on special occasions. In most religions, foot is part of sacred rituals. It is no wonder, then, when someone we love is unable to eat and drink naturally, that we feel compelled to 'feed' them in some way It seems to be basic caring. But, as death approaches, you will not 'keep up your strength' by forcing yourself to eat when it makes you uncomfortable. If eating is a social event for you, or providing food is one of the common ways of expressing caring in your family, our loss of appetite may be distressing to you and your loved ones. You might enjoy small amounts of home-cooked food, dishes that mean something special to you. However, you should also know that a decrease in appetite is natural and eating less may increase, rather than decrease, comfort. Because most dying people are more comfortable without eating or drinking near the end of life, forcing food or liquids is usually not beneficial, especially if restraints, IVs, or hospitalization would be required. No forcing someone to eat or drink is not letting him 'starve to death.' The truth is, for those who are dying, the times come when it might be more compassionate, caring, even natural, to allow a natural dehydration to occur. Forcing tube feedings and IVs on dying patients can make the last days of their lives more uncomfortable.

"Many people can be supported with artificial feeding even though they do not seem to be conscious. Some stroke patients may never again respond to any stimuli. Many young people have suffered head trauma and are also permanently unconscious. . . .

The courts and medical practice have ruled it acceptable to withhold or withdraw tube feedings from such patients. This not taking an action to kill the patient; rather it is allowing a natural death to occur. Again, all the advantages of dehydration in any dying patient will benefit these patients in their last days. They can die a comfortable and peaceful death. The real struggle for the families of these patients is an emotional and spiritual one. Can we let go? Are continuing the artificial feeding for us or the patient? If the patient could make his or her own choice, would the choice be to withdraw treatment and allow a natural, peaceful death?"

The web site for the *Division of Church in Society*, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides a Christian perspective on this issue. http://www. Elca.org/dcs/endoflife.html.

The following are some excerpts:

"When medical judgment determines that artificially administered nutrition and hydration will not contribute to an improvement in the patient's underlying condition or prevent death from that condition, patients or their legal spokespersons may consider them unduly burdensome treatment. In these circumstances it may be morally responsible to withhold or withdraw them and allow death to occur. this decisions does not mean that the family and friends are abandoning their loved one. When artificially administered nutrition and hydration are withheld or withdrawn, family, friends, health care professionals, and pastor should continue to care for the person. They are to provide relief from suffering, physical comfort, and assurance of God's enduring love."

C. A Case Study: *Dance of Life*

Tears streamed down Tracy Graham's face as she blurted out her feelings to Dr. Adams. "I don't want to tell my sister that it's all right for her to die. But if I really love Sara, maybe that's what I have to say."

In talking with Dr. Adams, Sara's doctor, Tracy wanted to piece together the events of the past few months to try to understand Sara's choice to leave the hospital. Without the artificial cleansing of her blood through dialysis she could only live a few weeks. If she continued the treatment, there was a chance she could live for at least a few more years.

Tracy, now 17, and Sara, who would be 16 next month, had always been very close. It was now almost six months to the day when Sara had begun to lose weight and get very weak. The family doctor said it was a kidney disease and had recommended Dr. Adams, a specialist. When both of Sara's kidneys failed, she was put on a dialysis machine which hooks up to the blood circulation system and cleans the blood of impurities as the kidneys would. Dr. Adams began to look for a donor to give Sara a healthy kidney.

Tracy remembered the arguments with her parents. She wanted to be the donor, but her mom, dad, and Sara, as well as Dr. Adams, said "no." A donor was at last found, the transplant made, but after ten days of waiting the signs were obvious that Sara's body would reject the new

kidney. She was placed back on the dialysis machine. Tracy insisted again that she be the next donor. As there was a slightly better chance of her kidney being accepted, the girls' parents and Sara reluctantly agree. Three weeks later Tracy's transplanted kidney was also rejected by Sara's body.

Tracy slipped into Sara's room. She later remembered telling Dr. Adams how still and pale Sara had looked with all of the tubes and machines around her. There was hardly a sign of the laughing, joyous girl who had told Tracy from the time she was seven that she wanted to be a dancer. Dr. Adams had called Mr. and Mrs. Graham and Tracy into Sara's room for a conference. He told the family then that some blunt realities had to be faced. "After two rejections, we should no longer consider a kidney transplant as a possibility at this time. In a few days when Sara is stronger, she will be able to go home and resume many of her normal activities. But she must return here to the hospital three days a week for six to eight hours to use the dialysis machine. If not, her own blood would poison her.

"At the present time there is no medication that can take the place of this machine. However, there is always the hope that through new medical advances we learn how to combat the rejection of an organ transplant." Dr. Adams had told the family in confidence yesterday that Sara might live only a short time even with the dialysis because of the possibility of several complications that could arise.

The Grahams began to make plans for the future. At this point the purchase of a dialysis machine was financially an impossibility for them and in their part of the state none was available for rental. Thus because the family lived more than 65 miles from the hospital, Mr. Graham, who ran a small business in Oak Town, began to look for an apartment much closer to the city. Tracy knew that the medical costs for Sara had placed the family heavily in debt. The members of their village church, many of whom had been regular visitors at the hospital for the past few months, had spoken of their prayers for her, and had already held two bazaars to raise money for Sara's expenses. The money had only covered a fraction of the actual costs.

Mrs. Graham, who spent her days with Sara in the hospital, had begun to take in secretarial work in the evenings. Tracy, now in her senior year of high school, said that she really didn't want to go off to school in the fall, but would rather postpone this and get a job instead.

Sara told Tracy how aware she was of the love and support of the family and their friends. She said she was most aware of the tremendous faith they had in things working out for the best. Recently Sara had spoken to Tracy several times of their common Christian beliefs and of her assurance of a life after death. Dr. Adams had told her how lucky she was to have access to the machine. But Sara confessed to Tracy that the idea of living through the machine was very hard to take, and right now to think about life without dancing and running was almost impossible.

Sara was quite thin and took many days to recover from her second surgery. She had gotten acquainted with Mike, a boy on the same floor, and had told Tracy about him. "He's just a little guy. He's really 12, but he looks about 9. He's waiting for a kidney donor, but unless one shows up pretty soon, he'll need the machine to make it. I even explained to him what the machine does. But I overheard two of the nurses talking. Right now there's no space available to schedule Mike for dialysis. Do you know that only one of ten people who needs this machine gets a chance, and our hospital has one of the only machines like this in our section of the state?"

That was over a week ago. Then just this morning, Sara had turned to Tracy and in a clear, firm voice said, "Tracy, I can't stand the thought of living the rest of my life tied to this machine. It's not living for me. I want to go home now--and not come back to the hospital. I've already told Mom and Dad. they are very sad but I think they understand. But most important to me is that <u>you</u> understand and will support my decision.

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Author's note: The issue of dialysis is as technical one. As medical science progresses and as the current federal funding for dialysis makes more machines available, the facts surrounding a dilemma such as Sara's will surely be affected. However, the basic issues of the quality of life on earth and life after death are classic and must be dealt with by every generation.

X. Therapeutic Approaches to the Healing of Persons

Meissner suggests that there is a "childhood narcissism" which is essential to personal well being in the adult. Experienced losses to this narcissistic core play a critical role in psychic development.

"The sense of loss and diminished self-esteem attack the fundamental narcissism at the root of our emotional lives. This narcissism is essential to our psychological well-being and any threat to it must be resisted. And so loss sets in motion restorative efforts by which the ego strives to recover the loss and reconstitute the sense of self-esteem. Self-esteem is a fragile but indispensable vessel, whose preservation requires care and constant effort in the fact of the onslaughts of deprivation and loss." W. Meissner, 1987, *Life and Faith,* p. 140.

The mistake of equating the sinful self with the narcissistic self.

Every person is born with a disposition toward sin, but this disposition is not located in the instinct for self fulfillment
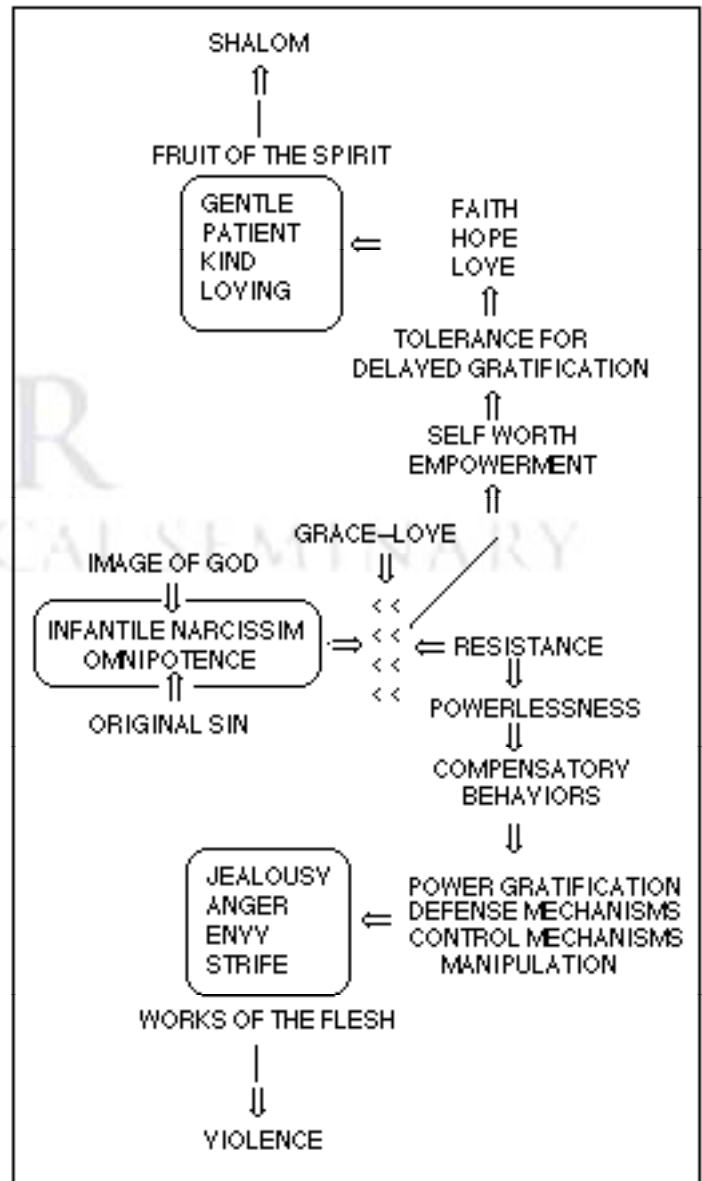
and pleasure, rather, it is located in the instinct to use power over others and one's own life to gain that fulfillment. The image of God with which each person is endowed is the source for positive self worth and self fulfillment. This is the infant's capacity to love itself, which is the basis for self-esteem. Original sin, however one defines it theologically, is the condition of every human person by which the infantile narcissism is fused with an instinct to control and gain power so as to provide one's own self with pleasure and fulfillment. Original sin may be posited as a sense of omnipotence which is fused with the narcissistic instinct giving the infant a sense of absolute power over others who cater to the infant's every need. Self fulfillment is quite different from self-gratification.

When resistance is encountered to self gratification the infantile self feels powerless and threatened. When the infant's expressed need for self gratification is resisted by the caretaker, it is not experienced only as denial of pleasure, but also as loss of power. This feeling of powerlessness at not being able to find immediate gratification of the pleasure instinct, causes a variety of compensatory mechanisms to kick in. The goal of these mechanisms is to manipulate the source of gratification and produce a response. A new set of behavior patterns are quickly learned and reinforced by the caregiver's adaptation to the demands. The infant is soon back in control of its environment and the core narcissistic needs are being fulfilled.

Unfortunately, however, the instinct for self-fulfillment and self worth has become confused with the instinct for power and control as the provider of self-gratification. Here is the point where narcissism becomes associated with self-gratification rather than with self-fulfillment. With the intervention of the grace of God the infantile narcissism is freed from the need to control and is empowered by love to experience self worth. The intervention of divine grace may be seen as providing empowerment for the self to retain the infantile narcissism in the form of self worth, or self esteem, with delayed gratification the evidence of this "fruit of the Spirit." Tolerance for delayed gratification is the mark of growth and maturity resulting in qualities of life which lead to Shalom--the Hebrew word for peace, health, wholeness and reconciliation.

Anderson, Ray S. *On Being Human*, Eerdmans, 1982, chapters 11, 12, 13
Anderson, Ray S. *Christians Who Counsel,* Zondervan, 1990
Anderson, Ray S. *Self Care: A Theology of Personal Wholeness and Spiritual Healing*, Victor Books, 1995.
Gerkin, Charles V. *The Living Human Document--Re-Visioning Pastoral Counseling in a Hermeneutical Mode*, Nashville, Abingdon, 1984

1. Approaches to Emotional, Mental, and Spiritual Healing

A. The ecological matrix as context for healing

1) The unity of the self is experienced as a process of integration, with both self identity and self activity (behavior) congruent with the three ecological spheres;
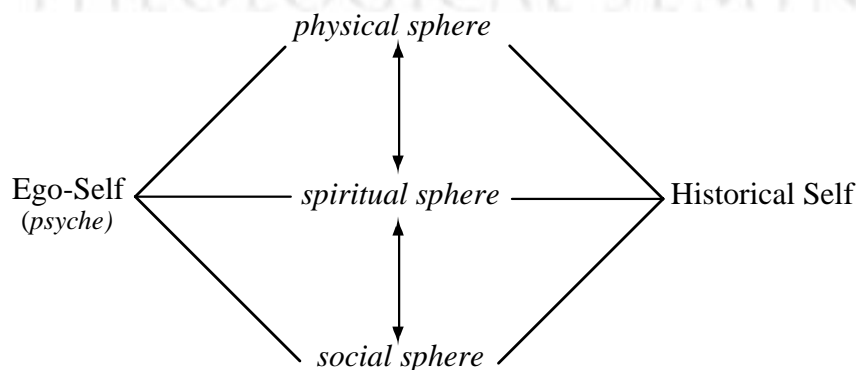
2) The core of the self can be termed the "soul" in a theological sense; a term which includes the various psychological terms;

To use the designation self is to emphasize the line of experienced continuity and interpretive capacity which emerges from the self's object relations. To use the term ego is to emphasize

the coming together of a nexus of forces demanding mediation and compromise. . . . The term *soul* is here used as a theological term that points to the self's central core subject to the ego's conflicting forces and to the ultimate origins of the self in God. The soul is the gift of God bestowed upon the individual with the breath of life. It is thus the self, including its ego conflicts, as seen from an ultimate perspective--the perspective of the self as nurtured and sustained in the life of God. Charles V. Gerkin, *The Living Human Document,* p. 98

3) The person as a unity of selfhood is approached through any one of the three modes of healing: i.e. the physical, the social, and the spiritual;

Specific modes of healing may necessarily focus on one sphere of the self's existence, but the totality of the self is involved in the specific mode of therapy;

Certain aspects of the self (soul) are related to each of the three spheres; e.g. feelings (emotions) are involved in the physical, social, and spiritual.

4) the development of the self (soul) is a process of differentiation whereby the three spheres become integrated into the core of the self's identify as an orientation toward the physical world (I-it), the social world (I-thou), and the spiritual world (I-self);

The self (soul) is related to God in all three spheres as a physical, social and spiritual being;

The image of God is thus developmental, as the self achieves the differentiation which constitutes the life of the soul in its totality as a being related to the world, others and self in fulfillment of God's purpose;

B. The life continuum as a context for therapy

1) The life of the self as a pilgrimage from being to becoming;

Pastoral counseling undertaken in the hermeneutical mode [assumes] the context of human life seen as pilgrimage set within a community that shares a certain narrative vision or mythos concerning the whole of life in creation. The care provided by pastoral counseling is thus only one aspect of a larger context of care provided by the community of faith and life. Rather than "treating" an "illness" or "solving" a "problem," the pastoral counselor seeks to provide a more or less temporary intensification of a process of care and prophetic ministry to persons which the church in its ministry in other modes carries on with people throughout their lives. The deep issues of the soul with which pastoral counseling is primarily concerned are the same issues as those with which ministry is concerned in preaching, worship, Christian education, and pastoral care. What pastoral counseling makes possible is simply an intensification and greater particularization of ministering response to the specificity of these issues. The solving of human problems is seen as fundamentally related to coming to grips with the deeper issues in the life of the soul. Human problems provide the occasion for the surfacing of these deeper issues. Gerkin, Op. Cit., p. 178

2) Therapeutic gain and agogic goals

cf. Anderson, *Christians Who Counsel*, chapter three

(a) In the broad sense, therapy not only means healing, but the health and growth of the self as God's gift of life;

The Greek word for salvation (*soteria*) can also be translated as healing. Jesus' ministry of healing was also called therapy (*therapeuo* Matt. 9:35).

(b) In a narrower sense, therapy means a more limited procedure which releases persons for growth;

Therapy is not a matter of doing something <u>to</u> the individual, or of inducing him to do something for himself. It is instead a matter of freeing him for normal growth and development, of removing obstacles so that he can move forward. Carl Rogers, *Counseling and Psychotherapy* (1942), p. 29

Therapeutic gain would then be the outcome expected for a specific clinical procedure which focuses more or less on one aspect of the self which is to some degree dysfunctional or growth and life inhibiting.

(c) The agogic situation is one in which the motive power for change is introduced; it is not only a moment of understanding, but a positive motive for change and growth;
     (See, Jacob Firet, *Dynamics in Pastoring*, Eerdmans, 1986, pp. 99ff)
Agogic goals are:

Those aspects of the self which relate to the unity and integrity of the person as both mental and physical; these goals give the self meaning, congruence and a sense of well being as a psychical/physical person;

Those aspects of the self which relate to the various levels of social relationships in which the person functions; these goals give the self a sense of differentiation and definition as a functioning part of intimate as well as public relationships;

Those aspects of the self which relate to a sense of being grasped and upheld by God's power and love; these goals give the self a sense of security and hope as well as personal worth and value which is not susceptible to loss through inner doubt or life circumstances;

3) Agogic goals constitute the growth continuum on which the development of the self takes place; the agogic goals inform the therapeutic task and provide a context for therapeutic gains through specific procedures;

(a) Self formation: the hermeneutical task:

To extend D.W. Winnicott's language, it is the role of interpretation to sustain and solidify the line of continuing existence that provides the self with a sense of continuity at all levels of its functioning. The line of life becomes a line of interpretation--the hermeneutics of the self. Within a theological perspective I would place that process at the center of the life of the soul in all its relationships. Gerkin, op. cit. p. 102

(b) Self socialization: the narrative task:

The development of the self takes place as the story, or narrative of the self unfolds through the acquiring of a history of relationship to the world (I-it) and the community (I-thou);

The self's story, says Gerkin, `may be seen as the soul's myth of the self in the world.' (p. 112) The story of the self is acquired through participation in the story of the community in which the individual gains a name, a history, and a context for discovering one's own "character" as part of the "plot."

cf. Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character* (Notre Dame, 1981)

The necessary existence of the other for my own self is but a reminder that the self is not something we create, but is a gift. Thus we become who we are through the embodiment of the story in the communities in which we are born. What is crucial is not that we find some way to free ourselves from such stories or community, but that the story which grasps us through our community is true. And at least one indication of the truthfulness of a community's story is how it forces me to live in it in a manner that gives me the skill to take responsibility for my character. Hauerwas, pp. 148-9

(c) Self fulfillment: the eschatological task

The level of acceptance of eschatological identity is often signaled by a reduction in the self's preoccupation with itself and a concomitant enhancement in the self's capacity for concern for and participation with other persons. In the reappropriation and reinterpretation of one's own suffering, a greater sensitivity to the suffering of others has been engendered. The weakness of one's own historical embeddedness has to a significant degree been turned to the strength of an enlarged capacity to care for the welfare of others in their historical situation. Rather than being depleted by the demands and pressures upon the self that threaten the self's existence, the self is increasingly nourished and fulfilled by engagement with others in activities oriented toward the renewal of life together in the spirit of the Kingdom. Gerkin, op. cit., p. 189

The integrity of the self (soul) in its three-fold ecological context (physical, social, spiritual), depends to a large degree by its orientation to the future;

This orientation is what is here called the eschatological task of the self; this task is the creative task of faith, by which meaningful investment of one's self in the present is experienced as a realization of the promise that God sustains life in its task by preserving the life of the person through it;

Against that background of the psychologizing of everyday concern with problems of living and spiritualizing of religious life and devotion, the model of pastoral counseling

here proposed may be seen as an alternative lying somewhere midway between psychotherapy and spiritual direction. Fundamentally concerned with the self's pilgrimage through the problems and crises of everyday relational life, the hermeneutical theory is simultaneously concerned with the formation of that side of the self's paradoxical identity rooted and grounded in God and the inbreaking of the Kingdom. Here, of course, the theory becomes openly and unashamedly confessional. Insofar as the horizon of understanding brought by the counselor to the counseling relationship is thus involved in confessional faith, to that extent it entails a form of spiritual direction. But insofar as that horizon represents psychological ways of attending to the inner and relational workings of the self, it is a clearly recognizable form of psychotherapy. Partaking of both, the model, both in design and intention, embraces a psycho-spiritual form of ministry. Gerkin, op. cit., pp. 193-3.

2. A Paradigm of Pastoral Care

When I ask you to listen to me and you start giving advice, you have not done what I asked. When I ask you to listen to me and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way, you are trampling on my feelings. When I ask you to listen to me and you feel you have to do something to solve my problem, you have failed me, strange as that may seem. Listen. All I ask is that you listen, not talk or do--just hear me. When you do something for me that I can and need to do for myself, you contribute to my fear and inadequacy. But when you accept as a simple fact that I do feel what I feel, no matter how irrational, then I can quit trying to convince you, and can get about the business of understanding what is behind them. So please just hear me. (Anonymous). [Cited by Donald P. Smith, *Empowering Ministry: Ways to Grow in Effectiveness*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996, p. 124]

The Cappadocian Father Gregory of Nazianzus wrote these pertinent words in the fourth century:

The principle is this: just as the same food and medicine is not appropriate to every bodily ailment, so neither is the same treatment and discipline proper for the guidance of souls … Some persons are proper motivated by words, others by example. Some who are sluggish and dull need to be stirred up to the good, while others are already inordinately fervent and so rushed about that they need to be calmed. Praise will benefit some, while correction will benefit others, provided that each is administered in a seasonable way. Out of season your counsel may do more harm than good. Quoted in Thomas Oden, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*, San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1983: 197

cf. Anderson, *Christians Who Counsel*, chapter twelve

A. Pastoral Care as Extension of God's Grace

The mode: intervention
The goal: forgiveness
The theological dynamic: a kind of absolution

God's grace is also a judgment against that which distorts and destroys the life of human persons (sin);
This judgment is an intervention between sin and its consequences;

Even if the consequences be viewed as a kind of penalty or punishment due to sin, God's judgment, based in his grace, intervenes between the sin and its consequence for the sake of the restoration of the person. (cf. Miriam, Numbers 12:1-16: the plague, Exodus 32:35)

The specific goal of divine grace is thus forgiveness; the renewal of a positive relation between persons and God; The content of forgiveness is restored relation, not merely an abstract and legal pardon;

The moral law is itself rooted in the moral freedom of God; thus forgiveness does not violate the moral law, but fulfills the intention of God's moral freedom, and is an ultimate moral good

3) Pastoral care must be prepared to make that same kind of intervention, with the objective of creating the moral good of forgiveness as an experienced reality; Repentance is the positive fruit of forgiveness experienced as grace, not a condition of forgiveness; cf. Job 33. Absolution is a state of realized and experienced forgiveness, and as such, is a state of inner peace not merely a formal or legal stipulation;

B. Pastoral Care as Transfer of Spiritual Power

The mode: Advocacy
The goal: liberation
The theological dynamic: a kind of exorcism

1) The transfer of spiritual power is not a literal movement of power from one person to another; rather, it is a process of empowerment which results in moral and spiritual parity;

E.g. Jesus empowered persons who were viewed as powerless and weak: cf. Luke 5, the woman who was healed by touching his garment; he felt "power" go forth from him; and when she was healed, he attributed it to her faith not to his power: `Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.' (Luke 5:34)

2) The transfer of spiritual power is effected by advocacy, by which one places power on the side of the powerless;

The void and emptiness left by evil (or one's own sin), is filled by the presence of the caregiver; this is an incarnational kind of caregiving, where presence is empowering to those who lack power;

3) God's grace does not only medicate sickness, it sets up a barrier, or shield against the invasion of that which causes disorder and destruction to the self; this is a kind of "exorcism" by which the positive "yes" to the person experiencing affliction or oppression is at the same time a "no" to the forces and powers which cause disorder;

C. Pastoral Care as the Creation of a Healing Community

  The mode: affirmation
  The goal: peace/shalom
  The theological dynamic: a kind of eucharist

1) The christian community as liturgical paradigm for the healing of persons;

  cf. Anderson, *On Being Human*, chapter 12
      Dunn, Frank G. *Building Faith in Families--Using the Sacraments in
          Pastoral Ministry* (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow, 1986)

  The community of Christ contextualizes the sacramental significance of Christ's
  healing and affirming grace:

  When we view the work of the Church to be the work of Christ, we begin to see that
  reconciliation means not only the restoration of a cosmic relationship of unity with God but
  also the healings, large and small, that are needed by ourselves and our neighbors. These
  healings are physical, emotional, psychical, relational. The job not only of the clergy, but of
  the whole Christian community, is to heal--to bring this wholeness on all levels to all who are
  broken, distressed, troubled, ill, fragmented in a myriad of ways. Dunn, p. 46

2) The test of authentic moral advocacy and intervention in pastoral care is the
   willingness to give affirmation to the person who would otherwise be vulnerable
   to the demands of the moral law, or of one's own self-imposed self-condemning
   spirit; in binding one to the community of Christ, affirmation of moral worth and
   personal dignity is communicated as a resource for personal healing and hope;

3) The content of affirmation is three-fold

   (a) The affirmation that intercepts the consequences of sin and lays claim to the
       person who would otherwise be alienated from all hope of moral and spiritual
       health; The moral law is redirected away from the lawbreaker to the lawgiver-
       -to God himself

   (b) The affirmation as a creative ritual for re-entry to the community (cf. Exodus
       33:12,14; Exod. 35)

   (c) The affirmation that effects a moral and spiritual renewal of life through the
       offering up of thanksgiving to God--i.e. the eucharist; The life of the
       community itself is eucharistic in its vicarious offering up to God the
       thanksgiving and service of praise on behalf of all who "touch the hem of its
       garment"; cf. David:

          Fill me with joy and gladness;
          let the bones which thou hast broken rejoice;
          Create in me a clean heart, O God,
          and put a new and right spirit within me.

Restore to me the joy of thy salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.
O Lord, open thou my lips,
and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.
  Psalm 51: 8,10,12,15