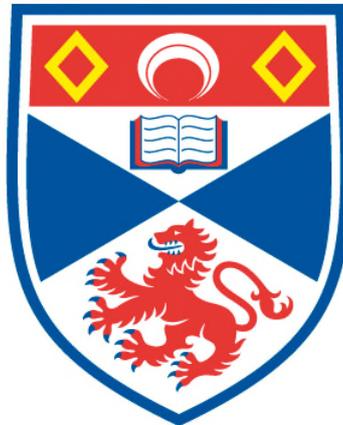


**OUR BEING IS IN BECOMING
THE NATURE OF HUMAN TRANSFORMATION
IN THE THEOLOGY OF KARL BARTH,
JOSEPH RATZINGER, AND JOHN ZIZIOULAS**

Luke Ben Tallon

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews**



2011

**Full metadata for this item is available in
St Andrews Research Repository
at:**

<http://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/>

Please use this identifier to cite or link to this item:

<http://hdl.handle.net/10023/2572>

This item is protected by original copyright

**This item is licensed under a
Creative Commons Licence**

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

ST MARY'S COLLEGE



OUR BEING IS IN BECOMING

**THE NATURE OF HUMAN TRANSFORMATION
IN THE THEOLOGY OF KARL BARTH,
JOSEPH RATZINGER, AND JOHN ZIZIOULAS**

A THESIS SUBMITTED BY

LUKE BEN TALLON

TO THE FACULTY OF DIVINITY

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ST ANDREWS, SCOTLAND

February 2011

Candidate's declarations:

I, Luke Ben Tallon, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 80,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in August, 2005 and as a candidate for the degree of PhD in August 2006; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2005 and 2011.

I, Luke Ben Tallon, received assistance in the writing of this thesis in respect of proof-reading for typographical errors, which was provided by Holly Anne Tallon.

Date 10 Feb 2011 signature of candidate

2. Supervisor's declaration:

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of PhD in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

Date _____ signature of supervisor

3. Permission for electronic publication:

In submitting this thesis to the University of St Andrews I understand that I am giving permission for it to be made available for use in accordance with the regulations of the University Library for the time being in force, subject to any copyright vested in the work not being affected thereby. I also understand that the title and the abstract will be published, and that a copy of the work may be made and supplied to any bona fide library or research worker, that my thesis will be electronically accessible for personal or research use unless exempt by award of an embargo as requested below, and that the library has the right to migrate my thesis into new electronic forms as required to ensure continued access to the thesis. We have obtained any third-party copyright permissions that may be required in order to allow such access and migration, or have requested the appropriate embargo below.

The following is an agreed request by candidate and supervisor regarding the electronic publication of this thesis:

Access to all of printed copy but embargo of all of electronic publication of thesis for a period of 5 years on the ground that publication would preclude future publication.

Date 10 Feb 2011 signature of candidate

signature of supervisor

ABSTRACT

This study offers an ecumenical exploration of human transformation through the examination of this topic in the thought of Karl Barth (1888-1968), a Swiss Reformed theologian; Joseph Ratzinger (b. 1927), a Roman Catholic theologian; and John Zizioulas (b. 1931), a Greek Orthodox theologian. Describing and understanding human transformation stands as a crucial task for theology because no one is simply born a Christian—in order to *be* a Christian one must *become* a Christian. The first chapter introduces this topic, the three theologians (highlighting their commonalities), and the three questions that guide the analysis of each theologian and the thesis as a whole: What is the goal of human transformation? What is the basis of human transformation? How are humans transformed?

Chapters 2, 3, and 4 treat the topic of human transformation in the theology of Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas, respectively. All three understand the goal of human transformation to be the prayer of the children of God, and locate its basis in God's reconciling act in Jesus Christ—an act itself based in the primordial divine decision to be God *pro nobis*. Even within this broad agreement, however, differences are evident, especially with regard to eschatology. Consideration of how this transformation occurs reveals significant differences concerning the agency of Jesus Christ in relation to the Holy Spirit and the church.

The final chapter explores 1) the convergences and divergences between Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas regarding human transformation; 2) the contributions of this study to the interpretation of Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas; and 3) the relationship between human transformation and participation in God. Throughout, attention is given to the relationship between Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church, the *eschaton*, and the triunity of God and human transformation. All three accounts of human transformation point beyond the transition between sinful and redeemed humanity to a dynamic anthropology in which the constant asking, receiving, thanking, and asking again is the very “ontological location” of the *eschatological* life of humanity: our being is *in becoming*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My work would not have been possible without the support of my family. Holly, my true helpmate, has been gracious beyond measure as we moved and sacrificed because of this PhD. My dear children Isaiah and Noelle energetically urged me on with their smiles, questions, and cries of “Knock it out!” as I worked on this project. My parents, Jack and Roxanne Tallon, have provided living Christian catechesis, as well as cultivating my love of learning and facilitating my education at crucial junctures. Phil and Sara Sykora have been model in-laws—even during the months my family unexpectedly took up residence with them and I typed away morosely in their basement. Cass and Alex Huffman, as well as Shannon and David Burcham, have cheered me on as brothers and sisters in Christ.

In many large and small ways, my work bears the imprint of the Christian communities that formed me before and during my PhD research. Thanks are due to the Eastside Church of Christ for their care during my childhood, the Malibu Church of Christ for their commitment to serving a transient student population, the “wee” St Andrews Free Church for their openness to my family as strangers in a strange land, the Littleton Church of Christ in Colorado for their steadfast prayers, and the Church Village Church of Christ in Barbados for reminding me of the joyousness of life in Christ during the last steps of the PhD process.

Along the way, I have been blessed with intelligent, perceptive, and personally engaging colleagues who contributed to my education in areas far beyond the limited scope of this thesis. My advisor, Alan Torrance, has suffered immensely during the last five years, yet his enthusiasm for this project and willingness to see it through never flagged. Special thanks are due to Cliff Barbarick, a friend who is closer than a brother and who has shared my journey from its earliest days, Kelly Liebengood, Aaron Kuecker, Kevin Diller, Daniel Driver, Jeremy Gabrielson, Amber and Paul Warhurst, RJ Matava, Josh Moon, Matt Ford, Jason Goroncy, Jeff Tipner, Meg Ramey, Tim Stone, Stephen Presley, Matt Farlow, Andrew Torrance, Drew Lewis, Ivan and Julie Khovacs, Reno Lauro, Bruce Baker, Theng-Huat Leow, Seth Tarrer, Ian Church, Mariam Kamell, Darren Schmidt and Andy McCoy—though I am also indebted to many more faculty, staff, students and family members from the St Mary’s community.

Thanks are also due to my students at Pepperdine University, the University of St Andrews, and Codrington College, whose determined search for understanding pressed me towards a more expansive, deep, and clear theological understanding. I also am extremely grateful to the Principal of Codrington College, the Rev. Dr. Ian Rock, who was willing to take me on without a PhD in hand and has continued to demonstrate confidence despite several delays. The Benedictine community at Pluscarden Abbey in Moray, Scotland, provided hospitality and quiet at crucial junctures in this project. Finally, my debt to my elementary school teachers has crossed my mind regularly during my PhD studies; for teaching me the fundamentals of reading and writing, I thank Mrs. Hannaway, Mrs. Gary, Mrs. Swearingen, Mrs. Schreiber, Mrs. Ward, Mr. Randolph, and Mrs. Slavens.

DEDICATION

To Holly Anne, whose loving work of prayer encouraged me when I did not love my work on prayer.

“Nothing is as beautiful as when she believes....”

- Ben Harper, *Diamonds on the Inside*, Virgin Records, 2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abbreviations	xiii
Chapter 1: Introduction	
What does it mean <i>to be</i> a Christian?	1
I. Karl Barth: An Idiosyncratic Answer?	2
II. Joseph Ratzinger: A Roman Catholic Answer	5
III. John Zizioulas: A Greek Orthodox Answer	8
Chapter 2: Karl Barth	
Calling on God: Our Being is in Becoming Prayers	11
I. Invocation, Ethics, and Covenant	13
I.A. Invocation: Calling on God	13
I.B. The Task of Ethics: Lessons in the Art of Invocation	17
I.C. Salvation: Fulfillment of the Eternal Covenant (the Basis of Salvation)	20
I.D. Invocation: Being-Reconciled-in-Action	25
II. Covenant Partners: God, Humanity, and the God-Human, Jesus Christ	26
II.A. Jesus Christ—Very God: The Reconciling God	28
II.B. Jesus Christ—Very Human: God’s Reconciled Covenant Partner	33
II.C. Jesus Christ—True God-Human Mediator: The Guarantor and Witness of the Reconciled Covenant	40
III. Baptism: An Event of Divine Change and Human Prayer, Not a Sacrament	46
III.A. Spirit Baptism: God’s Foundation of the Christian Life	49
III.B. Water Baptism: The Human Act at the Foundation of the Christian Life	56
IV. Conclusion: Our Being is in Calling on God	69
Chapter 3: Joseph Ratzinger	
Becoming <i>Eucharistia</i> : Receiving Ourselves Through Dialogue in Communion	75
I. The Question of Death and the Answer in Jesus Christ	77
I.A. Death: Primordial Fruit of Sin and Whence of Human Transformation	77
I.B. True Life: The Answer to Death in the Person of Jesus Christ	80
II. The Life of God and Human Life	88
II.A. The Triune Life of God	91
II.B. Human Life: Jesus Christ	96
II.C. Church, Sacraments, Liturgy: Our Life in Christ and Christ’s Life in Us	103
III. Baptism	113
III.A. <i>Metanoia</i> : Reception, Response, Conversion	114
III.B. Baptism into Death	117
III.C. Baptism into Life	119
III.D. The Baptismal Ethic	120
IV. Eucharist	123
IV.A. The Basis of the Eucharist in Jesus Christ’s Sacrifice	123
IV.B. <i>Communio</i> Eucharist and Church	127
IV.C. The Eucharistic Vocation	133
V. Conclusion: Our Being is in Becoming <i>Eucharistia</i>	135

Chapter 4: John Zizioulas	
Becoming Ecclesial Persons: Eucharistic Transformation from Death to Life in Communion	141
I. Human Transformation from Death to Life in Jesus Christ	142
I.A. Death: The End of Creation <i>in se</i>	143
I.B. Does Zizioulas Collapse Creation and Fall?	145
I.C. Jesus Christ <i>is</i> Salvation	148
I.D. Jesus Christ's Recapitulation of Creation	150
II. Becoming Ecclesial Persons in Baptism	153
II.A. Baptism as Death and New Birth	153
II.B. Christian Existence in Faith	156
II.C. Becoming Like God: Baptism and the Doctrine of the Trinity	159
II.D. The End of the <i>imago Dei</i> : The Coincidence of Freedom and Love	163
II.E. Baptism as Ordination to Life in the Body of Christ	168
III. Receiving Life in the Eucharist	169
III.A. The Eucharist is Life	170
III.B. Ecclesial Communion and Otherness	171
III.C. The Bishop, Structure of the Eucharist	173
III.D. The Eucharist as Presence of Christ—the spiritually catholic person	176
IV. Eucharistic Persons: Persons Becoming	181
IV.A. The Eucharistic Vocation	181
IV.B. Eschatological Ontology: Shadows of Things to Come	184
V. Conclusion: Our Being is in Becoming Ecclesial Persons	187
Chapter 5: Conclusion	
Human Transformation: Our Being is in Becoming	191
I. The Convergences and Divergences Between Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas Regarding Human Transformation	191
I.A. The <i>Prayer</i> of the Children of God as the <i>Goal</i> of Human Transformation	192
I.B. Human Transformation's Trinitarian <i>Basis</i> : God's Being is in Becoming	196
I.C. Christ, Spirit, and Church: <i>How</i> Humans are Transformed	199
II. Implications of this Thesis for the Study of Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas	203
II.A. Barth Studies	204
II.B. Ratzinger Studies	209
III.C. Zizioulas Studies	211
III. Prayer as Participation	213
III.A. Barth: Participation in the History of the Covenant	214
III.B. Ratzinger: Participation in the Being and Act of God	218
III.C. Zizioulas: Participation in the Divine Communion	223
IV. Conclusion	226
Appendix A	
John Zizioulas: A Biographical Sketch	229
Bibliography	231

ABBREVIATIONS

General

- R Translation revised from the original language.
r Original emphasis restored.
* Emphasis added.

Karl Barth

- CD *Church Dogmatics*. 4 vols. in 13 parts. Translation edited by T.F. Torrance and G.W. Bromiley. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1956–1996.
[*Die kirchliche Dogmatik*. 4 vols. in 13 parts. Zollikon, Switz.: Verlage der Evangelischen Buchhandlung, 1932-1967.]
- ChrL *The Christian Life*. Church Dogmatics *Volume IV, Part 4—Lecture Fragments*. Edited by Hans-Anton Drewes and Eberhard Jüngel. Translated by G.W. Bromiley. London: T & T Clark, 1981.
[*Das christliche Leben: Die Kirchliche Dogmatik IV/4, Fragmente aus dem Nachlaß, Vorlesung 1959-1961*. Edited by Hans-Anton Drewes and Eberhard Jüngel. Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1999.]
- ET *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction*. Translated by Grover Foley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979.
- FT *Final Testimonies*. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Edited by Eberhard Busch. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977.
- HG *The Humanity of God*. Translated by John Newton Thomas and Thomas Wieser. Richmond: John Knox, 1960.

Joseph Ratzinger

- BPO *Behold the Pierced One: An Approach to a Spiritual Christology*. Translated by Graham Harrison. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987.
- CEP *Church, Ecumenism, and Politics: New Essays in Ecclesiology*. Slough, England: St Paul, 1988.
- CtC *Called to Communion: Understanding the Church Today*. Translated by Adrian Walker. Ignatius Press, 1996.
- DaP *Dogma and Preaching*. Translated by Matthew J. O’Connell. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1985.
[*Dogma und Verkündigung*. München: Erich Wewel Verlag, 1973.]
- DZ *Daughter Zion: Meditations on the Church’s Marian Belief*. Translated by John M. McDermott, S.J. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1983.
- EDEL *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life*. Edited by Johann Auer, translated and edited by Aidan Nichols. . Translated by Michael Waldstein. Dogmatic Theology. Washington, D.C.: CUA, 1988.
- FaF *Faith and Future*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1971.
- FoF *The Feast of Faith: Approaches to a Theology of the Liturgy*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1986.

- GCC *Gospel, Catechesis, Catechism: Sidelights on the Catechism of the Catholic Church.* San Francisco: Ignatius, 1997.
- GINU *God Is Near Us: The Eucharist, The Heart of Life.* San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2003.
- GJC *The God of Jesus Christ: Meditations on God in the Trinity.* Translated by Robert J. Cunningham. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1979.
- GW *God and the World: A Conversation with Peter Seewald.* Translated by Henry Taylor. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2002.
- ItB *“In the Beginning...” A Catholic Understanding of Creation and Fall.* Translated by Boniface Ramsey, O.P. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.
- ItC *Introduction to Christianity.* New edition with ecclesiastical approval. Translated by J.R. Foster. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2004.
[*Einführung in das Christentum: Vorlesungen über das Apostolische Glaubensbekenntnis—Mit einem neuen einleitenden Essay.* München: Kösel, 2005.]
- JoN *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration.* Translated by Adrian J. Walker. New York: Doubleday, 2007.
- MCB *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood.* San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993.
- MROC *Many Religions—One Covenant: Israel, the Church, and the World.* Translated by Graham Harrison. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999.
- NMT *The Nature and Mission of Theology: Essays to Orient Theology in Today’s Debates.* Translated by Adrian Walker. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1995.
- NSL *A New Song for the Lord: Faith in Christ and Liturgy Today.* Translated by Martha M. Matesich. New York: Crossroad, 1996.
- OWJC *On the Way to Jesus Christ.* Translated by Michael J. Miller. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2005.
- PCT *Principles of Catholic Theology: Building Stones for a Fundamental Theology.* Translated by Mary Frances McCarthy. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1987.
[*Theologische Prinzipienlehre: Bausteine zur Fundamentaltheologie.* Donauwörth: Erichewel Verlag, 2005.]
- PPF *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith: The Church as Communion.* Edited by Stephan Otto Horn and Vinzenz Pfnür. Translated by Henry Taylor. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2005.
- SL *The Spirit of the Liturgy.* San Francisco: Ignatius, 2000.
- TaT *Truth and Tolerance: Christian Belief and World Religions.* Translated by Henry Taylor. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2004.
- “Catholicism” “Catholicism After the Council.” *The Furrow* (1967).
- ‘Comment-GS’ “Commentary on *Gaudium et Spes*.” In *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. V. Edited by Herbert Vorgrimler. London: Burns & Oates, 1969.
- “Covenant” “The New Covenant: A Theology of Covenant in the New

- Testament.” Translated by Maria Shradly. *ICR Communio*, no. 22 (Winter 1995): 631–51.
- 'Identification' “Identification with the Church.” In *Living with the Church*, 9–28. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978.
- “Person” “Concerning the Notion of Person in Theology.” *ICR Communio*, no. 17 (Fall 1990): 439–54.
[“Zum Personenverständnis in der Theologie.” 205–224 in *Dogma und Verkündigung*. München: Erich Wewel Verlag, 1973.]
- “Holy Spirit” “The Holy Spirit as Communio: Concerning the Relationship of Pneumatology and Spirituality in Augustine.” Translated by Peter Casarella. *Communio*, no. 25 (Summer 1998): 324–39.
- “Revelation” “Revelation and Tradition.” In *Revelation and Tradition*, translated by W. J. O’Hara. *Quaestiones Disputatae*, 26–66. New York: Herder and Herder, 1966.

John Zizioulas

- BaC* *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*. Contemporary Greek Theologians. Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary, 1985.
- C&O* *Communion & Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*. Edited by Paul McPartlan. London: T & T Clark, 2006.
- EBC* *Eucharist, Bishop, Church: The Unity of the Church in the Divine Eucharist and the Bishop During the First Three Centuries*. 2nd. Translated by Elizabeth Theokritoff. Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2001.
- LCD* *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics*. Edited by Douglas Knight. London: T & T Clark, 2008.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

WHAT DOES IT MEAN *TO BE* A CHRISTIAN?

No one is simply born a Christian. In order to *be* a Christian, one must *become* a Christian. Thus, any account of *being* a Christian will also be an account of *being transformed*, of *becoming* a Christian. This thesis inquires into the nature of this becoming by examining human transformation in the theology of Karl Barth, Joseph Ratzinger, and John Zizioulas. While substantive theological differences separate these three accounts of becoming Christian, they also converge in remarkable ways, especially around the *prayer of the children of God* as the *goal* of human transformation. This common affirmation indicates that the double dynamic of divine call and human answer, which is at the same time a human call expecting a divine answer, is not only a transformed and transforming way of being between Pentecost and *parousia*, but the very “ontological location” of the *eschatological* life of humanity: *our being is in becoming*.¹

In order to understand how prayer is the becoming in which Christians have their being, we will first set forth descriptions of the nature of the transformation involved in becoming Christian in the theology of Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas. As these descriptions are accomplished primarily through sympathetic exegesis, the three main chapters (2, 3, and 4) are basically exegetical, interpreting each thinker’s understanding of transformation in light of his broader presentation of Christian doctrine. Such reading, borrowing John Webster’s words,

is not atavism, but a matter of putting oneself in a place where one’s conventions can be quite seriously undermined or relativized, and where as a consequence one can begin to think afresh. Good texts ought not to be used, rummaged through for “insights” to shore up some proposal or other, but studied in such a way that they provoke by subverting. Approached in this manner, they form one of the indispensable prerequisites to creative thought. But they can only offer this to us as we are willing to suspend our own concerns and not press too quickly towards a judgement on what we read (*Barth’s Moral Theology: Human Action in Barth’s Thought*, 7).

1. Echoing Eberhard Jüngel’s provocative *God’s Being Is in Becoming: The Trinitarian Being of God in the Theology of Karl Barth*, quotes at xxv, 117, and 121.

As indicated by Webster, *sympathetic* does not mean *uncritical*. Rather, such exegesis involves several critical dimensions, for instance, discerning how individual arguments fit into the warp and weft of each theologian's theology as a whole and giving voice to these authors' best answers to criticisms advanced by their readers.

Furthermore, by placing these accounts side-by-side we have also taken responsibility for the critical task of discerning whether agreements and disagreements are apparent (merely *verbi*) or substantive (*res*). Thus, while each theologian's doctrine is presented according to its own inner logic, each exegetical chapter has an eye to the parallel chapters as well as the three interrelated questions which guide the analysis of each answer and facilitate this critical discernment: a) What is the *goal* of human transformation? b) What is the *basis* of this transformation? and c) *How* does this transformation occur? The final chapter (5) is dedicated to clarifying the "ontological location" (*becoming*) of Christian being through an exploration of the agreements and disagreements between Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas concerning human transformation.

I. Karl Barth: An Idiosyncratic Answer?

Karl Barth presents any would-be student of his doctrine of human transformation with a number of challenges. Not least is the sheer volume of his writings, especially given how frequently he turns his attention to the Christian life.² If the interpreter is not content with superficial generalities and reductive summaries, then the scope of study must be limited to some degree. We aim to present Barth's "last [dogmatic] word" on the topic of being Christian (what would have been §§74–75 of his *Church Dogmatics*, respectively CD IV/4 and *ChrL*, 3–46) within the contours of his *Versöhnungslehre* (laid out in §§57–58 [CD IV/1, 3–154]), striking a balance between attending to concrete specifics and placing them within a broader context.³ This means

2. See Joseph Mangina for a demonstration of Barth's ongoing interest in the Christian life, against many critics (*Karl Barth on the Christian Life: The Practical Knowledge of God*).

3. Barth continued returning to this topic even after he stopped working on his *Dogmatics* (see *Final Testimonies* and *Call for God: New Sermons from Basel Prison*).

that our study draws on both sides of a significant change of mind: until Barth revised his ethics of reconciliation under the rubric of *invocation* [*Anrufung*], he had presented the Christian life in terms of *faithfulness* [*Treue*].⁴ However, as Barth understood this revision as *more faithful* (so to speak) to the matter set forth in *CD IV/1–3*, there is justification for using the former material to help interpret the latter.⁵ The final challenge we will address is the material content of Barth's later understanding of the Christian life, that is, the *special* or *Christian* ethics of reconciliation.

Barth only prepared one paragraph (§74) of his ethics of reconciliation for publication. In this paragraph on baptism as the foundation of the Christian life, he demonstrated the practical outworking of his *Versöhnungslehre*, especially his strong distinction between God and humanity in Jesus Christ and his emphasis on Jesus Christ as the true and unique sacrament (God-human reality): a non-sacramental understanding of baptism and the consequent renewal of his protest against

4. Hans-Anton Drewes and Eberhard Jüngel simply assert that this decision represents a “radical revision [*grundlegenden Neubearbeitung*].... not unlike the complete revision [*völlig veränderten*] of the *Romans Commentary* in the second edition, or the replacement of the false start of the Prolegomena of the *Christian Dogmatics* by *CD I,1*” (*ChrL*, x [9]). Important with real implications for his Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology and pneumatology? Yes. Radical in the above sense? No, for Barth's conception of Christian being as a being-in-prayer remains largely within the outlines put in place in *CD IV/1-3*.

5. There is no doubt that Barth understood reconciliation to be the *Mitte* of Christian doctrine and that he constantly attempted to better conform his thought to this reality, for “To fail here is to fail everywhere. To be on the right track here makes it impossible to be completely mistaken in the whole,” because here we arrive at the “centre of all Christian knowledge” (*CD IV/1*, ix [i]). This continuity through a constantly renewed willingness to be ever-more constrained by the subject-matter (and thereby *freed*, Barth would argue) appears to be disregarded by both George Hunsinger, who treats Barth's thought as a labyrinth with many possible exits and avenues of development distinct from the path Barth takes (“Baptism and the Soteriology of Forgiveness,” 266), and Bruce McCormack, who argues that “[t]he real challenge is to understand how Barth's mind changed even as he was writing his magnum opus” (*Orthodox and Modern: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*, 18). Thus, while McCormack's cautions against reading Barth's entire *oeuvre* “as though it had been written in the space of a single afternoon, as though every part were fully consistent with all the others” (*Orthodox and Modern*, 17) are certainly valid, the most fruitful task for Barth studies is *not only* identifying change, *but also* understanding how Barth thought this change served his ongoing effort to be make his theology more consistent with its subject matter (Kurt Richardson articulates something like this in his *Reading Karl Barth: New Directions for North American Theology*). With regard to our topic, the key question would be how Barth understood *invocation* to be *more consistent* than *faithfulness* with the *subject matter* of his *Versöhnungslehre*.

paedobaptism (“the wound from which the Church suffers at this genuinely vital point” [CD IV/4, 194]) upon this new foundation. Far from an aberrant addenda to his theology, Barth believed “this fragment in particular [to be] well adapted to show what I have found to be the most relevant way of handling the whole complex which demands discussion in IV, 4” (CD IV/4, ix). It is no surprise, then, that Barth foresaw that this fragment, indicating his final answer to the question of what it means to be a Christian, “will leave me in the theological and ecclesiastical isolation which has been my lot for almost fifty years” (CD IV/4, viii and xii [iii and vi]).⁶ Confronted by the likelihood of this “poor exit” glimpsed in his uncharacteristic prognostication, the “late Barth” (as he referred to himself) responded characteristically: “So be it” (CD IV/4, xi [v]). Yet, Barth also expressed hope that, “The day will come when justice will be done to me in this matter [*dieser Sache*] too,” hazarding “the paradoxical conjecture that this will perhaps come about earlier, not on our [Protestant] side, but among Roman Catholic theologians” (CD IV/4, xii [vi-vii]; cf. CD IV/2, ix; and CD IV/3, xii). This hope appears to be unrealized as yet, despite Barth’s unique standing in Roman Catholic theology.⁷

6. Coming on the heels of the encomium offered by the editors (T.F. Torrance and G.W. Bromiley) of the English translation of *Church Dogmatics*, describing him as “the great Church Father of Evangelical Christendom, the one genuine Doctor of the universal Church the modern era has known” (CD IV/4, vi), Barth’s self-estimation seems incredible. It should not, however, be chalked up simply to the black moods and discouragement that were an increasingly prominent feature of Barth’s later years. Rather, as Michael Welker persuasively argues, this negative prognosis stands in continuity with Barth’s consistent self-estimation as a *Randfigur* in the theological and ecclesiastical-ecumenical spheres (“Karl Barth: From Fighter Against the ‘Roman Heresy’ to Leading Thinker for the Ecumenical Movement”)—in stark contrast to his actual influence and the high esteem in which the early leaders of the ecumenical movement held him. For example, see W.A. Visser’t Hooft’s description of Barth as a “Pastor Pastorum Oecumenicus” (cited in Welker’s “Karl Barth,” 435; cf. Visser’t Hooft’s own “Karl Barth and the Ecumenical Movement”). Of course, there is a difference between exerting influence and being heeded, though as Barth makes clear, he did not understand himself to be in *utter* isolation: “no small company of worthy souls will even now rejoice in this book, take to heart its contents, and put them into practice to the best of their knowledge and power, standing firm against all opposition” (CD IV/4, xii [vii]).

7. “Whatever a man may think about me otherwise, he will have to grant me the strange fame entailed in the fact that since the Reformation no figure in Protestant theology has aroused so much critical but also positive and in any case serious interest on the part of Roman Catholic scholars” (*How I Changed My Mind*, 69)—cf. T.F. Torrance: “Karl Barth, one man, had a greater impact upon the Roman Catholic

While Barth's denial of baptism's sacramentality and his rejection of paedobaptism are certainly included in *dieser Sache*, these negative polemics cannot be isolated from Barth's "positive teaching" which is "infinitely more important" (*CD* IV/4, xii [v]). To read *CD* IV/4 as mere polemic is to miss not only Barth's "radically new view of baptism," but also Barth's new understanding of what it means *to be* a Christian and the material-theological bases of this new understanding (*CD* IV/4, ix [iv]).⁸ For *CD* IV is not only Barth's "last word on the subject [of baptism]," but also points toward his mature understanding of the whole of Christian life as invocation or *epiclesis* (*CD* IV/4, ix [iii], cf. 213). Baptism is not only "truly the first step of the Christian life," but also "[a]s asking and praying which is ventured in hope in Jesus Christ, in obedience, it is a constitutive action which makes a beginning and which is a *model* [*exemplarisches*] for all that follows" (*CD* IV/4, 213r [234]). Thus, determining the position of Ratzinger and Zizioulas vis-à-vis Barth on the transformation involved in becoming Christian (whether or not they do "justice" to Barth is not the direct focus of this thesis) necessarily involves more than noting their opposition to Barth's position that only those who responsibly request baptism should be baptized—though this is not incidental to the question.

II. Joseph Ratzinger: A Roman Catholic Answer

It is quite possible that Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, was among those Roman Catholics to whom Barth looked in expectation for a hearing of his later doctrine of baptism. While Ratzinger may appear reactionary in relation to a large segment of contemporary Roman Catholic theology, Barth (with good reason) likely

Church than four hundred years of Protestantism" (*Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, 1). Barth was wary, however, of those who "want[] to introduce me into Roman Catholic theology rather like a Trojan horse," each one with "his own critical little coda" (*Karl Barth: His Life from Letters and Autobiographical Texts*, 421).

8. This does result in Barth's "confirming and strengthening" (*CD* IV/1, x) the polemic against paedobaptism that he began in 1943 (*The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism*), but Barth is at pains to point readers to his new (*theological*) reasons for this polemic, that is the Christology, soteriology, pneumatology, ecclesiology and anthropology unfolded in his *Versöhnungslehre* and upon which Barth's teaching on baptismal practice depends.

numbered the young Ratzinger among those “who to-day [1967] are questioning almost everything” (*CD IV/4*, xii).⁹ Indeed, Ratzinger studied under Gottlieb Söhngen (even considering Söhngen “my true teacher in theology” [“Presentation on the Centenary of Cardinal Newman’s Death”]), from early on showed an affinity for Barth’s doctrines of revelation (“Commentary on *Dei Verbum*,” III) and election (*MCB*, for example), took his research students to visit Barth’s seminar in Basel on occasion (*Salt of the Earth*, 65), and was among those “Christians with whom [Barth] could not only speak candidly and seriously, but also join in hearty laughter,” when Barth visited Rome to discuss the documents of the Second Vatican Council (*Ad Limina Apostolorum*, 17, cf. 14).¹⁰ Of course (as the remainder of *Ad Limina Apostolorum* illustrates), candid and serious discussion in no way guarantees agreement. Yet, in opposition to those who either lionize or demonize Ratzinger for his supposed desire for and practice of dogmatic isolation, we may very well expect a fruitful engagement between Barth and Ratzinger on the topic of human transformation as a real history of such interaction already exists.

In looking to Ratzinger for a Roman Catholic answer to the question of what it means to be a Christian, we do not look to his work in the name of the Roman Catholic Church—i.e., as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith or as Bishop of Rome. Rather, we look to his work as a speculative and pastoral theologian working in his own name, whether in the academy (1958-1977) or as one

9. Indeed, it almost beggars belief that someone who made such a decisive break with the Thomism that dominated Roman Catholic theology in the 19th and early 20th centuries could be considered an archconservative by the end of the 20th century—this is one of the many stories Fergus Kerr weaves together in his *Twentieth Century Catholic Theology*. Even someone as sympathetic as Aidan Nichols cannot help but note that Ratzinger’s thought is “alien to the philosophical and theological tradition which has provided the customary idiom for the magisterial interventions of the popes in both dogmatic and ethical issues for the last hundred years,” (“Joseph Ratzinger’s Theology of Political Ethics,” 380).

10. Barth thought that if Söhngen’s presentation of the *analogia entis* was the actual teaching of the Roman Church, he would be forced “to withdraw my earlier statement that I regard the *analogia entis* as the ‘invention of the anti-Christ’” (*CD II.1*, 82).

entrusted with ecclesial oversight (1977 to present).¹¹ Moreover, we limit ourselves to his mature works, written after the award of his doctorate and *Habilitation*.¹² The focus, then, is on Ratzinger's distinctive "spiritual theology," at the center of which stands the question of Christian transformation. In fact, Ratzinger understands this question to be at the center of all Christian theology, not least the early christological controversies, in which "the question at issue was this":

What happens when I myself become a Christian, when I enroll myself under the banner of this Christ [*wenn ich mich dem Namen dieses Christus unterstelle*] and thereby accept him as the authoritative man, as the measure of humanity? What kind of shift [*Wende*] in being do I thus accomplish; what attitude to the business of being a man do I adopt? How deep does this process [*Vorgang*] go? What estimate of reality as a whole does it involve (*ItC*, 90 [81])?

In order to answer this question, Ratzinger, like Barth, looks to the history of *Jesus Christ* (*the sacrament*), and what he finds when looking upon Jesus Christ is the incarnate Son's dialogue with the Father in the Holy Spirit, i.e., *prayer*. This leads to a common understanding of transformation as receiving and actively participating in the Son's filial relation to the Father in the Holy Spirit.

In addition to these key similarities, Ratzinger's theology provides several important points of contact with Barth's theology. Both are self-consciously modern, interested in articulating the *res* of Christian doctrine in modern *verbi*.¹³ It is no surprise,

11. Thus, while his pronouncements as Prefect of the CDF and his sermons, speeches, and encyclicals as Pope Benedict XVI are not considered in this study *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*, (written in his own name), plays a central part.

12. Thus, Ratzinger's doctoral thesis (*Volk und Haus Gottes in Augustins Lehre von der Kirche*) and *habilitationsschrift* (*The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure*), are limited to the margins of this study. In addition to being a logical and convenient place to delimit Ratzinger's voluminous work, these are the works in which Ratzinger's own voice is least discernible—the topics were assigned to him and his *habilitation* was rejected by Michael Schmaus and only passed after the section offering Ratzinger's positive proposal had been deleted, a section not included again in the published version.

13. Cf. Bruce McCormack's argument that "Barth might justly be located within the Schleiermacherian tradition of 'mediating theology,'" describing *CD IV* as "revising what it means to be 'orthodox' in the realm of Christology *under the conditions of modernity*" (*Orthodox and Modern*, 37 and 232). While McCormack expresses a valid protest against those who read Barth as some sort of paleo-orthodox theologian, the question of exactly how Barth understood modernity to "condition" his doctrine requires careful elucidation. For instance, John Franke's description of Barth's approach as a "struggle[] to hold the commitments of [his] faith together with the realities of the modern world" (*Barth for Armchair Theologians*, xi), gets Barth's

then, that *freedom* plays a central role for both and that both Ratzinger and Barth develop an account of divine and human *being* without recourse to substance metaphysics.¹⁴ Moreover, both offer a *relational ontology* (although Ratzinger lacks Barth's thorough *actualism*), focusing on persons as a *way* of being in *relation*, where the relation is understood in light of the *covenant*.¹⁵ The centrality of the covenant translates into an emphasis on God's act *for* humanity in Jesus Christ, and as they share an understanding of the covenant as *eternal*, they also share an emphasis on the absolute *prevenience* of God's gracious act *pro nobis*. Thus, despite their serious ecclesiological, pneumatological, eschatological, and even christological disagreements, ample common ground exists for a fruitful interaction.

III. John Zizioulas: An Eastern Orthodox Answer

No such history of personal engagement exists between Barth and John Zizioulas, and while Zizioulas and Ratzinger have served together on Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogues, they have rarely chosen to engage each other's work otherwise.¹⁶ Despite this, Zizioulas proves to be a fitting Eastern Orthodox representative for discussion of the topic of human transformation for several reasons. Not least,

relationship to modernity exactly backwards: Barth attempted to expound the *realities* of faith in light of modern commitments.

14. See especially Barth's "translation" of Chalcedonian christology in §64 into "pure concepts of movement" (*CD* IV/2, 106)—cf. McCormack: "Barth's theological ontology constitutes a rejection of Greek metaphysics" (*Orthodox and Modern*, 232). For Ratzinger's "theological metaphysics," see Chapter 3, II.A below.

15. Cf. Scott Hahn's treatments of covenant in Ratzinger's thought ("The Authority of Mystery: The Biblical Theology of Benedict XVI"; and *Covenant and Communion: The Biblical Theology of Pope Benedict XVI*)—which Hahn describes as an important factor in his decision to leave the Reformed for Roman Catholicism (rather ironic when one considers how indebted Ratzinger is to Barth's theology of the covenant [cf. Chapter 2, I.C below]).

16. One striking feature of Barth's thought is the dearth of engagement with concrete representatives from the Eastern Orthodox churches. Barth encountered Orthodox theologians through his work with the World Council of Churches, but such theologians (and their churches) play almost no role in Barth's *Church Dogmatics*—the "General Index" lists only one mention of Eastern Orthodoxy (*CD* I/2, 289). The one significant exception is Barth's enthusiastic discussion of the *Christus victor* theme of reconciliation, which "in its strange and contradictory fashion the Eastern Church has not ceased to see and to take seriously," thereby shaming the West (*CD* IV/2, 233). Zizioulas rarely mentions Barth and Ratzinger, and we are unaware of any references to Zizioulas in Ratzinger's work.

Zizioulas demonstrates a generally sympathetic understanding of Western theology (his propensity to caricature Augustine notwithstanding), reflected in his decision to pursue education and work in the West (and likely deepened by his experiences doing so).¹⁷ Second, and most importantly, Zizioulas occupies much of the ground common to Barth and Ratzinger: the centrality of Jesus Christ (the true sacrament), the divine persons as “ways of being,” the relational ontology (worked out apart from substance metaphysics), the understanding of human transformation in terms of the Son’s filial relation to the Father in the Holy Spirit (*becoming* son in the Son), the attempt to translate his tradition into modern (indeed, Western) language, and the emphasis on freedom.¹⁸ Third and finally, Zizioulas offers a challenging vision of human transformation, sometimes bridging positions presented as mutually exclusive by Barth and Ratzinger (for instance combining a sacramental understanding of baptism, the Eucharist, and *ordo* with an ecclesiology focused upon the *local* church), while at other times diverging radically from both Barth and Ratzinger (eschatology, for instance).

The common ground would be for naught, however, if Zizioulas did not have a robust understanding of human transformation. In fact, *becoming* persons-in-communion—as Zizioulas understands salvation—is the heart of his theology. The “fundamental logic of theology” is given in baptism and the Eucharist, which are oriented to “the life which can never be brought to an end,” and thus “[t]heology is concerned with life... with salvation,” not merely information about God and the world (*LCD*, 4 and 1).¹⁹ Therefore, transformation (“of personal relationships between God,

17. See Appendix A for a brief biographical sketch of Zizioulas.

18. Most of these commonalities will be substantiated through the exegetical treatment of Zizioulas in Chapter 4, but it is worth noting the criticisms of Zizioulas’s ontology as “anti-metaphysical crypto-existentialism” and “determined in its antiphilosophical stance,” by Meredith Anthony (“Review,” 440) and Wayne Hankey (“Theoria Versus Poesis,” 393), respectively.

19. Further, “the subject of theology is straightforward, for it is simply that life with God which is the fundamental experience of the Christian. The whole outworking of the doctrine of the Trinity is comprehended in the experience of the one who is learning the freedom of love that belongs to God” (*LCD*, 75). Given Zizioulas’s ecclesial understanding of salvation, Michel Stavrou rightly observes, “*Toute votre œuvre repose sur la conviction que la théologie ne fait pas référence à des idées mais au mystère du salut qu’est l’Eglise,*” and characterizes his work as “*la recherche d’une articulation organique entre les facettes fondamentales du mystère du salut*” (“Éloge du métropolite Jean

man and the world”) is the prerequisite for theology, because “[i]t is only when we are drawn into the life of God, which is triune, and through it receive our entire existence and identity, that we have real knowledge” (*LCD*, 7; cf. “Authority and Ecumenism,” 152). For this reason, Paul Schroeder is correct in observing in Zizioulas’s theological methodology “a principle that may be referred to as the ‘existential imperative’; the task of true theology demands that it impinge upon human existence” (“Suffering Towards Personhood,” 247). Yet, as Paul McPartlan clarifies, “[f]or Zizioulas, ‘ontological’ and ‘existential’ are synonyms,” and therefore true theology cannot help but be existentially relevant, because “[o]ntology has to do with ‘questions of life and death’, in the strongest sense, of being and non-being” (*The Eucharist Makes the Church: Henri de Lubac and John Zizioulas in Dialogue*, 128). Zizioulas’s theology, then, in the words of Douglas Knight, “is not... merely an ontology, a theory of *being*, but also an account of *becoming*” (“The Spirit and Persons in the Liturgy,” 183). Before exegeting Zizioulas’s well-constructed account of human *becoming*, however, we focus our attention upon Barth and Ratzinger in turn.

(Zizioulas) de Pergame”).

CHAPTER 2
KARL BARTH: CALLING ON GOD
OUR BEING IS IN BECOMING PRAYERS

“[T]hose who *already* pray and those who do *not yet* pray” (*Letters*, 200 [GA V.6, 203]). With this succinct formulation Karl Barth describes the difference between Christians and the rest of humanity. The Christian life consists in the invocation corresponding to God’s command, “Call on me” (*CD IV/4*, ix, referencing Ps. 50:15; cf. *ChrL*, 44, 49–50, 52, and Eberhard Jüngel’s prefatory remarks, e.g., xi). The Christian lives in the *vocative*, that is, “a human life whose purpose, will, and work focuses always on the one action of invocation of God, and which... is to be understood in its totality as a life in invocation to God” (*ChrL*, 49–50r [76], cf. 54). To be a Christian, then, is to become one who calls upon God, one who offers “the free and active human answer to the divine work and word of grace [treated by Barth in *CD IV/1–3*].” For this reason, Christian ethics will be “a progression beginning with recollection of the divine gift [i.e., *Versöhnung*] that demands this answer and makes it possible” and culminating with “a description of the answer thus posed for humanity as a task” (*CD IV/4*, ixR [iii]). Indeed, this is Barth’s program in the baptism fragment, presenting water baptism as the cry of the community and the baptized for the Holy Spirit that answers God’s reconciling Word (*CD IV/4*, especially 208–13 [229–34]).

Our treatment of Barth’s presentation of the Christian life as prayer will focus on Barth’s revised lectures on the ethics of reconciliation, what would have been §74 “Ethics as a Task of the Doctrine of Reconciliation” (*ChrL*, 3–46) and §75 “The Foundation of the Christian Life” (*CD IV/4*).¹ The two introductory paragraphs of

1. Barth’s unfinished exposition of the Lord’s Prayer (*ChrL*, 49–271, what would have been §§76–78), is used sparingly.

Barth's *Versöhnungslehre* (§57 "The Work of God the Reconciler" and §58 "The Doctrine of Reconciliation [Survey]") will provide the broader context necessary for understanding the connections between Barth's doctrine and ethics of reconciliation. This procedure will place Barth's treatment of the Christian life as prayer [*Beten*] (specified by Barth as invocation [*Anrufung*]) within his broader understanding of the divine-human covenant. Such an approach gives substantial weight to material (*ChrL*, 3–46, i.e., §74) thoroughly revised by Barth, but not put forward for publication along with the so-called "baptism fragment" of Barth's ethics of reconciliation (*CD* IV/4, i.e., §75). Barth's decision to publish §75 apart from §74 speaks against this approach, but the interconnectedness of these revised sections, their material similarities, and the explanatory power of §74 when used as a lens for reading §75 speak for this approach. The proof of the pudding, of course, is in the eating.

In order to do this we shall first consider §74.2.4 (reconciliation as command: "Call on me!") and §74.2.3 (God and humanity face to face [*gegenüberstehen*]) in light of the understanding of covenant presented in §57 and §58. Second, we will examine Barth's grounding of invocation in Jesus Christ, in whom the covenant partners are united—the God who commands in humility and the exalted human being, responsible to the commanding God. For this, the brief statements by Barth in §74.2.1 (the commanding God), §74.2.2 (the human responsible to the commanding God), and §74.2.3 (the situation of God and humanity in genuine encounter) will be read in light of Barth's introductory summaries in §58, namely 1) "The Grace of God in Jesus Christ," 2) "The Being of Man in Jesus Christ," 3) "Jesus Christ the Mediator," and 4) "The Three Forms of the Doctrine of Reconciliation." Third, we will expound Barth's understanding of baptism (§75) as the foundational transformation that provides the pattern for all that comes after it in the *Christian* life. This involves understanding Barth's presentation of baptism as one differentiated prayer-event: Spirit baptism (the divine *vocatio* actualizing reconciliation) and water baptism (the corresponding human *invocatio*).

I. Invocation, Ethics, and Covenant

I.A. Invocation: Calling on God

Barth teaches that *invocation* names the central and basic Christian action. Invocation is not an abstract catchall, but a specification of that activity called forth by God's reconciling act in Jesus Christ.² That is to say, Barth describes invocation as the "general *key*" [*allgemeinen Schlüssel*] for "special" (Christian) ethics because he "understand[s] the command, 'Call upon me' (Ps. 50:15) to be the basic meaning of every divine *command*" and "invocation according to this command as the basic meaning of all human *obedience*." Invocation is the sum total of reconciled human action: "What God permits humanity, what he expects, wills and requires of humanity, is a life of calling upon him." As reconciliation is accomplished for all humanity, the command also is given to all humanity. *Christian*, however, designates those who recognize their accomplished reconciliation and obey this command: "This life of calling upon God will be a person's Christian life: a life in freedom, conversion, faith, gratitude, and faithfulness" (*ChrL*, 44R [69]). Such a conception of Christian ethics is not foreign to Protestant theology, and Barth points out precedents in Calvin's *Institutes* (III, 20), the Heidelberg Catechism (Qu. 116), and, especially, Luther, who taught that "[we] should and must pray if we are to be Christians" (*ChrL*, 44 [68]).³ Barth does acknowledge, however, several other possible rubrics for treating Christian ethics.

2. Note Barth's cautions against ethics attempting to be more than a second-order reflection upon and aid to the first-order reality of the divine command and human response (*ChrL*, e.g., 7 [8]).

3. [The English text does not indicate that Barth is quoting Luther's *Larger Catechism* (1529).] In light of Barth's emphasis on how characteristically Protestant his decision is and the strong presence of prayer in Barth's earlier discussions of ethics, Eberhard Jüngel's descriptions of "[t]his way of handling the ethical problem" as "remarkable," "so startling," and "hardly foreseeable" appear to exaggerate the novelty—though these terms may be more appropriate in relation to ethics after Kant (*Theological Essays*, 164). While the centrality of invocation (understood chiefly in terms of asking or petition) is the result of a revision to the lecture material, this revision is very much a *recapitulation* of Barth's earlier discussions of prayer—albeit with a new emphasis on *invocation* [*Anrufung*]. For instance, see *CD* III.3, especially 264–271 [299–307], where Barth describes prayer as "the most intimate and effective form of Christian *action* [*Tat*].... Christian obedience *in nuce*.... primitive movement... the basis of all other activity.... the act of obedience *par excellence*... from which all other acts must spring," and in relation to which "[a]ll other work comes far behind"; and *CD* III.4, §53.3 "Prayer" [*Das Gebet*], 87–115 [95–127].

The options Barth considers and rejects—because *invocation* says better what they want to say—are instructive for understanding Barth’s ethics of reconciliation. In the first instance, merely designating ethics *Christian* will not do because the adjective is “hardworn, heavily freighted, and ambivalent” and Barth declines to fight the uphill battle required to give it his sense: “grounded in the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ and oriented to the effected [*verwirklichte*] justification, sanctification, and vocation of humanity in him” (*ChrL*, 37R [56]). Barth also rejects the “rich and beautiful and fruitful concept” of *freedom*, because 1) it was used often in the preceding chapters and Barth wants to avoid a “tyranny of concepts,” and, decisively, 2) it is inadequate to the subject at hand (*ChrL*, 37 [56–57]).⁴ Likewise, *repentance* attracts Barth’s consideration as a description of “the conversion which is grounded, and has to be carried through in an awareness of the situation” that clearly points to the “radical and universal nature of the divine command, and of the human obedience for which it calls” (*ChrL*, 37 [57]). Yet, he passes by *repentance*—and the related, existentialist darling, *decision*—in search of a more fitting concept.⁵ *Faith* demands attention as a possibility, but in addition to fearing another tyrannical concept Barth judges *faith* to be too materially indeterminate (*ChrL*, 39r [60]).⁶ Even better options are *thanksgiving* and *faithfulness*, as long as one bears in mind that “[t]he faithfulness with which humans turn *to God* is *unlike* that with which God turns *to the human* to the point of nonrecognition” (*ChrL*, 42Rr [65]).⁷ While not necessarily *wrong*, Barth passes over all of these concepts.

4. Whether Barth escapes this tyranny is a fair question. Daniel Migliore’s observation seems accurate: “for Barth, prayer is the quintessential act of human freedom before God” (“Freedom to Pray: Karl Barth’s Theology of Prayer,” 96).

5. Repentance and conversion remain critical components of invocation. See *ET* for Barth’s “existential” treatment of theology—by no means a simple *Nein!* to existentialism. In *ET*, conversion, not mere decision, plays a decisive role as “the turn of 180 degrees that is required, not just once, but every day anew” (117).

6. Barth also hesitates to adopt this concept because he thinks that the existential influence and the Lutheran interpretation of Judaizing in Galatians and Romans have distorted it. While Barth judges *faith* to be an unsuitable “key concept” for ethics, it remains central to his thought as the name for “the fundamental relationship” at the center of theology (*ET*, 116); and he cautions that, “it must never be forgotten that there can be no other obedience than that of faith” (*ChrL*, 39 [60]).

7. Barth gives no reasons against *thankfulness*, and his outworking of *invocation* reflects his unwillingness to abandon *eucharistia* as central to the ethic called forth by God the reconciler.

All the above concepts are deficient—and here the strength of *invocation* emerges—in that they do not “express the fact that some human *action* [*Handeln und Tun*] is at issue in the obedience which the gracious God commands of humans” (*ChrL*, 42Rr [65]). This, however, is exactly what is needed, because the ethics of reconciliation demand a concept indicating that “[w]hat God expects and wills from those in whose hearts he has caused the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ to shine is the *action* [*Aktion*] of obedience accomplished as their Christian life,” and not simply “a certain form of human life (which might well be construed passively) and the disposition or attitude corresponding to it” (*ChrL*, 42r [65], referencing 2 Cor. 4:6). Reconciliation calls forth *action*, not only hearing, but doing as well. As John Webster has argued, in no way did “the intensity of [Barth’s] adherence to... the ontologically constitutive character of God’s action in and as Jesus Christ make serious consideration of human action superfluous, even, perhaps, a trespass on the sovereignty of grace” (*Barth’s Ethics of Reconciliation*, 1), or cause him to “abandon[] any sense that the human subject is an ethical agent” (*Barth’s Moral Theology: Human Action in Barth’s Thought*, 11).⁸ In his defense of Barth, Webster grasps that true prayer involves *doing*, “not mere consent, not only a calling upon the strengths of another,” for prayer is “that which actualises the will and energies of the Christian and sets them upon a specific path” (*Reconciliation*, 211).⁹ To those who would ask, “*Only prayer, then?*” Barth replies,

Yes, only prayer! Have you ever really tried to cast all your cares before the Lord in fervent and insistent prayer? Not as a routine matter, but because the Lord is at hand? Have you ever (as you should) dared letting all your requests be known before God, praying as [Jesus Christ’s] brother, as his sister, as God’s child? Whoever has tried and done this knows that such prayer, nothing but prayer, includes vigilant, steady and effective *action* [*Arbeit*] (*Deliverance to the Captives*, 106–07r [GA I.12, 102]).¹⁰

8. Webster identifies Kant’s influential understanding of grace as “a morally subversive concept” as the reason Barth’s strenuous defense of the necessity and reality of human action is invisible to many readers (*Reconciliation*, 15).

9. That true human life involves *doing* by no means reflects a late development in Barth. See *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, 141, an essay from 1922.

10. Frank Jehle notes that prayer is not atomistic or individualistic action in Barth’s thought because “*To pray for someone or something means the most intensive participation possible*” (*Ever Against the Stream: The Politics of Karl Barth 1906–1968*, 108).

The strength, then, of *invocation* is that it must be understood as a human *action*.

Moreover, the concept *invocation* refers to a specific human action: action-in-reconciled-covenant. This is to say that the divine act of reconciliation precedes invocation, that the human action of invocation *responds*—or as Barth prefers, *corresponds*—to *being reconciled*. For invocation is “distinctive to humanity as the partner of God in the covenant of grace established by him,” and as such “derive[s] and proceed[s] from the fulfilment of this covenant in *Jesus Christ*.” In light of the situation—*being reconciled*—established by divine action, the now-reconciled human “finds him- or herself empowered only by the free *grace* of God, so that in it he or she can use only this empowering—but also has no choice other than to make use of it.” Yet, just as reconciliation involves the exaltation of *humanity*, so too invocation will be “an authentically and specifically *human* action” done “according to the measure of one’s human capacity” (*ChrL*, 42Rr [65–66]).¹¹ In fact, this action is not simply like other human actions, for even in its particularity it has “central significance and import for all one’s other being and acts,” preceding, accompanying, and following them and bestowing upon them “meaning, direction, and character” (*ChrL*, 42r [66]). Again, just as reconciliation aims at the *fellowship* of the reconciling God and reconciled humanity, in invocation reconciled humans are “wholly referred to the gracious God as their only helper in distress and the only source and giver of all good things,” but in this way “able to give active expression to their own willingness and readiness in relation to the gracious God” (*ChrL*, 42–43R [66]). For this reason, the one who calls upon the reconciling God will enter into prayer both humbly and confidently, “*not* as one *worthy* to encounter God and answer him, ...[with] no thought of making oneself worthy,” but in “complete confidence, with no reservation, doubt, hesitation, or vacillation” in light of God’s initiative (*ChrL*, 43r [66–67]). Before turning our attention to the covenant *restored* by the divine act of reconciliation, we attend briefly to the place of invocation within Barth’s understanding of ethics.

11. Barth likens this very *human* action to “rising up and lying down, coming and going, eating and drinking, working and resting.”

I.B. The Task of Ethics: Lessons in the Art of Invocation

Barth understands theological ethics as a discipline in service to the divine command and the human obedience called forth by it. Ethics is “an attempt to answer theoretically the question of what may be called *good human action*,” finding “both this question and its answer in *God’s Word*” (*ChrL*, 3r [1]). As a discipline subservient to God’s Word, ethics can at most “help humanity on to ethical reflection and action, to the finding, studying, honoring, and *Deo bene volente*, the keeping of the commandments.” In pursuing its task, ethics must take care, lest “human speech... crowd out or replace the divine” (*ChrL*, 7R [8]). Moreover, ethics will refuse even to ask the question “What should *humans* do?” as such a question evades the *particularity* of the divine command: “God in his command... tells one very concretely what one is to do or not do here and now in these or those particular circumstances,” and offers “ever new and living and specific direction” (*ChrL*, 33 [50], cf. 4–5). Theological ethics also will refuse to sit in the seat of judgment and render a verdict on an individual’s obedience or disobedience (*ChrL*, 34 [51]). Rather, ethics aids humans in the “conversion from disobedience to obedience in relation to the divine commanding,” by “offering *instructions*: teaching the art of asking that question [“What should *I* do?”] relevantly and looking forward openly, attentively, and willingly to the answer that God alone can and does give” (*ChrL*, 7 [8–9] and 34Rr [51]).¹² In all this Barth bears witness to the *priority* of God’s being-in-the-act-of-reconciliation and humanity’s consequent being-reconciled, attending especially to the *particularity* of this reconciliation.

This is to say *being reconciled* precedes and founds the action corresponding to this commanding word of reconciliation, and that the command is particular to each reconciled human even as all humans are reconciled. As God the reconciler is the “*living God*,” the command of God the reconciler is a “*dynamic reality*” (*ChrL*, 33r [49]). An ethics of reconciliation, then, “can and should indicate that always and everywhere there has been and will be that event” that determines humans as *reconciled* to God

12. [*Ethik kann also nicht selbst Weisung, sondern nur Unterweisung geben: Unterricht in der Kunst....* (Again, *Deo bene volente*.)]

(*ChrL*, 34 [51]).¹³ Although Webster does not do justice to Barth's emphasis on the radical particularity of the command, he does grasp its nature as a dynamic *reality* that precedes and determines "good" human action. Thus, Webster highlights that "[Barth's] answer to the question: what shall the Christian do? is rooted in an answer to a prior question: what is moral reality?" and that Barth's *Church Dogmatics* is "amongst other things, a moral ontology—an extensive account of the situation in which human agents act" (*Reconciliation*, 214 and 1). Furthermore, Webster helps readers understand that because Barth sees that "Jesus Christ *is reality*," that "reality, what really *is*, is constituted by Jesus' history—constituted as a history reconciled to God" (*Moral*, 84), Barth can only understand theological ethics as "essentially an assertion that good human action is action which is most in accord with the way the world is constituted in Jesus Christ" (*Reconciliation*, 219). With this recognition of the relation between ethics and reality—human act and human being—we see the framework within which Barth constructs his doctrine of *being* Christian. Unless one understands Barth's conception of reality, one will not understand his instruction in the art of asking, that is, *invocation*.¹⁴ Barth names reality with one word: *covenant*.

Covenant describes the dynamic relationship between God and humanity. Reconciliation [*Versöhnung*] is the heart, but not the whole, of this reality.¹⁵ Barth holds reconciliation to be the "center of all Christian knowledge," so that "[t]o fail here is to fail everywhere" and "[t]o be on the right track here makes it impossible to be completely mistaken" (*CD IV/1*, ix). Yet, "[t]he knowledge of God and humanity disclosed in Jesus Christ... is not simple, nor indefinitely multiple, but triple," as

13. NB, "*will be*." It must be remembered that reconciliation stands within a single event that is a "series of events," *viz.* creation-reconciliation-redemption.

14. Jüngel describes Barth's ethics of reconciliation as "instruction in prayer" (*TE*, 164).

15. Eberhard Busch relates that Barth "wondered for a while whether he would not do better to call the doctrine [of reconciliation] 'the doctrine of the covenant', but kept to the traditional title, although he interpreted it in the sense of the other" (*Karl Barth: His Life from Letters and Autobiographical Texts*, 377). This perhaps indicates Barth's awareness that while reconciliation can only be interpreted adequately in terms of the covenant, the covenant cannot be reduced to reconciliation.

“[k]nowledge of the one, total God and the one, total humanity.... it is *differentiated* and *structured*” (*ChrL*, 7Rr [9]). Given this triune reality of human *being* in relation to the triune God, theological ethics must also be triply differentiated and structured. It must attend to 1) humanity as a creature in relation to God the creator; 2) humanity as needy sinner and participant in the grace of God the reconciler; and 3) humanity as child and future heir of God the redeemer (*ChrL*, 7 [9]). Therefore, in our examination of the reconciling God, reconciled humanity, and invocation as the human action corresponding to reconciliation, we must remember that *reconciliation* does not say everything that can and must be said about God’s establishment of the covenant and the human participation in this reality.

With this caution, the true centrality of the doctrine and ethics of reconciliation becomes clear. Creation and redemption, though integral, are the periphery of the covenant. Using one of his favorite metaphors, Barth describes reconciliation as the center of the covenant with creation and redemption forming its circumference, arguing that “the center establishes the circumference and not the reverse.” Barth depicts salvation, being-in-covenant, as a triptych with reconciliation as the central panel, for in it we are dealing with “the *center*, the source of all the reality and revelation of God and humanity—Jesus Christ, who is not only the ontic but also the noetic basis of the whole of Christian truth and the Christian message” (*ChrL*, 9 [12]).¹⁶ Given the centrality of reconciliation in the covenant, any interpretation of Barth’s thought that relegates the ethics of reconciliation, that is, the Christian’s being-in-act, to mere marginalia will be a misinterpretation. For, although “the history of Jesus Christ” (that is, “the history of this covenant”) “embraces and integrates into itself that of every other human,” this history is “a *covenant* that God not only established between himself and humanity, but in which humanity was called and impelled to play our own free and active part in it” (*ChrL*, 74Rr [117]). Yes, Barth describes covenant history as “completed fellowship [*vollkommenen... Gemeinschaft*]” between God and humanity, but

16. Again, “[t]here is no center without a circumference, no second article of the Creed without the first and the third.”

Barth glosses *vollkommenen* as “not only unilaterally upheld but mutually established,” and stresses that this *vollkommenen Gemeinschaft* calls forth corresponding (indeed, participating!) human action, becoming a command that “the existence of special creatures called Christians may and can and should become possible and actual” (*ChrL*, 11R* [15] and 76R [121]). Barth thus challenges his readers to hold together the *perfect* tense of Jesus Christ’s reconciling action without allowing it to efface the *ongoing* and *active* fellowship between God and humanity.¹⁷ The existence and activity of Christians stands in an asymmetrical relationship with the divine being and act, but by no means does this subordination make it incidental to the covenant and salvation.

I.C. Salvation: Fulfillment of the Eternal Covenant (the Basis of Salvation)

The reality of the being-in-act of Jesus Christ, the reconciling God and reconciled human, establishes the possibility and the *telos* of the Christian’s being-in-act. Barth describes the reality of Jesus Christ, the basis and goal of the covenant and the subject of reconciliation, as a dynamic *history*: Emmanuel, God with us.¹⁸ In this history God’s existence with us is not a matter of necessity, but a matter of his free willing, a “free act” (*CD IV/1*, 3 [1]).¹⁹ From all eternity God willed this union with us: “He

17. See Webster’s comments regarding the “inclusive perfection” of Christ’s work in which the subjective is included within the objective (*Reconciliation*, 127).

18. Barth emphasizes *history*, describable only in *narrative*, not because of some essentially narrational dimension of humanity, but in order to make what Webster describes as a “simple and unrestricted” point: “the core of a Christian account of God’s dealings with humanity is Jesus in his historical progress from Bethlehem to Calvary.... because it is the sovereign act of God himself,” and therefore “it cannot be resolved into something higher or more general: as God’s act, Jesus’ history simply *is*” (*Reconciliation*, 84 and 85; cf. *CD IV/1*, 122–28).

19. Note the rather heated debate regarding the exact nature of this freedom and its relationship to God’s triunity and the act of election (God’s self-determination to be *God with us*) in Barth’s thought. Bruce McCormack interprets Barth’s logic (excepting numerous “inconsistencies”) as implying that “God’s essence... is constituted by the act of turning towards us. God in himself is God ‘for us’”—though God is free to do so and be so (*Orthodox and Modern: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*, 190, but see all of 183–200 and the clarification and development of this argument in 201–33, 261–77; and “The Ontological Presuppositions of Barth’s Doctrine of the Atonement”). Spirited protests (as well as anathemas) have been offered (among others) by Paul Molnar (*Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity: In Dialogue with Karl Barth and Contemporary Theology*); Edwin van Driel (“Karl Barth on the Eternal Existence of Jesus Christ”); and George Hunsinger (“Election and the Trinity: Twenty-Five Theses on the Theology of Karl Barth”).

creates us, to share with us and therefore with our being and life and act His own incomparable being and life and act,” Barth continues, “He does not allow His history to be only His and ours to be only ours, but causes them to take place as a *common* history” (CD IV/1, 7Rr [5–6]).²⁰ This common history is *salvation*, which Barth describes as “more than being,” indeed,

Salvation is fulfilment, the supreme, sufficient, definitive and indestructible fulfilment of being. Salvation is the perfect being which is not proper to created being as such but is still future. Created being as such needs salvation, but does not have it: it can only look forward to it. To that extent salvation is its “eschaton.” Salvation, fulfilment, perfect being means—and this is what created being does not have in itself—being which *has a part* in the being of God [*ein Sein in der Teilnahme am Sein Gottes*], from which and to which it is: not a divinised being but a being which is hidden in God, and in that sense (distinct from God and secondary) *eternal* being. Since salvation is not proper to created being as such, it can only *come to it*, and since it consists in participation [*Teilnahme*] in the being of God it can come only from God. The coming of this salvation is the *grace* of God—using the word in its narrower and most proper sense (CD IV/1, 8r [7]).²¹

God does not owe us this salvation, even as our Creator, but freely determines us for salvation. In fact, the determination of humanity for salvation “goes beyond, or rather it precedes His will and work as Creator,” for it is “the original and basic will of God, the ground and purpose of His will as Creator” (CD IV/1, 9 [8]). Neither is salvation simply a response to our sin, though it does save us from our sin, for

20. The “radicalization” of McCormack’s position (it does not appear to be Barth’s) by Adam Eitel, who argues that the being of God was “historicized” in Christ, lacks analytic clarity regarding Barth’s doctrine of *history* (“The Resurrection of Jesus Christ: Karl Barth and the Historicization of God’s Being”). Barth, as seen here, uses the term for both *eternal* and *temporal* events.

21. Here, again, we see that reconciliation presupposes creation and implies redemption—even as the center of salvation, it is not the whole. Note George Hunsinger’s judgment: “The *koinonia*-theme in Barth may be what unifies the *Church Dogmatics*. It is not always as thematically explicit as the theme of witness or correspondence, but it is never absent. ‘Fellowship’ or *Gemeinschaft* is ever-present as a theme. Related terms like ‘participation’, and even every now and then ‘coinherence’, are part of the same language-complex. Most important of all, however, is his use of the preposition ‘in’. His use of ‘in Christ’ always dialectically includes a reference to ‘in us’, even when the reference remains tacit (which is a great deal of the time)” (“Baptism and the Soteriology of Forgiveness,” 266; cf. Webster [*Reconciliation*, 61; and *Moral*, 92f.]). While McCormack may be correct that those who emphasize the centrality of participatory union in Barth’s soteriology often downplay correspondence and suppress both Barth’s actualist ontology and the judicial dimension of his soteriology, responding by downplaying *participation* or juxtaposing it with *correspondence* does not result in a better exposition of Barth’s theology (*Orthodox and Modern*, 231 and n. 75).

[a]s a redemptive happening [Emmanuel] means the revelation and confirmation of the most primitive relationship between God and humanity, that which was freely determined [*beschlossen*] in eternity by God Himself before there was any created being (*CD IV/1, 9R [8]*).

The eternal covenant, then, is the presupposition of salvation, even as salvation fulfills the covenant (cf. §41, “Creation and Covenant”).

Without the eternal covenant, the “we with God” enclosed in God’s self-determination to be “God with us,” there could be no reconciliation. Reconciliation is not the whole of salvation, but “the restitution [*neue Bestätigung*], the resumption of a *fellowship* which *once existed* [*zuvor bestehenden*] but was threatened by dissolution” (*CD IV/1, 22r [22]*).²² The covenant is not a static truth, but a dynamic event—“[i]t cannot be something given apart from the act of God and humanity” (*CD IV/1, 23R*).²³ Yes, God *and* humanity.²⁴ Not merely then and there, but here and now, for the covenant “does not cease to be actual” (*CD IV/1, 23*). Moreover, the only way the covenant remains—and it does remain in this way—is as an “*event* of a divine and a human choice [*Wählens*]” (*CD IV/1, 23r [24]*, cf., again, 122–28). This occurs in Jesus Christ,

[He] is the atonement... He is the maintaining and accomplishing and fulfilling of the divine covenant as executed by God Himself. He is the eschatological realization of the will of God for Israel and therefore for the whole human race (*CD IV/1, 34*).²⁵

While requiring both God and humanity, the two are related asymmetrically with divine priority and created posteriority. “The real freedom of humanity,” as Barth understands it, “is decided by the fact that God is the human God. In freedom humans can only

22. Reconciliation restores the eternal covenant, not a pristine state of creation—it is not a *restitutio ad integrum* in the usual sense (*CD IV/1, 110*).

23. [*er kann keine von der Tat Gottes und der Menschen gelöste **Gegebenheit** werden, 23.*]

24. As Barth explained (against caricatures of his theology), “It is apparent at once that the formula ‘God is everything and man nothing’ as a description of grace is not merely a ‘shocking simplification’ but complete nonsense.... God is indeed everything but only in order that man may not be nothing, in order that he may be His man, in order that as such he, too, may be everything in his own place, on his own level and within his own limits” (*CD IV/1, 89 [95]*). Again, see Webster’s exposition of “the mutuality of God and creature as reciprocal agents” in Barth’s theology (*Reconciliation*, quote from 111; and *Moral*).

25. “What I think [Barth] wanted to suggest,” observes Hunsinger, “was that we are not saved by the work of Christ, but by the person of Christ in his work” (“Gerrit Neven on Karl Barth: A Brief Reflection,” 245).

choose to be the man or woman of God, i.e., to be thankful to God” (*CD IV/1*, 43R [45]).²⁶ In Christ this free human choosing occurs even before the act of creation, determining both the real freedom *and* the real being of humanity.²⁷

In light of Jesus Christ’s pre-existence, then, there is a certain universality to the covenant in regards to both temporality and humanity (*CD IV/1*, 57). This universality both is qualified by and itself qualifies human rebellion. Barth contends that the “history of humanity from the very first—and the same is true of the history of every individual” consists in breaking the covenant, “a rebellion which at bottom is quite negative, but terribly real even in this negativity” (*CD IV/1*, 62R [71]). This rebellion, which for Barth is basically ingratitude, leaves us incapable of reconciling our relationship with God as his covenant partner (*CD IV/1*, 68). God, though he does not need us to be God, undertakes the responsibility for our rebellious sin by “accepting solidarity, oneness, with those who committed them,” thereby doing “something total and definitive against human trespasses.... removing... their very root, the one who commits them” (*CD IV/1*, 70R [82], commenting on 2 Cor. 5:19 and 21).²⁸ This removal, the putting to death sinful humanity, occurs apart from our acceptance or rejection of it. Barth calls this “the deepest and most comforting but also the most terrifying abasement of humanity: that as the transgressors we are we can live only by that which we do not do ourselves” (*CD IV/1*, 69R [73]). Human being is transformed—converted—as God in Christ takes the place of humanity in death and as in Christ humanity turns to God in friendship and in accord with the truth of our being (*CD IV/1*, 75–76). Thus, human rebellion is ultimately qualified by the restitution of the eternal covenant between God and humanity in Jesus Christ. All that remains—

26. NB the connection between freedom and *eucharistia* (see also *HG*, 35–65 and 69–96).

27. The ability to use “determined” to qualify “freedom” points to Barth’s non-commonsensual understanding of freedom. For a representative example of Barth’s discussion of the pre-existence of *Jesus Christ*, see *CD IV/1*, 66.

28. While God was free to abandon humanity to sin and death (“If [rebellion] is what humanity wanted, God might easily have allowed humanity to fall and perish” [*CD IV/1*, 79R {84}], in light of the covenant, “the glory of God is threatened by humanity’s destruction” (*CD IV/2*, 226R).

though this is no small thing—is for this reconciliation “of the *world*” to manifest itself “in the establishment and the actual bearing of a witness to it” in the creation of a witnessing community (*CD IV/1*, 78r [83]).

That is to say that the being-in-act of the Christian depends upon God’s graciousness as its foundation and root. Though it requires radically reconceptualizing our idolatrous theology and miserable anthropology, this grace denigrates neither God nor humanity. In light of reconciliation, “[God] cannot be understood except as the One who constantly surpasses Himself in His constancy and faithfulness, and yet who never compromises Himself,” and “humanity finds itself accused and humbled and judged by his God, but also and primarily received by Him... and treated as His friend and indeed His child” (*CD IV/1*, 82R [86 and 87]).²⁹ This reconciliation depends upon the divine initiative—its basis is *extra nos*. Barth describes our state as one of “utter lack” and speaks of grace “exclusively as *gratia praeveniens*” (*CD IV/1*, 83 [88] and 85 [90]). In our “absolute *need*,” humanity “is and *remains* always a *recipient* [*Empfänger*], a state in which we not only do not cease but can never do more than begin... to beg and to reach out for it in our poverty [*als Armer*], in order that in poverty we may be rich” (*CD IV/1*, 88Rr [93]).³⁰ With this emphasis on grace Barth attempts to shatter idolatrous notions of God (*anthropotheology*) by showing God’s humility and demonstrating the hollow anthropology imaged on those idols by arguing for a high anthropology in the image of the humble God (*theoanthropology*) (see *ET*, 12 for this language).³¹ In Jesus Christ the non-being of grasping, false humanity is revealed, as is true human being, for it is as Jesus refuses to grasp after equality with God that Jesus is truly God and truly human.

29. In short, God is and reveals himself to be the one who is true to himself as he loves in freedom, cf. §28.

30. Note that Barth’s anthropology is *dynamic* becoming and beginning.

31. Barth argues that in Jesus Christ “a new human subject was introduced, the true human beside and outside whom God does not know any other, beside and outside whom there is no other,” and though the old humanity may still break covenant, “the being of *that* humanity... has been long superceded and replaced... in reality it is absolutely nothing.” Moreover, on this basis of grace, we “cannot think or demand or expect too much or too high things of humans” (*CD IV/1*, 89R* [95] and 91R [96–97]).

I.D. Invocation: Being-Reconciled-in-Action

Although *all* humanity is reconciled to God in Jesus Christ, not all humanity knows this and acts upon this knowledge. This results in a real difference between Christians and other humans that extends beyond the ethical and noetic to the ontic. In Barth's words, "*Christians exist [existieren] in [Jesus Christ]. In practice this is the only thing that we can call their peculiar being [Sein].*" It is perhaps surprising that Barth takes this division so seriously, given his emphasis upon reconciliation as once-for-all and that Christians exist in this peculiar way, "as *examples*, as the representatives and predecessors of all other humans," that is, *for* the non- or not-yet-Christians, "of whom so long as their ears and eyes and hearts are not opened we can only say definitely that the same being in Jesus Christ is granted to them and belongs in Him." Yet, Barth is not shy about describing this difference:

Christians know and can declare what it is that belongs to them and all other humans in Jesus Christ. And by the existence of the Christian we can make this clear. The human being reconciled with God in Jesus Christ is reflected in the existence of the Christian. That is something we cannot say of others. It is not that they lack Jesus Christ and in Him the being of humanity reconciled to God. What they lack is obedience to His Holy Spirit, eyes and ears and hearts which are open to Him, experience and knowledge of the conversion of humanity to God which took place in Him, the new direction which must correspond to the new being given to them in Him, life in and with His community, a part in its ministry, the confession of Him and witness to Him as its Lord and as the Head of all humans (CD IV/1, 92–93R [98–99]).³²

All humanity *is reconciled*, but only in the existence of the Christian does that ontological truth become actual. The Christian, however, does not accomplish this actualization. That is the work of the Mediator, the God-Man Jesus Christ, through the power of his Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit brings about this Christian reality:

The πνεῦμα θεοῦ is the πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας, in whose presence and under whose lordship and direction they have no other possible relationship to God, but they really do have this possibility—and they cannot help but make use of it—of turning to God with this vocative (ChrL, 52R [80]).

To be a Christian, then, is not only to be reconciled or to recognize this reconciliation,

32. NB, "*by the existence of the Christian*"! Barth happily calls Christians "representatives"—not in the sense that they re-present Christ, (cf. Webster [Moral, 96; and Reconciliation, 152–53]), but in the sense that they declare the *telos* of humanity to those outside the church.

but to act in a way that corresponds to this accomplished reconciliation, which for Barth means calling out to God the reconciler again and again for the salvation that reconciliation brings.

II. Covenant Partners: God, Humanity, and the God-human, Jesus Christ

For Barth, this covenant is not an abstract concept, but the concrete, actual relationship between God and humanity *in the person of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel*.³³ *In him* theology finds the freedom to be “the science and doctrine of the commerce and communion between God and man” (*HG*, 11).³⁴ *In him* is “not only the ontic but also the noetic basis of the whole of Christian truth and the Christian message” (*ChrL*, 9). *In him*, “[w]ho the commanding God is and who responsible man is—God in the mystery of his commanding and man in the mystery of his obedience or disobedience—is not hidden from us but is revealed and may be known” (*ChrL*, 5).³⁵ As Barth says in retrospect, “[M]y own concern in my long life has been increasingly to emphasize this name and to say: ‘*In him*’.... In him is all that I have attempted in my life in weakness and folly. It is there in him” (*FT*, 30*).³⁶ Christology, the *doctrine* about Jesus Christ, is not the center of Barth’s theology; the center is *Jesus Christ*: “It’s not a matter of christology, nor even of christocentricity and a christological orientation, but of,” Barth

33. “The last word that I have to say as a theologian or politician is not a concept like grace but a *name*: Jesus Christ” (*FT*, 29*). On Barth’s *particularism* and *personalism*, see Hunsinger (*How to Read Karl Barth: The Shape of His Theology*, 32–35 and 40–42). Although Hunsinger does acknowledge that “Barth wants to keep everything under the control of a single particular,” and “[t]hat control is fatally lost... when the mystery of the particular is allowed to disappear into a mere metaphysic of the particular” (19), he does not sufficiently coordinate his “motifs” or “-isms” to the actual, particular, objective, real, logical, person of *Jesus Christ*.

34. Webster recognizes that this emphasis (which he traces back to the Calvin lecture cycle [1922]) means that “the mutuality of God and humanity as agents is for Barth a matter of *description* rather than for *theoretical resolution*” (*Moral*, 34 and quote at 91).

35. Especially fascinating in relation to Zizioulas’s theology, Barth continues, “God *and* man, if not in their essence, at least in their work and therefore in their manner....”

36. Cf. Hunsinger’s perceptive comments regarding the importance in Barth’s theology of “in” (n. 21 above).

says, “Jesus Christ himself (*vivit! regnat! triumphat!*)” (Barth, 411 and 380).³⁷ Jesus Christ, the personal history and the historical person of *God with us*, embodies the covenant relationship, for in him God and humanity are united.³⁸ In looking at Jesus Christ one sees true God and true humanity—never in abstraction, but only in their union in this particular person who *is* atonement—God with us *and* we with God:

The atonement [*Versöhnung*] as the fulfilment of the covenant is.... the one thing from which neither the God who turns to humanity nor humanity converted to God can be abstracted, in which and by which both are what they are, in which and to which they stand in that mutual relationship.... But that one thing in the middle is one person, Jesus Christ. He is the atonement as the fulfilment of the covenant.... We hasten to explain that the being of Jesus Christ, the unity of being of the living God and this living human, takes place in the event of the concrete existence of this human. It is a being, but a being in a history.... And what takes place in this history, and therefore in the being of Jesus Christ as such, is atonement. Jesus Christ is not what He is—very God, very human, very God-human—in order as such to mean and do and accomplish something else which is atonement. But His being as God and human and God-human consists in the completed act of the reconciliation of humanity with God (*CD* IV/1, 122R and 126–27R).³⁹

This particular, historical person, Jesus Christ, stands as “the model of all that takes place between God and humanity.... the point where this encounter may be seen as an event in the covenant of grace set up between God and humanity, and therefore in its primal form” (*ChrL*, 12).

37. In this regard, Barth said, “I am very attracted to a remark by Hilary of Poitiers: *Non sermoni res sed rei sermo subjectus est* [*De Trinitate*, I.14].” Unfortunately, this note is rather muted in Marc Cortez’s otherwise fine discussion (“What Does It Mean to Call Karl Barth a ‘Christocentric’ Theologian?”). It was this focus that allowed Barth the freedom to “think through and develop everything anew, from a center which [he] considered the right one” (*How I Changed My Mind*, 60); cf. Jüngel (*Karl Barth: A Theological Legacy*, 15).

38. In Barth’s christology, argues McCormack, “the nineteenth-century distinction between Christologies ‘from above’ and ‘from below’ has been effectively set aside—*not* overcome by mediating between them but set aside as irrelevant to what the New Testament witness has to say about Jesus Christ” (*Orthodox and Modern*, 221, n. 51).

39. With regard to the centrality Jesus Christ’s *history*, see McCormack’s helpful discussion of “essence” and “actualism” in Barth’s thought, wherein he describes “essence” as “not something that is fixed and immovable in itself, a metaphysical substructure of ‘substance’ that guarantees to God or to the human Jesus identity with himself,” but rather “a description of a person or thing *in its entirety*, in the sum total of its existence, in all of its acts and relations—above all, where the question of that which differentiates the person or entity from others is in view” (*Orthodox and Modern*, 239).

II.A. Jesus Christ—Very God: The Reconciling God

In Jesus Christ we encounter the true God, the maker and keeper of the covenant with humanity: God the reconciler.⁴⁰ This God, Barth expands, is “the God who is gracious to us in Jesus Christ” (*ChrL*, 9). Given humanity’s predilection to idolatry, theology must focus upon “the atonement made in Jesus Christ,” for it is a wholly gracious and therefore sovereign act “which cannot be understood in all its profundity except from the fact that God is this God and a God of this kind” (*CD IV/1*, 80). In Jesus Christ, “His active person or His personal work,” God “sets up his covenant and upholds it and carries it to its goal by justifying humanity before himself, sanctifying us for himself, and calling us to his side in his service.... He thus reconciles humanity to himself” (*ChrL*, 12; cf. *HG*, 50).⁴¹ This act originates *extra nos*, and Barth is adamant that this must not be forgotten:

Reconciliation is God’s crossing the frontier to humanity.... The frontier is a real one. On the one side there is God in His glory as Creator and Lord, and also in the majesty of His holiness and righteousness. And on the other side there is humanity, not merely the creature, but the sinner, the one who exists in the flesh and who in the flesh is in opposition to Him. It is not merely a frontier, but a yawning abyss. Yet this abyss is crossed, not by humanity, not by both God and humanity, but only by God (*CD IV/1*, 82R).⁴²

The reality of reconciliation—*reconciled* humanity—depends upon the act of *God*.⁴³ It is only as the act of God that “it is the most actual thing in heaven or earth.” Barth continues, “Effective by Him, it is effective as nothing else is effective. Revealed in Him, as His revelation it is brighter and clearer and more certain than the light of the

40. The question of the identity of the commanding God is answered “exclusively in him, but in him clearly, solidly, exhaustively, and definitively; in him authentically and validly for all humans of all times and places in the whole cosmos” (*ChrL*, 13R).

41. As the covenant precedes (indeed, founds) God’s works and ways as Creator, Barth speaks not only of Jesus Christ establishing the covenant, but of maintaining and continuing it (*CD IV/1*, 79, for example).

42. Barth conceives of God’s conversion to humanity in terms of the parable of the prodigal son—as the Son’s journey into *die Fremde*, “the far country” or, perhaps, “otherness” (*CD IV/1*). Barth emphasizes the divine conversion, the divine turning to humanity, in a way reminiscent of early Luther, cf. Marilyn Harran (*Luther on Conversion: The Early Years*, 22–23).

43. “The hurt which has to be made good is on our side.... God does not need reconciliation with men, but men need reconciliation with Him” (*CD IV/1*, 74; cf. *C&A*, 65).

sun or the light of any other knowledge” (CD IV/1, 83R). Barth, however, is equally adamant that God acts as this human, Jesus Christ.

God does not simply turn to and for us from the outside; God turns to us in Jesus Christ. *In him* God *becomes* human, which is to say, “the commanding God is himself historical, that among and with and for and to humanity he acts and speaks as himself human” (ChrL, 13). In and through this *divine* action, Jesus Christ *is* God. Jesus Christ “is nothing less or other than God Himself, but God as human” (CD IV/1, 129). And in this human existence, God “has really acted.”

He has actually taken us, embraced us, as it were surrounded us, seized us from behind and turned us back again to Himself... The offence offered to God by the unfaithfulness of His covenant-partner, and the misery of that partner, or both removed in Him. In Him humanity keeps and maintains the same faithfulness to God that God had never ceased to maintain and keep to him. God keeps and maintains His faithfulness by looking and going away past the transgression of humanity and Himself and entering in and providing for the faithfulness of humanity and therefore for the fulfilment of the covenant, even on the side of humanity (CD IV/1, 88–89R, cf. 128–29).⁴⁴

In condescending so to humanity, the Lord reveals himself to be “the God who humbles Himself,” or “the Lord as Servant” (CD IV/1, 79 [§58 *Leitsatz*] and 128, cf. chapter XIV). Yet, in this condescension—*humiliation*, even—God was, is, and will be *true* God.

God *remains* the sovereign Lord in *becoming* human. Even the freedom of God, what Barth here refers to as *Godhead*, however, must be understood in light of Jesus Christ—as must the divine perfections (CD IV/1, 128–29).⁴⁵ God does not forfeit his power, but exercises it mightily in Jesus Christ: “God reigns *unequivocally* by pronouncing this Yes and putting it into action in the instituting, upholding, executing, and fulfilling of his covenant with humanity,” and, in fact, “[i]t is in this form, manner

44. “The Yes that God speaks to humanity and puts into action has its basis only in God himself, only in his resolve and purpose, only in his willing in *no* circumstances to be God merely in isolation and therefore without humanity, only in his willing in *all* circumstances to be God only in fellowship with humanity, the God who is holy precisely in his grace and righteous precisely in his mercy” (ChrL, 16R*).

45. Barth interprets this divine humiliation in terms of the effulgence of the divine glory, absolutely rejecting attempts to explain it in terms of “self-limitation” (CD IV/1, e.g., 183 [199]), *contra* John Sanders (*The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence*); Clark Pinnock (*Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God’s Openness*); and, indeed, McCormack (*Orthodox and Modern*, e.g., 216), among others.

and purpose—no other—that he is Pantokrator, the Almighty” (*ChrL*, 15R and 16). In Jesus Christ God reveals his lordship: his eternity in human temporality, his omnipotence in human impotence, his freedom in being humanly bound, and most of all his freedom to love “the one that has fallen away from Him, that has been unfaithful and hostile and antagonistic to Him.... making his own its penalty and loss and condemnation to nothingness” (*CD IV/1*, 129–30). This is the glory of the Lord and what distinguishes this God from all false gods.⁴⁶ “God might easily have allowed humanity to perish... regarded the covenant which humanity had broken as invalidated and destroyed.... He did not need to continue to love the sinful human world,” but he continued to love, and “[w]e can only say that He has actually done so, and that this decision and act invalidate all questions whether He might not have acted otherwise” (*CD IV/1*, 79–80R).⁴⁷ Crucially, this God who loves in freedom does not have to change to love us.

God wills Jesus Christ, the divine and human covenant keeper, from all eternity. Thus, in God’s reconciling activity, “He cannot be understood except as the One who constantly surpasses Himself in His constancy and faithfulness, and yet who never compromises Himself, who does a new thing and yet does everything in order” (*CD IV/1*, 82). Barth here attempts to navigate the newness of the divine presence and action in Jesus Christ while affirming that Jesus Christ participates in the *one* triune identity of God: “Jesus Christ is Himself God as the Son of God the Father and with God the Father the source of the Holy Spirit.... He is God as He takes part in the event which constitutes the divine being” (*CD IV/1*, 129).⁴⁸ There is, however, no *other* God

46. See Barth’s brief but insightful discussion of false gods (*CD IV/1*, 130).

47. As McCormack observes, “the works of God are not accidentally related to the divine being” (*Orthodox and Modern*, 60).

48. Webster calls this Barth’s “trinitarian dramatics of the doctrine of reconciliation” (“Translator’s Preface,” ix). Although Barth emphatically appropriates Creation to the Father, Reconciliation to the Son, and Redemption to the Spirit—with definite distinctions between these actions—he remains unwaveringly committed to what he calls the “theological rule with respect to the Trinity” (*CD I/1*, 375): *opera trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt*. So here: “Distinction does not mean division. That God is essentially Father, Son, and Holy Spirit does not mean that his being is inwardly split, but that it is triply active and rich in its unity” (*ChrL*, 7–8).

standing unrevealed behind Jesus Christ. In order to explain this constancy, Barth re-articulates his truly *radical* doctrine of election:

[t]here is no prior time in which the commanding God was not the one he is in Jesus Christ, and no later time in which he will not be so. He is never and nowhere any other than the God who acts and speaks in him (*ChrL*, 13).⁴⁹

The loving act of reconciliation, then, “is the event in which God wills to be God and is God” (*ChrL*, 14).⁵⁰ Knowledge of God, then, and the assurance that results from it, depend upon the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

As the active revelation of God’s free and immutable love, Jesus Christ is the judge of all talk of and to God. He absolutely displaces generic—and therefore idolatrous—ideas of divinity, contesting them as “the free and different and new God compared to all the truths [rebellious creation] knows and acknowledges, compared to all the gods and forces that are at work in it and that it admires and fears and venerates” (*ChrL*, 14).⁵¹ Theology and ethics are rebuked for judging the divinity of Jesus Christ by an alien god, knowing better than God who God is, and committing the sin of prideful judgment that is the root of all human sin (*CD IV/1*, 142–143, cf. 220 [241–242]).⁵² As the command of Jesus Christ is the command of the *living* God, it cannot be mastered by a principle: it is “the specific content of what is always a special event between God and the human in historical reality” (*ChrL*, 4).⁵³ Yet, there is constancy as well, for in Jesus Christ the *one* (triune) God commands (*ChrL*, 5 and 7).

49. Cf. McCormack (*Orthodox and Modern*, 57); and the election-triunity controversy (n. 19 above).

50. Cf. Jüngel (*Barth*, 129–30). “God *is* God for us,” which means, as Webster understands, “God is essentially one whose act is directed towards the reciprocal active life of humanity,” therefore God is “a *moral* reality” (*Reconciliation*, 46 and 43).

51. Barth describes this as God “moving out of naked Godhead and into the human world.” Further, “[W]e have to understand the very Godhead, that divine being and event and therefore Himself as the One who takes part in it, in the light of the fact that it pleased God—and this is what corresponds outwardly to and reveals the inward divine being and event—Himself to become human” (*CD IV/1*, 129R); cf. Jüngel (*Barth*, 129–30); and McCormack (*Orthodox and Modern*, 57).

52. It is exactly this question of idolatry that Garry Williams fails to account for in his critique of Barth’s acceptance of divine humiliation (“Karl Barth and the Doctrine of the Atonement,” e.g., 264).

53. In this connection Barth adduces John 3:8, “the Spirit blows where it wills.”

Jesus Christ, even as our divine judge and the commanding God, is constant in his ever-new and merciful love.

The immutability of God, especially in becoming human, serves as the basis for what justifiably could be called Barth's doctrine of assurance. The central assurance Barth offers is that the love for humanity (*in toto*) revealed and exercised in Jesus Christ the reconciler is of the very essence of God.⁵⁴ When Barth argues that "there is in God's act in Jesus Christ—whether in its character as an act of power or in its character as an act of grace—no trace of caprice, contingency, or mutability," and that "there are riches in God, but not antithesis, contradiction, or dialectic," he assures the reader:

As the righteous one, the *δίκαιος δικαιῶν* (Rom. 3:26) acts in this way: God is who he is. He loves the world (Jn. 3:16) in defiance of it, and therefore in consuming and killing love, yet not to its merited hurt but to its unmerited salvation. In this way he confirms, renews, and empowers his covenant.... He is not just occasionally but essentially—not just partially but totally—love (1 Jn. 4:8, 16) (*ChrL*, 16).⁵⁵

Furthermore, reconciled human *being* is ensured by God's constancy and immutability: in Jesus Christ, by the act of God, "a new human subject was introduced, the true human beside and outside whom God does not know any other, beside and outside whom there *is* no other.... therefore we have peace with God—without any uncertainty" (*CD IV/1*, 90R).⁵⁶ Due to the action of God—and God's alone—humanity *is* God's covenant partner, with real being and freedom to act.⁵⁷

54. See Busch's examination of the implications of this for Barth's later engagement with the Pietists (*Karl Barth & the Pietists: The Young Karl Barth's Critique of Pietism and Its Response*, 298).

55. Cf. McCormack (*Orthodox and Modern*, 60). This is connected to the ongoing priesthood of Christ, present, if not prominent, in *CD IV*: "Jesus Christ is not Yes *and* No, but what took place in him was simply Yes.... Yesterday, today, and forever he is the same, *αὐτός* (Heb. 13:8). The priestly office is unchanging, in whose fulfilment he can fully (*εἰς τὸ παντελές*) save those who come to God by him, ever living to represent them (Heb. 7:24f.))" (*ChrL*, 19).

56. Cf. Busch (*Barth*, 131). McCormack argues that this ongoing relationship (a *dandum*, not a *datum*) provides the basis for what amounts to Barth's *analogia entis* (*Orthodox and Modern*, 310).

57. The act of God, then, does *not* make humanity *nothing*, see n. 24 above.

II.B. Jesus Christ—Very Human: God’s Reconciled Covenant Partner

Only as the true God is Jesus Christ the true—exalted and reconciled—human (*CD IV/1*, 79 [*Leitsatz*]; and *HG*).⁵⁸ This servant can be and is the Lord only because the Lord can be and is this servant. It is only because God can and does take on flesh that is “like all other humans in every respect, subjected without exception to all the limitations,” the “conditions in which other humans exist and their suffering”—indeed, *sinful* flesh—that Jesus Christ is the true human converted to being a partner-in-covenant (*ChrL*, 130R).⁵⁹ That is to say, God took on the flesh which all humans share, but

[b]ecause He is God it is necessary that He should be human in quite a different way from all other humans; that He should do what we do not do and not do what we do.... Because He is God He has and exercises the power as this human to suffer for us the consequence of our transgression, the wrath and penalty which necessarily fall on us, and in that way to satisfy Himself in our regard (*CD IV/1*, 12R).⁶⁰

God, however, does not do this only to make an end of sinful humanity, but to bring forth true humanity:

again because He is God, He has and exercises the power as this human to be His own partner in our place, the One who in free obedience accepts the ordination of humanity to salvation which we resist and in that way satisfies us, i.e., achieves that which can positively satisfy us (*CD IV/1*, 12–13R).⁶¹

Through the act of God this human becomes and is the covenant keeper God willed

58. Jüngel describes this as the “concrete coexistence of God and man in one and the same history” (*Barth*, 134–35)—an idea developed by McCormack: “The ‘exaltation’ of the human Jesus consists in this: that he actively conforms himself to the history of God’s Self-humiliation and, in doing so, *is made the vehicle of it*” (*Orthodox and Modern*, 226).

59. For further discussion of the assumption of *sinful* flesh, see *CD IV/1*, 165, 215–16, 220, 235–41, 254, 258–59; and *CD IV/4*, 59. One must consult §64 to encounter the full dynamism of Barth’s account of God’s exaltation of humanity.

60. See Barth’s preparatory exegetical study of the humanity of Christ (*C&A*, [1952]). McCormack (“Karl Barth’s Christology as a Resource for a Reformed Version of Kenoticism”) argues that *CD IV/1* could be developed in a kenotic direction (the divine Son as pure *receptivity* to the humanity of Jesus of Nazareth), but Barth’s emphasis here and in *CD IV/2* on the activity of *God* in Jesus militates against such a move.

61. As Barth worked with this in mind from early on, his *Church Dogmatics* was always an “ethical dogmatics,” as Webster observes (*Moral*, e.g., 79).

from before the foundation of the world.⁶² The fullness and precedence of the divine activity in no way crowd out the fullness and freedom of the human activity in Christ (*ChrL*, 130–31).⁶³ Rather, the pleroma of the glory of the Lord and the prevenience of God’s grace ensure the reality of human being and act in Jesus Christ. As revealed by his resurrection and ascension,

[t]he special thing, the new thing about the exaltation of Jesus Christ is that One who is bound as we are is free, who is tempted as we are is without sin, who is a sufferer as we are is able to minister to Himself and others, who is a victim to death is alive even though He was dead, who is a servant (the servant of all servants) is the Lord.... It is not simply that he is the Son at the right hand of the Father, the *Kyrios*, the Lord of His community and the Lord of the cosmos, the bearer and executor of divine authority in the Church and the world, but that He is all this *as a human—as a human like we are*, but a human exalted in the power of His deity (*CD IV/1*, 135R*).

In this way Jesus Christ *is* the true human, the mediator between God and humanity, and the fulfillment of the covenant in person.

In his particular life and act Jesus Christ *is* true humanity.⁶⁴ Apart from him true humanity cannot be revealed because it does not exist: “Without Christ we would not be human at all” (*ChrL*, 19R, cf. 6; and *CD IV/1*, 131).⁶⁵ Jesus Christ reveals “we with

62. This divine determination to be God to and for humanity makes humanity necessary for God’s life with humanity, but not God’s own life: “In the inner life of God, as the eternal essence of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, *the divine essence does not, of course, need any actualisation*” (*CD IV/2*, 113*, cf. 101). Moreover, while Barth understands Jesus Christ to be previous to creation and therefore eternal, existing at “the beginning of all [God’s] works and ways,” he qualifies that Jesus Christ is “certainly not eternal as God is” (*CD IV/2*, 32 and 33 [34]). McCormack makes Barth’s noetic caution against looking behind this determination into an ontological rule for prioritizing election over triunity.

63. “He is altogether man just as He is altogether God—altogether man in virtue of His true Godhead whose glory consists in His humiliation.”

64. As Jüngel grasps, “The human being who is reconciled to God is named Jesus of Nazareth. In him, humanity became the new humanity, the humanity reconciled to God.... The life of the royal man was his deed. The person and work of Jesus are identical, his one momentous history” (*Barth*, 132 and 136).

65. Busch indicates that Barth was aware of a serious departure from tradition here, not least in the implication that “the non-theological disciplines might recognize individual ‘phenomena of human nature’, but not the ‘real man’” (*Barth*, 348). See Webster’s discussion of Barth’s “non-phenomenological and highly objectivist” account of “God’s summons of humanity in Jesus,” which is “*creatio ex nihilo*, and not the shaping or modification of pre-existent human receptivity” so that “outside the encounter between God and humanity it is not theologically meaningful to speak of humanity at all” (*Reconciliation*, 67, 68, and 69).

God,” true humanity exalted to the right hand of God (*CD IV/1*, 90).⁶⁶ This exaltation does not divinize humanity, but establishes humanity as the responsible *other*, the covenant partner intended by God:

God creates, preserves and over-rules man for this prior end and with this prior purpose, that there may be a being distinct from Himself ordained for salvation... and that there may be an object of His redemptive grace, a partner to receive it (*CD IV/1*, 9–10).⁶⁷

As God accomplishes this exaltation through the assumption of the sinful—false—humanity shared by all humans, all who share this flesh share this exalted being: “God has given it to all humans in Jesus Christ” (*CD IV/1*, 92R).⁶⁸ Here Barth’s *universalism* comes into view, but it is a rather peculiar universalism, something often missed by opponents and proponents alike: the covenant-being of humanity is “universal,” but

not in the sense that all men are members as such and without further ado—if that were the case it would no longer be a covenant of the free grace of God—but in the sense that as the promise and command of God it does seriously apply to all men and is made for all men, that it is the destiny of all men to become and to be members of this covenant (*CD IV/1*, 57).⁶⁹

This is to say that the actualization of true human being depends on the power of the Holy Spirit, the work of God the redeemer, and that it is *not* universally actualized. Many still exist in sin, that shadowy life at the left hand of God.⁷⁰

66. Further, “By the grace of God... man is not nothing. He is God’s man.... a subject who has been made free once and for all by his restoration as the faithful covenant partner of God.” Jüngel explains the *historical* unity between this particular human and all humanity see (*Barth*, 133).

67. See also *CD IV/1*, 82; and *ChrL*, 6–8, 12, 14, and 28. Again, Barth glosses *salvation* as “perfect being... participation in His own being” and “the presence of the *eschaton* in all its fulness” (*CD IV/1*, 9 and 13). While Barth emphasizes that “God becomes human,” he also emphasizes that this happens “in order that humanity may—not become God, but come to God” (*CD IV/2*, 105R [117–18]—intentionally echoing and contradicting Athanasius, *De Inc.* 54?). Cf. Webster (*Barth*, 129 and 132); and McCormack’s essay, “Participation in God, Yes; Deification, No” (*Orthodox and Modern*, 235–60).

68. “His participation in our being, life and activity,” brings about “our participation in his”—participation, not divinization (*CD IV/1*, 13). See Mangina’s comments on Barth’s “inclusive Christology” (*Karl Barth: Theologian of Christian Witness*, 73 and 127). Jüngel insightfully explains how Barth does not hereby violate human persons with a *construction* of “humanity” (*TE*, 157).

69. Barth explains this particular universalism by expounding the phrase, *totus Christus* (*CD IV/2*, 59–60 [63–64] for example).

70. Note Barth’s emphasis on the *willfulness* of human sin, which leads him to protest any hereditary understanding of original sin [*Erbsünde*] that, in Webster’s words, “bypasses deliberation and choice, so that it becomes more easily describable as a disease than as moral evil” (*Moral*, 73)—Barth prefers to speak of *Ursünde*.

Even as Jesus Christ reveals true humanity as the participant in grace and keeper of the covenant, he also reveals false humanity as the rebel against grace and breaker of the covenant (*CD IV/1*, 140–41).⁷¹ As a breach of the covenant, sin cannot be known apart from the covenant; only God’s journey to the far country “reveals the gulf... how it stands between God and humanity,” and our identity as those “who have forfeited the predetermined salvation, forfeited it with a supreme and final jeopardising even of our creaturely existence” (*CD IV/1*, 11R and 10R).⁷² Beginning with the God who is gracious to us in Jesus Christ, that is, the “*χάρις* [that] always demands the answer of *εὐχαριστία*,” Barth argues that “[i]ts failure, ingratitude, is sin,” and that “[r]adically and basically all sin is simply ingratitude—humanity’s refusal of the one but necessary thing which is proper to and required of those with whom God has graciously entered into covenant” (*CD IV/1*, 41–42R).⁷³ In this way Barth both takes sin seriously and relativizes it. Sin is serious because it is the “doing and accomplishing of what God does not will” that “negates and withstands and rejects” God’s will, and “therefore not merely an evil,” but the “human’s denial of him- or herself in face of the grace of [Jesus Christ’s] Creator” (*CD IV/1*, 140R). Yet, even as sinful humans speak their *No* to God’s will, God contradicts them by uttering “the divine Yes... of God’s covenant with humanity... the covenant of grace concluded in Jesus Christ from all eternity and fulfilled and revealed in time” (*CD IV/1*, 140). Sin is revealed to be a mere *episode* in relation to God’s unwavering *Yes* (*CD IV/1*, 46). For this reason, Barth cautions against referring to humans as *simul iustus et peccator*: Jesus Christ does not reveal a “two-sided, ambivalent, and fluctuating” humanity, but “the creation and revelation of the human who at the same time *was* the sinner and *will be* righteous” (*ChrL*, 26).⁷⁴ To this reconciled humanity we now turn.

71. In light of Jesus Christ, it becomes apparent that “the eternal grace of God is not merely undeserved,” but that the human “does not recognise it... does not want it,” indeed, “hates it” (*CD IV/1*, 68).

72. As there is only *one* covenant, Israel foreshadows sin as well as covenant.

73. Sin is not, as Webster grasps, the *fate* of humanity (*Moral*, 75).

74. In Barth’s judgment this *simul* becomes especially problematic when it ascribes to us “only a partial and limited responsibility for our own being and acts” (*ChrL*, 26R).

Primarily, centrally, and ultimately God's reconciling exaltation of humanity in Jesus Christ reveals humans *to be* a) *justified*, b) *sanctified*, and c) *called*, even as it also reveals the shadow existence at the left hand of God of a) *fallen* humanity in its sinful *pride*, b) *miserable* humanity in its sinful *sloth*, and c) *condemned* humanity in its sinful *falsehood*.

a) *Human being justified*. God justifies humanity "by the destruction of the old and the creation of a new human" (CD IV/1, 96R). In the death of Jesus Christ, who lived before God in the place—indeed, the *flesh*—of sinners, God has put a radical and total end to sinful humanity just as the whole animal was destroyed in Israel's sin offering (CD IV/1, 93–94). By thus disowning and renouncing sinful humanity, "God has vindicated himself in relation to [sinful humanity]... He could not and would not use [sinful humanity]... could not and would not tolerate and have [sinful humanity] any longer" (CD IV/1, 94, cf. 145, especially). However, even as the divine verdict of death disowns and renounces, it also pardons, cancels and removes the responsibility for sin, and

declares that man is no longer the transgressor, the sinner, the covenant-breaker that God has found him and he must confess himself to be, that as such he has died and perished from the earth, that he cannot be dealt with as such. That as such he has no future (CD IV/1, 93–94).

Yet, Jesus Christ lived before God as the keeper of the covenant, righteous in both his justification of God and his repentant refusal to justify himself before God. The Father justifies this covenant keeper by raising him from the dead, fulfilling and proclaiming his positive verdict that humanity is "a suitable partner for the divine partner," "the one in whom God delights," "a faithful servant and a friend and a dear child of God" (CD IV/1, 95). God's justification of Jesus Christ, his covenant partner, reveals sin as *pride*, "the negation, the opposite of what God does for us in Jesus Christ in condescending to us, in humbling Himself, in becoming a servant" (CD IV/1, 142). Moreover, the raising of Jesus Christ *from the dead* reveals the *fallenness* of humanity in its presumptuous attempt to be more godly than God, more exalted than the exalted one (CD IV/1, 143).

b) *Human being sanctified*. In Jesus Christ God places humanity under what can be variously described as “the divine direction.... the law, commandment, ordinance, demand or claim of God”—indeed, “we might almost say advice or hint” (*CD IV/1*, 99 and 100).⁷⁵ While this direction is all-powerful, Barth emphasizes that it conforms to God’s humble exercise of authority and “is not a loud and stern and foreign thing, but the quiet and gentle and intimate awakening of children in the Father’s house to life in that house” (*CD IV/1*, 100). In Jesus Christ humans are not only directed to live in the Kingdom of God, that is, “the kingdom in which God can be at peace with him and he at peace with God,” humans “are *already* in this kingdom” and “have our being and continuance here and nowhere else” (*CD IV/1*, 99*). As humans *already are sanctified* in Jesus Christ, this direction is simply “a matter of man’s direction into the freedom for which he is made free in Jesus Christ.... God’s direction is the direction to... make use of his freedom” (*CD IV/1*, 100). This freedom is not the idolatrous freedom imagined by prideful humanity, in which the human is left to his or her own judgment, acting as lord and master and therefore “imprisoned in... arbitrariness and self-sufficiency,” for such freedom “would be bondage—the unfreedom of the lost rebel and enemy from which he has been loosed” (*CD IV/1*, 100–01).⁷⁶ Rather, it is freedom to be “in a spontaneous and therefore willing agreement with the sovereign freedom of God” (*CD IV/1*, 101). Sanctification, then, is the direction to make use of the freedom we have in Jesus Christ to follow the example of the love revealed in Jesus Christ’s communion with God and communion with his fellow-humans (*CD IV/1*, 103).⁷⁷ Even though “[e]xistence without love has now been

75. Jüngel summarizes: “The human person is claimed by the love of God and by that alone: this is the fundamental insight of Christian ethics” (*TE*, 158).

76. On the falsehood of “independent” humanity, see Jüngel (*Barth*, 134).

77. As Busch observes, “What God’s holiness is, is defined by his will to enter into a covenant.... God’s holiness itself contains the freedom to ‘go beyond’ oneself (without doing away with oneself) in order to form a bond with someone who is totally different from oneself, someone who is unholy.... This is why our participation in God’s holiness revealed in Christ, our participation in the sanctification accomplished for us in him, will not consist of a mere separation from others” (*Barth & Pietists*, 299–300). Rather thought-provokingly, Nicholas Healy observes, “The relation between Christ and the apostles is thus the Gospel narrative version of the Pauline concept of the body of Christ” (“Karl Barth’s Ecclesiology

left far behind as an error and a lie,” God’s sanctification of humanity in his elevation of Jesus Christ to his right hand in fellowship reveals sin as *sloth*—humanity’s refusal to make use of our God-given human freedom—and the resulting human *miser* (*CD* IV/1, 104).

c) *Human being called*. Barth describes the most unfamiliar and difficult to understand dimension of God’s triply rich act of reconciliation as the divine calling of humanity in Jesus Christ. It is “the positing and equipping of humanity as the bearer of the divine promise.... given to humanity in Jesus Christ..., and therefore the calling of humanity” (*CD* IV/1, 108). This call is the

promise of God, which as the truth overcomes the lie, is God’s decision in which He has given to man, quite contrary to the destruction of his existence, an eternal future in fellowship with Himself, that is, in His service, and therefore a teleological direction of his life in time, so that even this life in time acquires a perspective and therefore (small, relative and provisional) ends (*CD* IV/1, 146).

Barth critiques Protestant soteriology (thereby explaining the aforementioned unfamiliarity) for its “magnificent preoccupation” with justification and sanctification, which obscured that human “being as such is under the promise,” that being in Christ is a beginning and not simply a delivered state (*CD* IV/1, 109).⁷⁸ Reconciliation involves not only our justification as covenant partners, sanctification to be covenant partners in fellowship with God, but also vocation actually to be who we are in Christ (*CD* IV/1, 109).

In this way, human being in Christ “in all its completeness is only a beginning—a being in which man looks eagerly forward to the activity of God and his own fellowship with Him,” a being with “a purpose and goal” (*CD* IV/1, 110, cf. 111). God calls humanity towards the *telos* of *being reconciled*, a “destiny”: “the actualisation and preservation of the fellowship between God and himself in the fulfilment of the

Reconsidered,” 291).

78. It cannot be such a state because, in McCormack’s words, the hypostatic union itself is best understood “in actualistic terms, as a *uniting*, rather than as a completed action, a union” (*Orthodox and Modern*, 243)—perhaps just such an understanding of election, as a *determining* rather than a finished determination, is called for as well?

covenant” (*CD IV/1*, 111).⁷⁹ Moreover, covenant is not merely a formal relationship, but has a “depth... something common to both God and man upon which man cannot lay his hand but which God promises to lay in his hand,” namely “eternal life” or “a being in a depth of fellowship with God which has yet to be disclosed” (*CD IV/1*, 111). With this *telos* of “a being by the side of God, the participation of man in the being and life of God.... a being... as an active subject in the fellowship of God... actively undertaken and maintained, a being in man’s own free responsibility with God for the cause of God,” Barth finds himself “dealing with what synergism of every age and type has tried to ascribe to man at a place where it does not—*yet*—belong to him, and has confused and falsified everything by trying to ascribe it to him at that place, that is, in his status under the verdict and direction of God” (*CD IV/1*, 113).⁸⁰ Typical synergism misses the promissory—indeed, *eschatological*—nature of covenant partnership and claims the gift that is to come as a present possession and what can only be a constant beginning again as an accomplished fact (*CD IV/1*, 114–15; cf. McCormack’s *Orthodox and Modern*, 81). Even though the promise is witnessed and guaranteed by Jesus Christ, the Lord who is servant and the servant who is Lord, condemned humanity still rejects the truth of his promise, revealing sin as *falsehood*, and humanity as *condemned* (*CD IV/1*, 143).

II.C. Jesus Christ—True God-Human Mediator: The Guarantor and Witness of the Reconciled Covenant

This call comes from Jesus Christ, the *mediator* between God and humanity. Seated at the right hand of the Father, his ongoing being-in-act both guarantees and bears witness to the promise of eternal life (*CD IV/1*, 122–28 and 79 [§58 *Letisatz*]). He is the mediator as “the One who is both—both, and not a third thing between God

79. Joseph Mangina observes the difference between this *telos* and the Platonic idealism of which Barth is sometimes accused (*Barth*, 127). Webster explains the connection between this teleology and Barth’s refusal to consider “humankind as such” (*Response*, 163).

80. McCormack describes Barth’s *historical*—rather than essential—understanding of participation (*Orthodox and Modern*, 237).

and man or a mixture of the two”—the unmediated mediator (*CD IV/1*, 136).⁸¹ Barth devotes so much effort to distinguishing “very God” and “very human” only with the goal that their union in Jesus Christ, “very God-human,” might be properly said and understood.⁸² For “[t]he third christological aspect... is at once the simplest and the highest.... the source of the two first, and it comprehends them both.... Jesus Christ is one” (*CD IV/1*, 135, cf. 53 and 123). The one person of Jesus Christ “both differentiates and comprehends the reconciling God above and the reconciled man below,” for in him divinity and humanity are

actualised and revealed both in themselves and in their inseparable connexion, indeed identity, the reconciling God as such in the sovereign act of His grace, and reconciled man as such in his being grounded in that divine act, the turning of God to man, and based upon it the conversion of man to God (*CD IV/1*, 122).

Divinity and humanity are conjoined, “not always and everywhere but in a single and particular event which has a definite importance for all time and space but which takes place once and for all in a definite *hic et nunc*” (*CD IV/1*, 8). In Jesus Christ the history unique to God becomes the history of this particular human; in him these histories “take place as a common history” (*CD IV/1*, 7).⁸³ Jesus Christ, “in the fact that He is this One and not another,” *is* the *unity* of God and humanity—not merely their relation, encounter, or correspondence—and, therefore, he *is* atonement and atonement is “wholly and utterly” Jesus Christ (*CD IV/1*, 128 and 125, but see all of 125–28). As the being of Jesus Christ is *dynamic* and *active*, “he is not simply a means or a predicate” of atonement, but its “active subject” (*CD IV/1*, 125). In this way, Jesus Christ “*guarantees* the fact that God and man and man and God belong together, are bound together, and

81. There is an asymmetry in this unity, “a specific and irreversible order of before and after, above and below. God unconditionally precedes and man can only follow” (*ChrL*, 29).

82. McCormack argues that Barth’s encounter (1923) with the Roman Catholic, Erich Przywara, challenged him to develop a doctrine of the true unity of God with humankind (*Karl Barth’s Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development 1909–1936*, 321). Regardless of the historical prompting, T.F. Torrance judges that “Barth’s own theology was governed by the dimension of the union of God and man in Christ,” providing the pointer towards the *third dimension* in other areas as well, e.g., eternity and time (*Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, 22).

83. See McCormack’s explanation of this *historical* union (*Orthodox and Modern*, 228–29).

are in fellowship with one another. In him the covenant has its irrevocable basis. In him it cannot be broken” (*ChrL*, 29). As the atoning one who is atonement, Jesus Christ is the *autor salutis*.

As the *autor salutis*, Jesus Christ is not content to let reconciliation be true for himself alone. Jesus Christ atones and is atonement with the goal of mediating his exalted life to us, and towards this end he is also the *applicator salutis* (*CD IV/1*, 147). Whereas in the first two forms of Barth’s doctrine of reconciliation the twofold narrative of “the Lord as Servant” and “the Servant as Lord” overshadows the priestly and royal offices, in the third form the prophetic office takes center stage:

Jesus Christ who not only is what He is and does what He does but in so doing encounters us, testifying to us, addressing us, promising to us, pledging Himself to us, in all His majesty summoning us—in the right sense a teacher and example—to come to Him and in that way His own *prophet*, the *prophet* of His future as ours and ours as His (*CD IV/1*, 138*).⁸⁴

This leads us to Barth’s oft-disparaged pneumatology. For,

Where between human and human there is real communication of the report of what took place in Him and through Him, He Himself is there and at work, He Himself makes Himself to be recognised and acknowledged.... He Himself by His Spirit is its guarantor (*CD IV/1*, 17R).⁸⁵

Justification, sanctification and calling are not only objectively relevant to *all* humanity, they are also subjectively apprehended and accepted by *particular* humans, but even—especially—in the latter case “we cannot abandon the christological basis,” for it is “the being and work of His Holy Spirit, or His own spiritual being and work” (*CD IV/1*, 147).⁸⁶ Here again we cross the border into the doctrine of redemption, for this appropriation or apprehension “presupposes and includes within itself the presence, the gift and the reception, the work and accomplishment of the Holy Spirit” (*CD*

84. Through the development of the prophetic office, Webster argues, Barth was able “to expound in Christological terms what is often expounded either morally, existentially or sacramentally, namely the ways in which Christ is realized in the present” (*Moral*, 6; cf. *Reconciliation*, 127–30).

85. NB, “between human and human.”

86. Webster speaks of the “inclusive perfection” of reconciliation, “its completeness is not only in its ‘being finished’, but its effective power in renewing human life by bringing about human response to itself.... the objective includes the subjective within itself” (*Reconciliation*, 127).

IV/1, 147–48).⁸⁷ While this work is *spiritual* in the supreme sense, Barth does not interpret this as *nebulous*, for the Holy Spirit works *concretely* in a) *gathering* the Church by bringing humans to embrace the divine verdict in *faith*, b) *building-up* the Church by directing the faithful to *love*, and c) *sending* the Church by awakening *hope* in the promise.

a) Christians have faith in Jesus Christ, the mediator. Christian faith, then, is both 1) faith in the reconciling God revealed in Jesus Christ: God the father, Son and Holy Spirit (CD IV/1, 3–4); and 2) faith in the believer’s being reconciled in Jesus Christ (CD IV/1, 97–98). Barth explains faith in terms of “subjection” to the *divine* verdict concerning *humanity* (CD IV/1, 94). On the one hand, faith bows to the negative verdict delivered against sinful humanity in Jesus Christ—carried out in its utter destruction in death—and is “in that way and to that extent a being in ‘the forgiveness of sins’” (CD IV/1, 94). On the other hand, faith also bows to the positive verdict delivered for humanity in Jesus Christ—carried out in the resurrection and ascension—and as such is faith “in a sentence which is absolutely effective, so that man is not merely called righteous before God, but is righteous before God” (CD IV/1, 95). This twofold “act of pure obedience.... is a work of the Holy Spirit, and as true faith, ...it is justifying faith.” Barth continues, “To that extent faith is the *only* form of this *new being*.... not unrighteous and rejected but righteous and accepted only by faith, not by love and hope” (CD IV/1, 96*). As the Holy Spirit brings about “that subjection to the will of God..., that acknowledgement of the honor and glory of God in relation to man,” the Spirit gathers these faithful into a community (CD IV/1, 96–97). With Jesus Christ as their head, the faithful are “His own earthly-historical form of existence, the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church...., the gathering of the community of those whom already before all others He has made willing and ready for life under the divine

87. Further, the Holy Spirit, God the redeemer, “is the one eternal God in His particular power and will so to be present to the creature in His being and activity, so to give Himself to it, that it can recognise and embrace and experience Himself and His work and therefore the actuality and truth of its own situation, that its eyes and ears and senses and reason and heart are open to Him and willing and ready for Him.” In the subsequent paragraphs, Barth does not clarify sufficiently how Jesus Christ’s “existence as the Guarantor of truth is itself ultimately grounded in the being and work of the Holy Spirit.”

verdict,” and the “provisional representation of the whole world of humanity justified in Him” (CD IV/1, 643* [§62 *Leitsatz*]). The Holy Spirit does not merely bring Christians to faith and gather them into community, but also moves them to love, thereby building up the community.

b) Whereas Christian faith submits to the *foundation* of the divine-human fellowship in Jesus Christ, Christian love “consists simply in the affirmation of *the existence of this fellowship as such*” (CD IV/1, 102). This acceptance and affirmation of Jesus Christ’s direction gives *active* form to human being (CD IV/1, 99 and 102). Crucially, this activity is a response to the love of God, “following it, imitating it, modelling itself upon it” (CD IV/1, 103). In the response of love, the Christian “not merely knows himself to be brought together but does actively come together with God in thought and word and work: within the limits, of course, of his human capacity, and humbly seeking the One who has already found him in His own free grace,the realising of all the possibilities of his active being” (CD IV/1, 103). In love, the Christian cannot even see anyone else than the being loved by God in his or her fellow humans (CD IV/1, 103). Even as he speaks of Christian love as “realising on his side the fellowship which has been set up by God,” Barth vehemently denies that love justifies (CD IV/1, 104–07). Indeed, “Christian love does not will anything from God. It starts from the point that there is nothing to will which has not already been given” (CD IV/1, 105). For this reason love “will be an activity which is at bottom voluntary.... accomplished as an act of pure gratitude, which does not make any claim and which is therefore complete” (CD IV/1, 103–04). Burdening love with “the impossible and superfluous task of accomplishing or actualising or even completing the justification of man,” Barth argues, “would completely destroy the essential character of Christian love as the freedom given to man” (CD IV/1, 105). Self-regard would poison love if it were a work required for our justification, for “love to God can envisage and seek and love only God, and for His own sake,” and “love to the neighbor can envisage and seek and love only the neighbor, and for his own sake” (CD IV/1, 105). Such self-regardless love depends upon the work of the Holy Spirit, who grows, sustains, and orders the

body of Christ for the purpose of giving “a provisional representation of the sanctification of all humanity and human life as it has taken place in [Jesus Christ],” in his quickening power (*CD IV/2*, 614 [§67 *Leitsatz*]).

c) Before the *parousia*, the Christian exists in hope, and thereby “participates... and lives in the light of” the promise of eternal life (*CD IV/1*, 108). While Christians’ hope includes “their hope of their own future,” it cannot be separated from mission and witness, the active hoping for those Christians represent, namely “all those who so far do not have this hope either for themselves or at all, just as faith and love are so far alien to them, because Jesus Christ Himself is not known to them” (*CD IV/1*, 119). Christian hope, then, is “the coming alive of the promise incorporated in the world of men... the taking root of the promise implanted in it,” for “in the act of Christian hope the objective becomes subjective” (*CD IV/1*, 119). Here again we see something often missed in accounts of Barth’s understanding of Christian, ecclesial life:

Christians do not merely see things differently from others. From God’s point of view they are different from others, just as they are different from others in relation to the divine verdict and direction when the Holy Spirit awakens them to faith and love. They do not merely live under the promise, which could be said of all men. They live in and with and by the promise. They seize it. They apprehend it. They conform themselves to it. And therefore in their present life they live as those who belong to the future (*CD IV/1*, 120).⁸⁸

In the Christian, “Jesus Christ as the (promised and coming) eternally living one is already present. Not merely virtually and effectively, but actually and actively” (*CD IV/1*, 119).⁸⁹ Barth’s cautions that Christians should treat their participation in the covenant as a promise should not be allowed to obscure his clear affirmation that the Christian is the one who, in hope “lives not merely in the factuality of the decision made by God concerning his whole being, but also in the factuality of his own corresponding thoughts and words and works in relation to the service of God” (*CD IV/1*, 119). Such hope depends upon the enlightening work of the Holy Spirit, who

88. In this way, Webster argues, “God is the *ground*, not the *abolition* of our human agency” (*Moral*, 89; cf. *Reconciliation*, 55 and 93).

89. Further, “the promised future is not only that of the day of the Lord at the end of all days, but because it is the end and goal of all days it is also to-day and to-morrow.”

sends Christians out of the Church to the fallen, miserable and condemned world “in hope in [Jesus Christ], i.e., in confident, patient and cheerful expectation of His new coming to consummate the revelation of the will of God fulfilled in Him” (CD IV/4, 903 [§73 *Leitsatz*]). In this way Christians hope that all humans *may be* as Christians *are*.

This again points to an *ontological* difference between Christians and non-Christians, which needs to be clarified in order to exposit correctly Barth’s doctrine of baptism. Again, *all humans are* reconciled:

Jesus Christ was born and died and rose again for all. The work of atonement, the conversion of man to God, was done for all. The Word of God is spoken to all. God’s verdict and direction and promise have been pronounced over all. To that extent, objectively, all are justified, sanctified, and called (CD IV/1, 148).

And yet. Not all have been born of the Holy Spirit, “the hand of God has not touched all in such a way that they can see and hear, perceive and accept and receive all that God is for all and therefore for them, how therefore they can exist and think and live” (CD IV/1, 148; cf. Webster [*Moral*, 86]). God has given Christians this being in Christ and knowledge of it, however, that they might declare reconciliation to all others: “What Christians know about themselves they have to attest to non-Christians as valid also for them, namely, that Jesus Christ is the origin and goal of their existence too” (*ChrL*, 22R). By the power of God Christians become different, living witnesses of what all humans may be—and are—in Christ.

III. Baptism: An Event of Divine Change and Human Prayer, Not a Sacrament

Barth teaches that the one event of baptism includes both a distinct divine act and a distinct human act, but is not a divine-human act. Jesus Christ, the Mediator, is the only divine-human reality. As such, he “is the one *mysterium*, the one sacrament, and the one existential fact before and beside and after which there is no room for any other of the same rank” (CD IV/1, 296).⁹⁰ Thus, unlike Jesus Christ, baptism ought not

90. This restriction of “sacrament” to Jesus Christ, the God-human, has been a definite feature of Barth’s thought through the whole of his *Versöhnungslehre* (see CD IV/1, 87, 228, 296 [especially], 315, 613, 625, 667, 696, and 767–68; CD IV/2, xi–xii, 40, 50, 54–55, and 107; and CD IV/3, 220 and 350—among others)—*contra* Webster’s claim that this only became definite ca. 1959 (*Reconciliation*, 125). As

be described as truly divine, truly human, and truly divine-human. Rather, it is an event of right (dynamic, active) relationship between God and humans in the covenant of grace.⁹¹ Barth does not *separate* baptism into two events as Hunsinger claims, but *correlates* and *distinguishes* the “two elements..., the objective and the subjective,” of the one event of baptism (*CD IV/4*, 41).⁹² Ultimately, the Christian life has only one indivisible foundation in which “[e]ach of the elements both individually and also in correlation, and therefore in the totality of the event, will be misunderstood if it is either separated from, or instead of being distinguished, ...confused with the other.” Again, Barth hereby simply treats baptism as a particular instance of covenant relationship: both God’s Word addressing the human and the human turning towards God in the obedience of faith are necessary to this relationship, and without “this unity of the two in their distinction” there would be no covenant relationship and no Christian ethics (*CD IV/4*, 41). Barth has been preparing the reader for this move from the beginning of *CD IV* through his emphasis on 1) the distinction between divine and human—even in Jesus Christ; and 2) the utter uniqueness of Jesus Christ, the only sacrament.⁹³ Moreover, Barth’s polemics against paedobaptism do not lead him to reject baptism as a sacrament unwittingly. The negative arguments he makes here are driven by his positive Christology: “Baptism responds to a mystery, the sacrament of the history of Jesus Christ, of His resurrection, of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It

Mangina understands, this means that the sacrament is not a dark mystery, but an eloquent and radiant person (*Barth*, 23).

91. Commentors have regularly missed the fact that *covenant* remains at the heart of *CD IV/4* and *ChrL*, for instance, George Hendry (“Review”).

92. Based on this mistake, Hunsinger labels Barth’s doctrine of baptism as “nonsense... confused” (“Baptism,” 256–57). While Barth acknowledges that making this “sharp distinction” between water and Spirit baptism involves “a certain exegetical liberty,” he claims that it is “one which is not without solid foundation” (*CD IV/4*, 30)—most notably his extensive distinction between divinity and humanity in *CD IV/1–2*. Strange then, is the rather common phenomenon of protesting only against the exegesis of *CD IV/4* and not the exegesis and doctrine of *CD IV/1–2* that Barth thinks serves as its “solid foundation,” for example, Webster (*Reconciliation*, 172).

93. Very odd, then, is Hunsinger’s praise of Barth for his long stretches (*CD II* and *IV/1–2*) of alternating between Alexandrian and Antiochene idiom and Hunsinger’s attacks on Barth for repeating this procedure in *CD IV/4* (*Disruptive Grace: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*, 131–47, for example).

is not itself, however, a mystery or sacrament” (CD IV/3, 102).⁹⁴

While Barth rejects the sacramental understanding of baptism as a divine-human act, he does affirm a contrasted communion between the divine and human partners. Thus, he rejects both *Christomonism* and *anthropomorphism* because they obscure or deny “that the founding of the Christian life is an event in the genuine intercourse between God and man as two different partners” (CD IV/4, 18–19).⁹⁵ Barth explicitly rejects *Christomonism*, or “subjectivism from above,” because this solution so weights the action of the divine partner that “*in nobis*, the liberation of man himself, is simply an appendage, a mere reflection, of the act of liberation accomplished by Jesus Christ in His history, and hence *extra nos*” (CD IV/4, 19). If God in Christ is the only agent, human faithfulness cannot be the free answer of a concrete other, but is only a manifestation of the divine act in Jesus Christ: “All anthropology and soteriology are swallowed up in Christology,” something “a true Christology will strictly forbid us to do” (CD IV/4, 19).⁹⁶ Conversely, Barth also rejects a self-sufficient anthropology and soteriology, i.e., “anthropomorphism” or “subjectivism from below,” his description of the solution that so weights human action that “what took place in His history, *extra nos*,...is regarded as a mere predicate and instrument, cipher and symbol, of that which truly and properly took place only *in nobis*, the subject being none other than man himself” (CD IV/4, 19). The human change, awakening, compulsion, and resolving is

94. Interpreters sympathetic to Barth but who disagree with him at this point often imply that Barth’s polemics against baptism as a sacrament are relatively disconnected from his positive dogmatic and ethical teaching. See especially John Yocum (*Ecclesial Mediation in Karl Barth*; “Barth as Polemical”), but Webster is also noteworthy in this regard: “Barth’s polemic about sacramental theology and practice... was in fact largely tangential to his main argument” (*Moral*, 2). As Richardson notes, this directly contradicts Barth’s explicit statements and the very logic of his arguments (*Reading Karl Barth: New Directions for North American Theology*). Jüngel’s willingness to see this as a necessary consequence of Barth’s *basic* commitments is a notable exception. See his attempt to place Barth within a Protestant tradition that includes Karlstadt, the early Luther and Schleiermacher (*TE*, 193–95)—though Jüngel, too, overemphasizes polemic and thereby obscures Barth’s positive reasoning.

95. See Webster’s able discussion of this in relation to baptism (*Reconciliation*, 116–17).

96. “Barth’s apparent ontological exclusivism,” Webster explains, “is in fact an inclusivism: *solus Christus* embraces and does not suspend or absorb the world of creatures and their actions” (*Reconciliation*, 29).

now, as such, the divine change and foundation of the salvation of humanity. Such a solution has no place for true covenant relationship as there is “no place for a concrete other which acts with power towards him and which speaks to him in the word of promise,” therefore “the change does not really have the character of a response to the action of another, of an answer to his word, of an act of gratitude” (CD IV/4, 20). Despite their intent, both answers “are really speaking about something else” (CD IV/4, 20). Barth, in contrast, attempts to speak of this conversion as *both* divine change (*Spirit* baptism) *and* human response (*water* baptism)—each as such and without confusion with the other.

III.A. Spirit Baptism: God’s Foundation of the Christian Life

There is a real difference between Christians and non-Christians. “[T]here is such a thing as the event of the Christian life,” that is “genuine human faithfulness in relation to God’s own faithfulness” (CD IV/4, 3).⁹⁷ About this Barth is adamant. Many interpreters—perhaps deafened by Barth’s thunderous defense of the *objective* (ἐφάπαξ) accomplishment of reconciliation—fail to hear just how seriously Barth takes this difference and how expansive is his understanding of the specifically, peculiarly, *Christian* life. Thus, even a sympathetic reader like Dawn DeVries arrives at the conclusion that Barth understands salvation as “something *entirely extra nos!*” and that “there is no difference with regard to salvation between those who have faith and those who do not” (“Does Faith Save? Calvin, Schleiermacher and Barth on the Nature of Faith,” 188 and 189).⁹⁸ DeVries does not miss Barth’s affirmation of specifically *Christian* existence, but laments that Barth understands it *only* in terms of knowledge, acknowledgment, and confession, so that “[f]aith adds nothing to the work of Christ”

97. Barth affirms the existence of “human faithfulness which replies and corresponds to the faithfulness of God” even if it occurs only “in great poverty, weakness and contradiction, constantly threatened and in need of renewal.”

98. This position is not without some justification (*HG*, 58, for example). Hunsinger, too, makes this mistake: “What distinguishes Christians from non-Christians is not their ontic but their noetic situation” (*Read Barth*, 134). Hunsinger also neglects Barth’s routine distinction between being *virtually* and *actually* “in Christ” (CD IV/1, 119–20, among others) claiming that Barth thinks all “human beings are *actually* in Christ by Christ” (*Read Barth*, 115, cf. 36 and 102).

(“Does Faith Save?” 177).⁹⁹ While DeVries’s latter statement does point to a sort of *Grundsatz* in Barth’s theology, her conflation of reconciliation and salvation and her neglect of the *ethical* and *eschatological* dimensions of Barth’s theology cause her to attend to only the noetic aspect of being Christian.¹⁰⁰ DeVries’s criticisms do rest on three key elements from *CD IV*: 1) Reconciliation is an *accomplished* history: “**Es Geschah... Es geht schon um Geschichte**” (*CD IV/1*, 223 [245] and 247 [271]); 2) Reconciliation is therefore objectively relevant to *all* humanity (*CD IV/1*, 148, quoted on 46 above); and 3) Barth does emphasize the noetic difference between Christians and non-Christians: “What Christians know about themselves they have to attest to non-Christians as valid also for them, namely, that Jesus Christ is the origin and goal of their existence too” (*ChrL*, 22R). If this were the whole of Barth’s soteriology, critics such as DeVries who object to Barth’s overly—or exclusively, even—noetic-revelational account of salvation would be justified. But this is *not* the whole of Barth’s soteriology.

Barth’s account of *salvation* goes beyond the noetic to the *ethical* and *eschatological*. Throughout his account of reconciliation, but especially in his discussion of the prophetic office of Jesus Christ (guarantor of and witness to the promised eternal life), Barth walks along the ethical-eschatological overlap of reconciliation and redemption.¹⁰¹ Yes, *all are reconciled*. And yet. Not all have been born of the Holy Spirit,

99. For Barth’s treatment of *Anerkennen*, *Erkennen*, and *Bekennen*, see “The Act of Faith” (*CD IV/1*, 757–79—NB *Act!*)—also worthwhile is Mangina’s treatment of *Anerkennung* as “a formal category for describing the *response* to God across the *entire range* of human existence” (*Karl Barth on the Christian Life: The Practical Knowledge of God*, 43*, cf. 39–43 and 58). As Busch explains, Barth often faced such criticism from Pietists: “Barth seems to want only to enlighten human beings about what they do not at all have to know because it is already valid anyway” (*Barth & Pietists*, 307, though see the surrounding discussion for Busch’s defense of Barth).

100. See above for Barth’s understanding of salvation as something bigger than, beyond, reconciliation, namely *eternal life*. This problematic confusing of Barth’s doctrine of reconciliation with the whole of his soteriology also bedevils discussions of Barth’s position on “universal salvation,” for instance when Hunsinger describes the gospel as proclaiming universal salvation (which Barth views as something to be hoped for rather than proclaimed) rather than universal reconciliation (which Barth views as a matter of historical fact) (*Read Barth*, 117).

101. We might describe Barth’s thought in this regard as he describes the Old Testament: “The line which reveals this eschatological aspect... is not a broad one. It is only a kind of border to the true narrative and message... But it belongs to it quite unmistakably” (*CD IV/1*, 31). The overlap between creation and reconciliation is no less present, if even less explicit, for Barth constantly assumes his anthropology from

“the hand of God has not touched all in such a way that they can see and hear, perceive and accept and receive all that God is for all and therefore for them, how therefore they can exist and think and live” (*CD IV/1*, 148).¹⁰² Not all have been freed to become what they are: reconciled to God in Jesus Christ (*ChrL*, 22, referencing 1 Cor. 15:10). God has not only given Christians the *knowledge* of their reconciled being, God has given Christians the *freedom* to “take God at his work as their Father and take themselves seriously as his children” (*ChrL*, 49 [§75 *Leitsatz*]; cf. *CD IV/1*, 120, quoted at n. 88 above). The Christian “is free to become what he was not and could not be before, and consequently to do what he did not and could not do before, i.e., be faithful to God,” or more precisely, “enabled to participate not just passively but actively in God’s grace as one who may and will and can be set to work too” (*CD IV/4*, 5–6).¹⁰³ Surely it is no small thing to be one “who as a free subject is God’s true partner in the covenant of grace” (*CD IV/4*, 5)?

III.A.1. Spirit Baptism: Sinner’s Death, Covenant Partner’s Resurrection

The conversion from ignorance and opposition to knowledge and participation involves a radical change from death to life impossible for humans in and of themselves. For in this conversion, the Christian “cannot be the same human but has become a very different human”—a humanly impossible conjunction of self-identity and new identity (*CD IV/4*, 3R, cf. 8). Indeed, the change at “the genesis and origin” of the Christian life “cannot be understood or described radically enough,” because it is “a transition through dying and death to a life which is visible and attainable beyond this pitilessly clear line of demarcation” (*CD IV/4*, 9). Through the Spirit’s work the Christian’s share in Jesus Christ’s history is not just virtual, but actual; his death is our death, his resurrection to new life is our life (*CD IV/4*, 14; cf. *CD IV/1*, 94–95). In this way, and only this way, the converted Christian lives the “life of one who was dead but

CD III, that is, the *createdness* of the reconciled.

102. Cf. Webster (*Moral*, 86).

103. Furthermore, through the redeeming power of God, the Christian “will voluntarily and by his or her own decision choose that which God in His grace has already chosen for him or her” (*CD IV/4*, 6; cf. *CD IV/1*, 108).

who is raised from the dead,” who “died, but in so doing... began to live” (*CD IV/4*, 9). As the beginning of the Christian’s participation in Jesus Christ’s history, it is understood only in light of his history.

An integral part of Jesus Christ’s history is his death—the utter death due sinful humanity. His death is not merely the revelation of the limits of created life (limits Barth interprets positively in *CD III*), but the destruction of sinful humanity in its opposition to the covenant of grace. Here, Barth takes Paul’s words in 2 Cor 5:14, “one has died for all; therefore all have died,” with extreme seriousness. “In his death,” Barth says, “we who deserved to die as He died are already put to death.... indeed each of us is crucified” (*CD IV/4*, 16, cf. 17). Humans—no matter if they are Christians or even the gathered, built-up, and sent Church—cannot accomplish this abolition of sinful humanity (*CD IV/4*, 15–16). This death is grace, for it “took place when Jesus Christ, in His death on the cross, at a time when they were still enemies and there could be no question of the obedience of faith, appropriated them and took them up into this death” (*CD IV/4*, 17, drawing on Jn. 12:32ff.).¹⁰⁴ Those who are baptized “are passive participants in His death, not in virtue of their own baptism, but in virtue of the fact that Jesus lets himself be baptised with them and like them” (*CD IV/4*, 15). Only Jesus Christ’s “baptism of death” on the cross is the death sinners ought to die, and it “includes within itself [the baptism] of His disciples and therewith their death, that they too will die in and with Him” (*CD IV/4*, 15–16).¹⁰⁵ The Christian “enters into that glory, not as he ‘can’ participate in Jesus’ baptism of death, but as his participation in it actually becomes an event,” that is through Spirit baptism (*CD IV/4*, 16). In this way, the origin and beginning of the Christian life is in the history of Jesus Christ, in the divine change, the divine happening, which moves *ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν* (Rom. 1:17), from the faithfulness of God to the to the corresponding faithfulness of the human.

104. Barth finds a “secondary” *theologia crucis* in the Christian’s death to self (*CD IV/2*, 264).

105. This divine change is “baptism with Spirit and *fire*” (*CD IV/4*, x*).

God did not desire simply to make an end to sinful humanity, but called forth and made a place for the human covenant partner in the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. Just as humans cannot make an end to their sinful selves, they cannot resurrect themselves and take possession of the promised of eternal life. In raising Jesus Christ, God not only gives humanity new life as partner in the covenant of grace, but proclaims it—and the power at work in it—to all. The resurrection does not transcend Christ’s history or make it irrelevant by consigning it to the past, but shows it to be “history which, because it has happened once-for-all, is present to all later times and indeed to all earlier times, cosmically effective and significant history” (*CD IV/4*, 24).¹⁰⁶ As a public statement the resurrection “is mighty as a Word of universal salvation,” which “is not merely ordained for all but which does in fact reach all and may be received by all” (*CD IV/4*, 25).¹⁰⁷ This is possible because Jesus was not resurrected to a state of divine rest, but was resurrected as the coming (and, indeed, already present) kingdom of God in person (*CD IV/4*, 26). The history of Jesus Christ and the history of the convert coincide because “He is integrated into human existence as it was integrated into His existence by the divine counsel and from all eternity, and as it will remain integrated in His to all eternity” (*CD IV/4*, 26). This mighty Word, however, is not simply a statement of fact, but a pledge and promise: the act and being of Jesus, based *extra nos*, was *pro nobis*, and by the power of the Holy Spirit may be made actual *in nobis* (*CD IV/4*, 25, cf. 23–24).¹⁰⁸ By the power of the Holy Spirit we may become what Jesus Christ is, *truly human*.

106. Further, “What passed away in the resurrection was not the history, but the appearance and suspension of its transience, of its imprisonment in its temporal, spatial and personal singularity. What was overcome herein was not the temporal, spatial and personal life of Jesus Christ but the triumph of death which threatened this life like every other human life.”

107. NB Barth’s subjunctive when speaking of the universality of salvation.

108. This dynamic of *extra nos*, *pro nobis* and *in nobis* shapes the whole of *CD IV*, see Barth’s “Extra Nos - Pro Nobis - In Nobis” for a concise treatment of it.

III.A.2. Spirit Baptism: The Divine Foundation of the *Christian Life*

The Holy Spirit reveals the truth of reconciliation to humans and sets them free to be Christians—God’s covenant partners.¹⁰⁹ In other words, one becomes a Christian as one accepts and bows to the verdict of justification, follows the direction of sanctification, and participates in the promise as Abraham did, which is “the work of the Holy Spirit” (CD IV/1, 93, 99 and 108). The Christian, then, like Jesus Christ, is: “*conceptus de Spiritu sancto*,” living a life “ultimately grounded in the being and work of the Holy Spirit” (CD IV/1, 147). In fact, it is through this Spirit baptism, that “Christians exist [*existieren*] in [Jesus Christ],” which, “is the only thing that we can call their peculiar being [*Sein*]” (CD IV/1, 92; cf. Webster’s *Moral*, 87). This highlights the ontological depth and theological basis of the difference between Christians and non-Christians: Christians are different in the eyes of God, indeed, God has marked Christians off from other humans, “the hand of God has touched and seized Christians.... without any merit or co-operation on their part” (CD IV/1, 148).¹¹⁰ This then raises the question of why God has “touched” some and not others, to which Barth responds: “That God did not owe His Son, and in that Son Himself, to the world, is revealed by the fact that He gives His Spirit to whom He will” (CD IV/1, 147–48). As we will see, water baptism is a liturgical act of prayer whereby Christians actively hope in the continuation and expansion of the Spirit’s work.

But is it really the *Spirit’s* work? Critics such as Robert Jenson have found Barth to be basically binitarian, effacing the agency and personhood of the Holy Spirit at crucial points.¹¹¹ While Jenson criticizes without direct reference to CD IV/4, the issue

109. On the relation between truth and freedom, see Barth’s discussion of John 8:32, “the truth will set you free” (*ChrL*, 23 and 91; cf. CD IV/3, 476–77).

110. Cf. Webster (*Reconciliation*, 137). Healy understands the implications of this for ecclesiology: “Christianity is thus fundamentally about God’s actions for us in Word and Spirit. Only consequently is it about our necessary response and ‘co-operation’ as God’s partners’. It follows that the answer to ‘Whose church?’ is that it is God’s church, the work of Word and Spirit; all else is secondary, though indeed vital, both consequently and in itself” (“Reconsidered,” 294).

111. Robert Jenson argues that this indicates not only Barth’s inability to take seriously the agency and personhood of the Spirit, but also his *unwillingness* to do so (“You Wonder Where the Spirit Went”).

is particularly acute here. For Barth speaks of *Jesus Christ* as the agent of *Spirit* baptism: “a direct self-attestation and self-impartation of the living Jesus Christ” (*CD IV/4*, 31); and of *Spirit* baptism as the event in which “the being and work of Jesus Christ... must now be understood as the being and work of His Holy Spirit, or His own spiritual being and work” (*CD IV/1*, 147). It is crucial to note that, in the first instance, Barth’s insistence on the agency of Jesus Christ in the subjective appropriation of reconciliation means that this too is part of reconciliation, an act of God the Reconciler: “the work of the Holy Spirit.... is not a different work, a second work alongside, behind and after the work of the reconciling covenant action of the one God accomplished in the history of Jesus Christ and manifested in his resurrection” (*ChrL*, 29). Second, as this quote illustrates, it is simply not true (in §§57, 58, 74 and 75, at least) that this insistence on the agency of Jesus Christ *replaces* the agency of the Spirit.¹¹² It is true in these sections that Barth speaks of the Holy Spirit as Jesus Christ’s Spirit, “the presence, gift and the reception, the work and accomplishment of His Holy Spirit,” but this simply demonstrates the outworking of Barth’s commitment to the *filioque* (*CD IV/1*, 147–48).¹¹³ Moreover, in order to make his criticism Jenson must downplay the role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ’s own being: while the Holy Spirit may proceed from Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is himself born of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is known by the Spirit because he “*is* by the Holy Spirit”:

The particular existence of the Son of God as man, and again the particular existence of this man as the Son of God, the existence of Jesus Christ as the Lord who becomes a servant and the servant who becomes Lord, His existence as the Guarantor of truth is itself ultimately grounded in the being and work of the Holy Spirit (*CD IV/2*, 39).¹¹⁴

We will return to his critique, but for the moment it is worth noting that Jenson is

112. Indeed, Busch goes so far as to claim that “For Barth, ...the Holy Spirit alone is *mediator* of salvation” (“Introduction,” xvi).

113. More explicit statements of Jesus Christ’s agency in the apprehension of reconciliation (*CD IV/4*, 21, for example) should be read in this light. Jenson unabashedly points to the *filioque* as part of Barth’s “problem” and subtly connects it with a criticism of Barth’s axiom that God *is* as God *reveals* himself to be in Christ.

114. Judging from the pointers in *CD IV*, it seems probable that Barth’s doctrine of redemption would have re-narrated Jesus Christ’s history once more, this time with a view to Christ’s dependence upon the work of the Holy Spirit, God the redeemer, before describing the Christian’s ecclesial participation in this history.

unable—or perhaps unwilling—to see that Jesus Christ’s *agency* is itself pneumatological because his *being* is thoroughly pneumatological.

Just as the power of the Holy Spirit frees the true human, Jesus Christ, Christians are freed by the Holy Spirit. This neither makes Christians subhuman nor divine, for the Holy Spirit frees them to live a truly *human* life as an *other* vis-à-vis God. “The work of the Holy Spirit,” Barth contends, “does not entail the paralysing dismissal or absence of the human spirit, mind, knowledge and will” (CD IV/4, 28). The Holy Spirit does not do away with the human intellect or will and we do not receive the Holy Spirit by sacrificing them. Indeed, such an attempt is itself “an enterprise of the human spirit,” and as such “not well-pleasing to God.” The Holy Spirit comes in order to bring forth human covenant partners, who in the fullness of their created humanity put themselves at God’s disposal, recognizing their true identity and therefore crying “Abba, Father” (cf. Galatians 4:6 and Romans 8:15). Christians do not hereby “take leave of their wits and start raving,” but they now say *Yes* with the same organs and capacities with which they once said *No* (CD IV/4, 28R, cf. 27).¹¹⁵ For this reason, Barth claims, “[t]here is no more intimate friend of sound human understanding than the Holy Spirit. There is no more basic normalising of humanity than in the doing of His work” (CD IV/4, 28R; cf. Webster’s *Reconciliation*, 19). The divine change accomplished in Spirit baptism, then, brings forth a distinctly *human* covenant partner vis-a-vis God.

III.B. Water Baptism: The Human Act at the Foundation of the Christian Life

III.B.1. Jesus Christ: The Basis of Water Baptism

Water baptism is necessary to the Christian life. Not only was it ubiquitous in the early Church, the missionary command in Matthew 28:19 expresses Jesus’ “will and

115. This is, Barth writes, “the deepest and most comforting but also the most terrifying abasement of humanity: that as the transgressor we are we can live only by that which we do not do ourselves, which it is impossible even to ask of us, which, in fact, we deny and resist” (CD IV/1, 69R).

command that those who would join and belong to His people should be baptised” (CD IV/4, 51, cf. 50).¹¹⁶ Barth understands this command, however, as based upon Jesus’ own baptism in the Jordan in which Jesus submitted to the Lordship of God, set himself in fellowship with sinners, and undertook the proper work of God for man and man for God (CD IV/4, 54).¹¹⁷ John’s baptism of Jesus “is the prologue which opens and characterises the whole of this history, setting it in motion... with a definite direction and towards a specific goal” (CD IV/4, 53).¹¹⁸ Jesus Christ’s baptism is the basis for all subsequent Christian baptism.

Barth’s treatment of Jesus’ baptism by John as the basis for Christian baptism depends upon his insistence that Jesus Christ bore *sinful* flesh. His baptism was not an empty pointer, but an “act of unconditional and irrevocable submission to the will of his Father” (CD IV/4, 54).¹¹⁹ This submission meant conversion and repentance, which paradoxically demonstrated the *sinlessness* of Jesus “precisely in the fact that He did not refuse this confession..., and therewith gave the glory unreservedly to God” (CD IV/4, 58). Troublesome though it may be to speak of Jesus Christ’s sins, Barth argues that it is demanded by the depth of identification with us: “No one who came to the Jordan was as laden and afflicted as He. No one was as needy. No one was so

116. Barth’s description of the ubiquity of baptism in the early church echoes the Vincentian Canon. Barth cautions, however, that the *command* to baptize does not give the church *authority* to baptize (CD IV/4, 52).

117. Mangina protests vehemently against this, but acts as if his preferred understanding of “baptism as a rite of communal entry that effectively unites a person with Christ’s death,” could simply be grafted onto Barth’s theology with only cosmetic changes (*Barth*, 163–64). Webster, perhaps better than any other interpreter, understands that this fits with Barth’s reconstruction of Jesus Christ as *exemplar*, who himself generates the changes necessary for following his impossibly exalted example in his *vicarious* humanity (*Reconciliation*, 184–85).

118. Indeed, Jesus’ baptism is “not merely the sign but the actual fulfilment of the act which opens this history, anticipates its meaning and purpose, and thus characterises it in advance” (CD IV/4, 54). Barth stresses the *continuity-in-difference* between John’s baptism and Christian baptism (CD IV/4, 76–84).

119. “Essentially, then,” Webster argues, “the story of Jesus’ baptism by John in the Jordan is read by Barth as a call narrative, a story of vocation and responsive obedience which is paradigmatic for the first great act of Christian obedience” (*Reconciliation*, 151).

utterly, human because so wholly fellow-human” (CD IV/4, 59).¹²⁰ Moreover, Jesus did not undertake baptism *ex opere operato*, but rather as a prayer:

He stretched [his hands] out to God as empty hands, not trusting in a power secretly native to this act, and certainly not glancing at the inner goodness and meritoriousness of the act as a reason why they should be filled, but in simple reverence before the God who ordered the act (CD IV/4, 65).

In this act of invocation Jesus Christ fulfilled and perfected the covenant as well as providing the valid basis for baptism for all times, places and peoples.

III.B.2. Water Baptism: The Human Action Corresponding to Spirit Baptism

On the basis of Jesus Christ’s own baptism in the Jordan, humans may undertake to request and administer water baptism. Some might wonder if Barth’s expansive understanding of the divine change in Spirit baptism even leaves any room for real and meaningful human action, especially in light of Barth’s resolute denial that reconciliation depends in any way on the candidate or the community who are absolutely unable to put the sinful flesh to death and bring a justified, sanctified and called human to life (CD IV/4, *passim*, e.g., 3 and 22).¹²¹ Barth, however, argues that only in correspondence to grace does human action become “action in the truest sense of the word” (CD IV/1, 15).¹²² Aware that his account of the divine change appears to leave nothing for humans to do in water baptism, Barth explains: “here, as everywhere, the omnicausality of God must not be construed as His sole causality” (CD IV/4, 22). Thus, in accomplishing the “exaltation and integration” of the baptized, God brings forth a real agent, a “new human who is pleasing to God, who may be used by Him,

120. Barth takes with the utmost seriousness the completeness of “this so strangely merciful exchange [*Austach*]” (CD IV/2, 32 [33]).

121. For instance, because Barth “[m]akes man’s entire subjectivity dependent on God as subject,” Renée van Riessen thinks, “[t]he two subjects (God and man) threaten to crowd each other out” (“Jewish Thought and Protestant Theology,” 231). See Webster, however, for a defense of Barth’s non-competitive account (*Moral*, 89; and *Reconciliation*, 55, for example)

122. Thus Webster: “To be human is to stand in relation to Jesus Christ and to be a participant in his history.... moral selfhood is derived from, and intimately bound to, a source external to the self” (*Reconciliation*, 225, cf. 223–24 for Webster’s explanation of how this anthropology is “essentialist”).

and who hastens towards eternal life” (*CD IV/4*, 161).¹²³ In fact, Barth makes the counter case that the sacramental understanding of baptism erases the human as agent-in-covenant and fatefully damages the praise and sanctity of baptism by seeking its meaning “in a supposedly immanent divine work.”¹²⁴ Only strictly correlating and distinguishing Spirit baptism (divine action) and water baptism (human action), Barth contends, protects against both 1) our human action being “overshadowed and obscured” by the divine work and thereby “robbed of significance,” and 2) the divine work and word being identified with human willing and doing as such and thereby rendered superfluous (*CD IV/4*, 102 and 134).¹²⁵ But, we might ask, what do humans do in water baptism?

Barth understands the candidate’s baptism with water in the name of Jesus Christ to be “the first form of the human answer to the divine change,” an act that while “secondary” is “indispensable” as “the first concrete step of the human decision of faith and obedience,” that is “resolutely and exclusively movement to Him, and thus the baptism of conversion” (*CD IV/4*, 90 and 48). The action itself is simply “bodily washing with water,” the water being only formally important as that with which the baptized is washed (*CD IV/4*, 44–45).¹²⁶ This ritual washing of the Christian community parallels the Jewish practice of baptizing gentiles joining the synagogues, except Christian baptism differs in that it is into the name of “the Messiah and the *Soter* of the world” (*CD IV/4*, 84). Indeed, Barth thinks that, formally, the only

123. Barth’s emphasis on Jesus Christ’s *vicarious* faith here and his rejection of the possibility of another “vicar” of faith is connected directly to his rejection of paedobaptism (*CD IV/4*, 186).

124. As Barth believes himself to be rejecting not only the Roman Catholic understanding, but also the Lutheran, Reformed, gnostic, Anabaptist, Baptist and inner- or Spirit-only understandings of baptism (*CD IV/4*, 105–07), it is no wonder that his doctrine of baptism has received so little praise.

125. Barth argues that a failure to strictly distinguish water and Spirit baptism (while also maintaining strict correlation) fails to navigate the “crux of a correct answer to the question of the meaning of baptism” and results in a docetic conception of Christian baptism—exactly the charge T.F. Torrance brings against Barth’s doctrine of baptism.

126. This abstraction of the form from the content (the water symbolizes neither a force of death nor life and the action need not formally correspond to death, burial and resurrection) stands in tension with Barth’s usual emphasis on the inseparability of form and content.

“unconditionally necessary” element, on which “we must inexorably insist,” is that Christian baptism be εἰς τὸ ὄνομα (*CD IV/4*, 92).¹²⁷ This human action “acknowledges and proclaims” this Name (that is, the “justification and sanctification, the cleansing and renewal of sinful man which God has accomplished and revealed in Jesus Christ”), corresponds to God’s action and thereby “bears witness to the boundary line which God has drawn between a passing age and a coming age, a passing personal life and a coming personal life” (*CD IV/4*, 159). As a retrospective action, baptism is the renunciation by the candidate and community that reflects, confirms and bears witness to God’s “gracious No which rejects the whole of man’s prior being, declaring it to be outdated and past” (*CD IV/4*, 159).¹²⁸ As the sinful candidate died when Jesus died on the cross, he or she can only be buried—and water baptism is this burial (*CD IV/4*, 160). However, baptism is also the forward-looking affirmation of “this new life... vicariously lived for him by... Jesus Christ,” and as such their “own true and actual life, ‘hid with Christ in God’” (*CD IV/4*, 161). In baptism Christians do not claim to possess this life, but confess this Jesus Christ and step forth into his promise of life.

Water baptism is responsible human action. In entering into life under this promise the candidate and community pledge their *Yes* to God’s *Yes*.¹²⁹ The divine change makes them able for this response, and in water baptism the Christian “becomes and is responsible,” both to fellow Christians and to God (*CD IV/4*, 14, cf. 5–6; *CD III.4*, 98;

127. For just as “the name of the Lord... is concretely and genuinely the self-revealing of Yahweh Himself,” so too “the name of Jesus Christ is quite simply, concretely and truly Jesus Christ Himself” (*CD IV/4*, 93). This name “is the ultimate objective and subjective motive behind everything that takes place, everything that is said and done, in the community” (94). Baptism is into the *one name* of the triune God, “expounded in three different ways,” because, “[t]he words Father, Son and Holy Ghost, in their inseparability and distinction, together indicate the expansion of the one name, work and word of God” (96, see 97–99 for Barth’s unfolding of the threefold name).

128. Further, “The attempt at human self-justification and self-sanctification, the very root of all evil and mischief, has itself been radically smitten and destroyed by this No, by this declaration of war, by the drawing of this line by the grace of God and His word.”

129. In Jüngel’s perceptive words, “with the realization of how the divine Yes can be answered in a Christian life; [Barth’s] unfinished work came to its end” (*Barth*, 18).

and *Prayer*, 16).¹³⁰ For this reason Barth views water baptism as “the oath which is taken by them in concert” (*CD IV/4*, 161).¹³¹ And because this oath is between responsible parties, because this “first step of this life of faithfulness to God... is requested of the community and... administered by the community” as part of a “decision” and “the binding confession of... obedience,” Barth rejects the propriety of paedobaptism (*CD IV/4*, 47).¹³² His polemic against this “profoundly irregular practice” and “wound from which the Church suffers at this genuinely vital point,” stems directly from his positive teaching about reconciliation and baptism (*CD IV/4*, 194).¹³³ All are reconciled; the baptism of babies does not alter the verdict delivered against and for them in Jesus Christ. In fact, infant baptism invariably obscures God’s objective reconciliation of *humanity* by speaking the truth of reconciliation to a limited number of infants based on their parentage. Furthermore, baptizing those who do not—even cannot—responsibly utter *Yes* to God the reconciler in the hearing of the church indicates a refusal to patiently wait for Spirit baptism, with the result that neither the candidate’s nor the community’s action properly *corresponds* to the divine change.¹³⁴ In contrast, the responsible act of water baptism is “a first step... which will be normative for all

130. Webster notes the growing importance of “personal responsibility” in Barth’s ethics (*Reconciliation*, 130–32).

131. “If the original sense of the Latin *sacrament* is observed, [water baptism] might be called a sacrament from this standpoint.”

132. Barth views water baptism administered to infants as *valid*, though “highly doubtful and questionable, because irregular,” and therefore does not advocate rebaptism as medicine for this wound (*CD IV/4*, 189). While put forth on a new basis, this opposition to paedobaptism stands in continuity with Barth’s *The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism*, and is hardly a “bombshell,” contra Mangina (*Barth*, 5–6).

133. See *CD IV/4*, 163–95, for the whole argument against paedobaptism. Barth acknowledges that his rejection of paedobaptism is not the “motif and goal” of his doctrine of baptism, but attempts such as Webster’s (*Reconciliation*, 172–73) to treat it as tangential polemic require distortions of Barth’s positive teaching, for “[t]he objection is a self-evident result of the positive deliberations” (*CD IV/4*, xi).

134. While Barth does not directly address the concerns that this would also prevent the baptism of those physically or mentally incapacitated, Barth does point to the answer in (*CD IV/2*, 246) with his affirmation that in the superabundance of grace God accomplishes “real deliverances,” presumably including making such persons able to respond—parallel to the healing of the lame so that they could obey Jesus’ command: “Follow me!” See Barth’s *Table Talk* for a fascinating pastoral conversation regarding the age at which one might be considered responsible for baptism.

others,” requested in order “to establish a fact,” a “Yes of [a] tiny but honest faith,” that cannot be reversed, rejected, argued away or repeated—an act which determines the “whole future and work” of the believer (*CD IV/4*, 43).

*Water baptism is a free human act of obedience. As a truly human action, water baptism is free exactly as obedience. In this, the gap between Barth and popular Western construals of obedience as the antithesis of freedom could not be wider. Barth does not understand freedom in terms of the ability to fashion ourselves as we will, but as the conformity of our wills to the truth of our being (and God’s) in Jesus Christ. In Spirit baptism, God freely accomplishes particular deliverances, thereby freeing persons to become reconciled (*CD IV/4*, 26).¹³⁵ The one event of baptism, then, involves both the *free* act of God and the *free* human response (*CD IV/4*, 48)¹³⁶. As water baptism follows from the divine command, it must be described “unequivocally” as “obedience,” but as God commands us to *act* in accordance with our reconciled *being*, the decision for water baptism may be “made in free responsibility” (*CD IV/1*, 153).¹³⁷ The decision to obey does not involve choosing between several possible options, for “[t]here is no freedom of the children of God *from* baptism,” no liberty to leave baptism undone, for the children of God “have no other choice as such” (*CD IV/1*, 157 and 154).¹³⁸ However, as the action of a free human, water baptism must be undertaken willingly, and “cannot be an obligatory act done under a compulsion which restricts or destroys its spontaneity or responsibility” (*CD IV/4*, 132). Baptism is free exactly as*

135. Spirit baptism frees both *for* faithfulness and *from* unfaithfulness, which “is not merely forbidden but prevented and rendered impossible.... a disallowed possibility which can no longer be actualised.... the wholly impossible possibility on which we can no longer count... eliminated and taken from us by God’s omnipotent contradiction set up in us” (*CD IV/4*, 22).

136. John McDowell (“‘Openness to the World’: Karl Barth’s Evangelical Theology of Christ as the Pray-er,” 254), without connecting it to water baptism, nicely captures the relationship between Christ’s agency and the Christian’s obedient prayer.

137. For criticisms of Barth’s ethics as Kantian and the form of command-obedience as too narrow for *Christian* ethics, see Mangina (*Barth*, 171); and Dickenson (“*Church Dogmatics IV/4*,” 49).

138. Cf. *CD II/2*, Chapter VIII, “The Command of God”; and Webster (*Reconciliation*, 159).

hope, and when obedience and hope are obligatory or enforced they have nothing to do with obedience to and hope in God. For this reason, baptism

is not to be administered in application of a general, natural, historical, social rule as part of the traditional and normative pattern of human life. In each instance it must be a breaking of all rules, customs, sequences and arrangements, a completely new and special event in relation to them.... a venture which is to be made without compulsion or assurance, but simply in the obedience of faith (*CD IV/4*, 133).¹³⁹

Yet, by no means does Barth view baptism as a maverick or individualistic act, for it occurs in the free community of Christians.

Water baptism is a human act in community. As Spirit baptism begins the Christian life “in a distinctive fellow humanity,” by making actual the Christian’s existence in Jesus, the *totus Christus*, it should be no surprise that water baptism now has “a gathering and uniting character”—not establishing the community, but proclaiming that the baptized “stand in personal relation to the Lord of the Christian community as the only source and cause of all salvation” (*CD IV/4*, 82–83). For this reason Barth affirms that, “[t]he action of the community is... indispensable to baptism,” even as he cautions that the community can do no more than “the service of acknowledging... faith and consequently... membership of itself and of Jesus Christ” (*CD IV/4*, 50 and 49). The Church is not a divine-human reality, but the truly *human* (i.e., communal) response to the *divine* act. This means that the personal decision of baptism is in no way private. For, from the very beginning the Christian life, “without detriment to its individual particularity, is a participation in the life of the Christian community” (*CD IV/4*, 131). Thus, water baptism must have a social form, evident to all as “a specific action taken in concert by those who are already serious Christians and those who seek to be such, by the Christian community and those who newly confess their Lord” (*CD IV/4*, 101). Water baptism, however, is not simply the induction of a new believer into

139. Cf. Webster (*Reconciliation*, 167). Again, Mangina views this primarily as polemic against reducing “the church to a pale reflection of the dominant culture” (*Barth*, 5–6), whereas Barth explicitly connects it to his positive anthropology and the danger of “conjuring away... the free man whom God liberates and summons to his own free and responsible action” (*CD IV/4*, 106)—such concerns drive Barth’s polemic against sacramental understandings of baptism and paedobaptism, not *vice versa*.

the community, a change in relationship between candidate and community. No, Barth emphasizes that this act partakes in the very life of this community: conversion. Water baptism *is* “conversion—the conversion of all who have a part in it” (*CD IV/4*, 138, cf. 145). Therefore, the community does not approach baptism as those who have arrived. Rather, “at issue is first and decisively the common conversion of both community and candidate to God” (*CD IV/4*, 136). In this human turning, Barth finds “the decision and act which precedes, sustains and characterises all the outworkings,” whether intellectual, ethical, or religious (*CD IV/4*, 139–40).

Barth’s location of the church alongside the candidate in this conversion indicates what some would describe as his “low” or minimalist ecclesiology. Most interpreters agree with Webster’s description of *CD IV/4* as an exercise in “negative ecclesiology,” while few celebrate this as Webster does (*Reconciliation*, 166, using the words of Edward Schillebeeckx). And, indeed, throughout *CD IV* Barth has been saying *No!* to those who teach that the church is a divine-human reality (that is, a *sacrament*).¹⁴⁰ In Webster’s words,

Barth seeks to secure a theology of Christian existence and ecclesial action against forgetfulness of the primacy of divine agency. His appeal to language about the Holy Spirit is in effect a denial of the communicability of the perfect work of Jesus Christ by agents other than Jesus himself, who is the agent of his own realisation and attestation in the human world....Barth extracts baptism from its historical identification with the ecclesial representation of grace, and in effect “secularises” it by giving it a radically vocational or ethical interpretation, thereby leaving behind the last traces of the idea of the church as *mediatrix* (*Reconciliation*, 129 and 166).

With this we have returned to Jenson’s criticism of “the whole web of Spirit-avoidance in the *Kirchliche Dogmatik*,” for he locates its cause in “avoidance of the *church*” (“Spirit Went,” 302). If Barth would only identify “the community itself, in its structured temporal and spatial extension,” Jenson offers, “as the ‘objectivity’ of the gospel’s truth *pro nobis*,” then he could speak of the Spirit’s agency in the Church, which itself is “the *Bedingung der Möglichkeit* of faith” (“Spirit Went,” 303). Of course, Jenson recognizes

140. See Jüngel’s careful but resolute case against understanding the church as a sacrament, based on Luther’s theology (though certainly indebted to that difficult disciple of Luther, Barth), “The Church as a Sacrament?” (*TE*, 89–213).

that this is just what Barth—being an *ornery Protestant cuss*—refuses to do (“Spirit Went,” 303).¹⁴¹ Yet, as is so often the case, it is all too easy to let Barth’s *No* obscure the *Yes* it serves.

Barth does reject “the actual and recurrent Roman temptation,” to ignore the biblical theme of the Lord’s judgment beginning with his own house and to attempt “to reverse the sequence whereby *event* precedes *institution*” (HG, 62). What is often missed, however, is that Barth thinks that his *No* “can be meaningful and fruitful only when it stems from insight—I do not say too much—into the existence and function of the Church as *necessary for salvation*” (HG, 63*). The church’s knowledge and freedom may be “paltry indeed, but because it is established by the Holy Spirit, it is unconquerable” (HG, 63). The church *is not* “a second Jesus Christ,” a divine-human reality, but

the second form of his one existence [*Existenzform*], his people as the second form [*Gestalt*] of his body, the community of those who, as they look to him, are united with him by the Holy Spirit in faith and love and hope, finding their own humanity caught up in his, and therefore exalted as such into existence in and with God.... We cannot speak, then, of a repetition or extension of the incarnation taking place in it.... But, in this second form [*Gestalt*], his relationship to his body, the community, *is* the relationship of God and man as it takes place in this one being as head and body (CD IV/2, 59–60Rr [63–64]).

What takes place is covenant partnership, the synergism of God and humanity, not as a divine-human act, but as the divine act and the human response (as in water baptism).¹⁴² Contra McCormack, Barth’s theology is not “the end of all synergism” (*Orthodox and Modern*, 311), but an attempt to distinguish properly between the divine act (reconciliation, creation and redemption) and the corresponding act of humanity—and Barth’s doctrine of baptism shows the concrete outworking of this attempt.¹⁴³

141. Cf. McCormack’s comment that “it is getting harder and harder... to read Karl Barth as a Protestant theologian without meeting resistance—precisely from Protestants!” (*Orthodox and Modern*, 302).

142. Cf. Matthew Boulton (“‘We Pray By His Mouth’: Karl Barth, Erving Goffman, and a Theology of Invocation,” esp., 68–70). Brouwer mistakes Barth’s interweaving of ecclesiology, Christology and soteriology for Barth’s refusal “to see the church only on the side of human activity” (“The Conversation Between Karl Barth and Amandus Polanus,” 63–64)—contra Webster’s perceptive comments in this regard (*Reconciliation*, 127).

143. Cf. Jüngel, who calls this “Barth’s ‘synergism’” and “a genuine Protestant, ‘evangelical’ formulation” of *co-operatio* (TE, 161). Barth tells his readers that “this fragment in particular is well adapted to show what I have found to be the most relevant way of handling the whole complex which demands discussion in IV,

Moreover, Barth protests against attempts to claim this covenant partnership as the church's possession. Before the final *parousia* of Jesus Christ, Christians participate in this covenant partnership (eternal life), in hope, for it is not a possession, but a promise—albeit a trustworthy promise witnessed to and guaranteed by Jesus Christ, the God-human Mediator. The church is the location where humans *become* what they *are* in Christ, but until he comes again and reveals himself and his body definitively, the community of Christians cannot claim to have what is promised, but must reach out for it, crying out for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Water baptism is a human act of prayer in hope for Spirit baptism. Based on Jesus Christ's own baptism, Christian baptism also shares his baptism's goal or *telos*—Spirit baptism: “God's act of reconciliation in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit, God's act of judgment and grace, of salvation and revelation” (*CD IV/4*, 72).¹⁴⁴ This is to say, “Baptism with water is a promise,” and “in no sense a self-sufficient act which is in some way divinely fulfilled or self-fulfilling within itself” (*CD IV/4*, 71). In obeying the command of Jesus Christ to be baptized, this act hopes in his promise to send his Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁵ With the action of Jesus Christ as both its basis and goal, water baptism reveals that obedience and hope are not two actions, but “two terms for the one human action which constitutes the meaning of baptism,” obedience in respect to its basis and hope in respect of its goal (*CD IV/4*, 135).¹⁴⁶ In this act the community and candidate both make a decision for God, and “transition from self-will to obedience to God, from anxiety before Him to hope in Him,” and “by the common and reciprocal determination in baptism... [they] leave the old way of self-will and anxiety and... enter

4” (*CD IV/4*, ix).

144. Barth happily observes that the divine change and the human response, “though plainly distinct, are directly one and the same” in Jesus' baptism (*CD IV/4*, 53), indicating his hopeful expectation of what will be revealed of Christian baptism at the *parousia*.

145. Water baptism's connection *hope* and *calling* indicates that Jüngel's schema, linking baptism directly to justification and faith (*CD IV/1*), the Lord's Prayer to sanctification and love (*CD IV/2*), and the Lord's Supper to vocation and hope (*CD IV/3*), to be in error. This schema (graphically illustrated in *Barth*, 48–49, but implicit throughout, e.g., 159) obscures baptism's character as *invocation* in response to *vocation* undertaken in *hope*.

146. Webster notes, “hope has imperatival dimensions” (*Moral*, 81).

upon and tread the new way of obedience and hope” (CD IV/4, 136).¹⁴⁷ They do not hope in their human action, however, but in “the persistent power of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ” (CD IV/4, 196). God has justified this hope through the “outpouring and impartation of the Holy Spirit,” which “has taken place repeatedly ever since [Pentecost],” and which is “the glorification of the cosmos in the new form given to it by its reconciliation to God... the fulfilment of the will of God that all men should be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth” (CD IV/4, 199). As the Spirit can only be received and never possessed, the community and candidate do not hope in the goodness of their own action (whether in or after baptism), but in Jesus Christ, the guarantor and mediator of the promised salvation.

As the community and candidate look to Jesus Christ they see the future: “the promise given and fulfilled in Him, the name of God hallowed in Him, the kingdom of God come in Him, the will of God done, and being done, on earth in Him” (CD IV/4, 206). Yet patient hope must not be confused with inactivity. Christian hope will always be active hope, and the action by both parties in water baptism serves as a model first step for all the actions that must follow. The whole Christian life will resemble baptism: depending upon what it cannot guarantee, *viz* the gift of the Spirit, it nevertheless acts in a way that includes both petition and trust in God’s having heard and answered. In this way the Christian life occurs as “a constantly new obedience to the divine command which is constantly heard anew” (CD IV/4, 202, cf. 204–07). A hope that is “idle, passive and inactive,” expecting the action of Jesus Christ “with folded arms... in the belief that He will certainly see to it that everything will finally turn out well, and that even now everything is in order... this is not really to hope in Him” (CD IV/4, 207–08). This “first step” of the Christian life does not create the distinction between the new and the old, the Before and the After, but denotes the word and work of God becoming effective and visible time and time again, and thereby exemplifies the

147. In Webster’s words, “Hopeful Christian action testifies to God’s act, not by seeking to repeat, prolong or extend it, but by patterning itself in its very humanness after that which God properly and uniquely does” (*Moral*, 96).

whole of the Christian life (*CD IV/4*, 145, cf. 151).¹⁴⁸ All subsequent steps can only be farther, not higher steps, confirming and exercising this life of hope (*CD IV/4*, 197–99).¹⁴⁹ The Christian life, then, is not only existence *after* baptism, but existence *from* baptism (*CD IV/4*, 202). The baptized do not cease praying for the Holy Spirit; Christian life is this prayer.

Furthermore, the whole of this prayer-life is characterized by the missionary prayer of the community that is answered by the candidate's request for baptism into the Name. Everyone who is baptized becomes "an active member of the holy people of Israel... set as 'mediator of the covenant among the nations,'" and given the task of bearing the good news to those outside the Church" (*CD IV/4*, 201, citing Isaiah 42:6, cf. 200). This missionary exocentrism is "essential and not merely incidental" to the being of the Church, for "the Church of Jesus Christ [exists] as this missionary Church which is sent out into the world or not at all" (*CD IV/4*, 199–200). The Church *is* from Christ for the world.

Within this teleology of the will of the God who loves the world, the Church is also specifically a baptismal community. In each individual baptism it documents God's universal will of grace and salvation.... In each baptism, then, the Church crosses its own frontiers into the territory of the people which walks in darkness (*CD IV/4*, 199–200)

As prayer, the missionary activity of baptism (and *all* subsequent Christian action) has a specific character of awaiting an answer. In baptism the candidate and community pray for forgiveness—asking God to answer and be responsible for sin (*CD IV/4*, 208, cf. 112).¹⁵⁰ Though this forgiveness depends solely upon God's action in Jesus Christ,

148. For "first step" language, see *CD IV/4*, 149–50, 152, 197, and 202.

149. Barth speaks only of "mere repetitions and variations of the grasping and exercising of this hope," because baptism "renders superfluous and indeed forbids the consecration, ordination, or dedication which customarily relates to a specific form of this mission, as though it were the affair of an ecclesiastical hierarchy.... all those baptised as Christians are *eo ipso* consecrated, ordained and dedicated to the ministry of the Church. They cannot be consecrated, ordained, or dedicated a second, third, or fourth time without devaluation of their baptism" (*CD IV/4*, 198 and 201).

150. After Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, ascension and Pentecost, Christian baptism is "oriented predominantly" to the remission of sins (*CD IV/4*, 80). Sins are not remitted through faith or by the act of water baptism, but through the name of Jesus Christ: "Interpreted by faith, repentance can no longer be.... understood as the condition which man must fulfil to attain to forgiveness of sins.... Repentance itself can now be called a gift of God (Ac. 5:31; 11:18)" (82).

Barth describes prayer as “the most vigorous [human] act,” absolutely different from “that evil and wholly fruitless desire to take, to have, and to control,” because prayer “wants to take place, to be taken in hand and carried through as an act,” and is the factual a) appreciation of the Giver, b) acknowledgment of the gift of grace, and c) certainty that prayer already carries an answer within it (CD IV/4, 209).¹⁵¹ The obedient human act of baptism,

is the overcoming of all worry about this future and hence the act of the most calm, assured and cheerful hope in which they take this first step of the Christian life, just because and to the degree that it is prayer directed to the God who waits for them there in the person of Jesus Christ, and who has already come to them from thence in His person. Because and to the degree that it is prayer to this God, it is an act which conforms to Him in all its humanity, and the participants do neither too little nor too much, but precisely that which gives due honor to Him with whom they have to do, and which is also appropriate and salutary for them in their relationship with Him. Where there is prayer, man’s relationship to God is corrected and it is in order. Because and to the degree that baptism is prayer, the participants act in this order.... They let God be God, but they let Him be their God, who has called them and to whom they may call in return, who hears them and is heard as they may hear Him, and, hearing, obey Him (CD IV/4, 210).

In the prayer-event of baptism, the baptized are freed to be—and actually become—God’s covenant partners.

IV. Conclusion: Our Being is in Calling on God

As the preceding exegesis indicates, Karl Barth understands “unceasing prayer” to be the goal of human transformation (CD IV/4, x, cf. 1 Thes. 5:17). As this prayer-event is “genuine *communication* [*echten Verkehr*] between God and humanity as two *different* partners” (CD IV/4, 19Rr [20]), our human action is both an *invocatio* that corresponds to the divine *vocatio* and a call that itself awaits a divine answer. Salvation consists in this covenant partnership wherein Christians ask for and receive *eternal life*, that “perfect being” which “created being does not have in itself—being which *has a part* in the being of God [*ein Sein in der Teilnahme am Sein Gottes*]” (CD IV/1, 8r [7]). Human *invocatio* does not save, however, for such participation can only be the gift of

151. Webster observes that “Once... we admit the propriety of ‘asking’ in our relationship to God, we already presuppose a duality of agency and disqualify any notion of divine sole causality” (*Reconciliation*, 186, but see through 189).

God. Thus, the *telos* of human transformation, divine and human partnership-in-covenant, has its *basis* in the single yet differentiated act of God.

In order to pray, one must be liberated by the Holy Spirit. While human prayer is a truly human work, it depends upon the divine change whereby we are turned to God and freed for covenant faithfulness (*CD IV/4, 2 [Leitsatz]*). Baptism with the Holy Spirit, then, the act of God *in nobis*, is the basis of human prayer. Yet, as the Holy Spirit is sent by “the work of the Son of God at work as the Son of Man in time” (*CD IV/4, 33*), this work of the risen and ascended Jesus Christ *pro nobis* is also the basis of human prayer. As Jesus Christ was raised and exalted by the act of the Father in the power of the Spirit, the act of God *extra nos* stands as the basis of human prayer.

Furthermore, the act of God *extra nos, pro nobis*, and *in nobis* that makes our reconciled being *subjective* and *actual* is rooted in the act of God *extra nos, pro nobis*, and *in nobis* that *objectively* and *universally* reconciles all humanity. Thus, “The secret, the very depth of the secret” of this “so strangely merciful exchange [*Austach*],” according to Barth, “is that at the beginning of all [God’s] works and ways [God] acted in this way and not otherwise” (*CD IV/1, 32 [33]*, again, cf. 33 and note 19 above). The divine decision *extra nos* to be God *pro nobis* stands as the ultimate basis for the covenant partnership in which prayer participates. In Barth’s words, “the existence of this man is grounded in the great possibility of God, in this alone but in this truly” (*CD IV/4, 5 [6]*). One cannot forget, however, that God elected to be our God through the *assumptio humanitatis*: God so fully *pro nobis* that he is *in nobis*—incarnate. “In this way Jesus Christ, his history, became and is the foundation of Christian existence: him and him alone” (*CD IV/4, 14R [15]*).

The *assumptio* provides Barth’s answer to the “How?” question of human transformation. God transforms humanity by taking human nature to himself, so that in Jesus Christ we see the *humanity of God*. Barth *explains* how God transforms humanity in Jesus Christ by *describing* the history of Jesus Christ: the Lord as servant and the servant as Lord—a single reality in the active person and personal work of Jesus Christ, the God-human mediator of the covenant. In Jesus Christ God establishes the

reconciled (justified, sanctified, and called) being of humanity. Moreover, Jesus Christ himself gathers, builds up, and sends his body to proclaim reconciliation through the power of the Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit Jesus Christ transforms sinful humanity into one who believes, loves and hopes. As the utterly unique divine-human mediator, Jesus Christ is the sole sacrament of salvation. In Jesus Christ alone we may speak of a hyphenated, divine-human, act. Apart from this *unio hypostatica*, we may only speak of distinct divine acts and human acts—even in their correspondence in covenant partnership.

That human transformation depends upon the act of God, *extra nos* and *pro nobis*, but also *in nobis*, demonstrates just how radical this transformation is. Becoming a covenant partner “absolutely transcends and completely overshadows all that [the transformed] was before or otherwise is” (CD IV/4, 7 [8]). This is to say that “[t]he Christian life begins with a change which cannot be understood or described radically enough, which *God* has the possibility of effecting in one’s life in a way which is decisive and basic for one’s whole being and action” (CD IV/4, 9r [10]). This change is completely and utterly beyond human capability. It depends upon the act of God in Christ—and, indeed, at crucial moments simply the act of God, for sinful humanity cannot give itself the utter death it deserves, and even Jesus Christ cannot raise himself from the grave to the eternal life of covenant partnership. Indeed, the being and act of God *pro nobis* was determined in eternity before human agency even existed. Yet, this transformation is in continuity with the determination of humanity as God’s covenant partners, and as such it is a *return* to our true being, a coming to our true selves for the first time.

The true being of humanity in Jesus Christ stands at the heart of Barth’s understanding of human transformation—exemplified in his doctrine of baptism. Two issues regarding this true humanity, both leading to criticisms of Barth’s ecclesiology, will come into play in the subsequent chapters and are worth noting before turning our attention to Ratzinger’s account of human transformation. First, while Barth understands Jesus Christ to be the *vere homo*, and therefore the *telos* of humanity, he

constantly reminds his readers that Jesus Christ is also a *unique* person (“*der Neue, der Eine, Jesus Christus*” [CD IV/3, 710 {813}])—the *sole* sacrament of salvation. Only Jesus Christ is the unmediated mediator, the one who is truly God and truly human and not a *tertium quid*. In Jesus Christ we have to do not with *divinized* humanity, but with the *humanity of God*, God existing and acting as a human, a single divine-human reality. Thus, while becoming Christian means becoming the children of God and the body of Christ, this certainly entails neither divinization nor becoming a conduit of divine action. The church, therefore, is not a divine-human reality, a *mediatrix* or sacrament alongside (or even subordinated to) Jesus Christ. Unlike Jesus Christ’s act, the act of the church cannot be directly identified with the act of God.¹⁵² With regard to human transformation, “Jesus Christ *Himself*, and He alone, makes one a Christian. He Himself is the divine change.... He does not delegate His work to other factors, even to His community” (CD IV/4, 33r [36]). As Ratzinger and Zizioulas both share Barth’s emphasis on Jesus Christ as *the* sacrament, yet also ascribe sacramentality to the church and her actions, this topic will merit special attention in subsequent chapters.

Whereas the first issue involved a restriction of human becoming to *humanization* (the *true* humanity of Jesus Christ), the second issue is a matter of clarifying the nature of this human *being* that is the *telos* of human transformation. In declaring prayer to be the *telos* of human transformation, Barth indicates that the dynamic of *asking for* and *receiving* our very being will not be something limited to this side of the final *parousia*. Indeed, Jesus Christ, the God-human mediator of the fulfilled covenant relationship (salvation) not only *had* but *still has* his being in the double dynamic of call and answer. Jesus Christ did not look to Israel’s history, his own righteousness, or even his filial relationship to the Father to guarantee his being.¹⁵³ Even as the risen and exalted Lord, Barth indicates that Jesus still has his being in this dynamic of *vocatio* and *invocatio*. And while Barth explains that this *asking* will no longer be characterized by *hope*

152. Barth’s warnings about the “nostrification” of God are pertinent here (*ChrL*, 130–31, 196, and 203).

153. Cf. Barth’s treatment of Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan, 45–46 above.

after the final *parousia*, there is no point at which our being will be a *datum* and not a *dandum*. Moreover, as Jesus Christ himself did not treat Israel's history, his own righteousness, or even his filial relationship to the Father as a *guarantee* of his being or as something that would make his being his *possession*, human *being* will never be a human *possession*. To seek a guarantee of our being other than the risen and ascended Jesus Christ (who bears witness to the depth and height of God's decision to be *pro nobis*) is to seek another foundation and goal for human transformation. This points to the christological basis for Barth's refusal to view the historical institution of the church as a guarantee of her existence: if the incarnate Son did not look for a guarantee of his being apart from the Father's will, why should his body the church seek to possess, or even guarantee, her own being? Our being not only is, but ever will be *in becoming*.

CHAPTER 3

JOSEPH RATZINGER: BECOMING *EUCHARISTIA*

RECEIVING OURSELVES THROUGH DIALOGUE IN COMMUNION

The “‘praying’ of Jesus is the Son conversing with the Father,” and as such, his prayer “is the dialogue of love within God himself—the dialogue that God *is*” (*JoN*, 7 and 344). With this glimpse into the very heart of Ratzinger’s theology we see that *dialogue* is both the *basis* and *telos* of human transformation. Ratzinger describes this transformation as *divinization* because it has its basis in the trinitarian dialogue of love and its goal in human participation in this dialogue. Yet, Ratzinger argues that this participation does not efface the difference between God and humanity, but creates the genuinely two-sided covenant of God and humanity in *communio*. Jesus Christ’s life of dialogue in prayer reveals not only the basis and goal of human transformation, but also *how* humans are transformed, for in the Son’s dialogue with the Father, “Jesus’ human consciousness and will, his human soul, is taken up into that exchange, and in this way human ‘praying’ is able to become a participation in this filial communion with the Father” (*JoN*, 7). The prayer of Jesus also reveals the radical nature of human transformation, for Jesus’s dialogue with the Father in the Spirit continued even into the realm of God-forsakenness: death. The transformed life, then, is life that has come through death (the isolation caused by sin). As no one else *is* Son and no one else lives this life on the other side of death, to be transformed is to be *in* Christ.

Ratzinger understands the sacramental prayer of the Church to be the place where this transformation occurs. Quite simply, the Eucharist “is the shared prayer of the Church, in which the Lord prays together with us and gives us himself” (*FoF*, 152). Thus, unlike Barth, Ratzinger teaches that God brings about the divine-human and human-human relationships of love that are life *through* the Church, that the Church

actively mediates the transformation from death to life. Baptism and the Eucharist are central to this transformation. One enters the Church and receives Jesus Christ's filial relationship to the Father by being baptized. Moreover, this sacrament of *metanoia* shows the basic pattern of the Christian life, because "being a Christian can only take the form of *becoming* a Christian ever anew" (*DaP*, 24 [323]). This becoming has its goal in the Eucharist, the covenant-event in which Christ makes himself present and gives the gift of divine-human and human-human *communio*.¹ In this way, the Eucharist unites the earthly and heavenly liturgies.² However, Ratzinger argues, even in and after the Eucharist, Christians do not possess the life of God. Rather, the eucharistic celebration "is at once the joyful proclamation of the Lord's presence and a supplication to the already present Lord that he may come, since, paradoxically, even as the One who is present he remains the One who is to come" (*EDEL*, 6).³ Christians are those who await this coming one in prayer, and "[o]ne who prays is one who has hope," for to pray is to deliver oneself "to the dynamism of what is asked for, to that of hope itself" ("On Hope," 84). Indeed, it is only as an act of hope that prayer already participates in the *communio* for which it asks.

In order to arrive at Ratzinger's eucharistic account of human becoming, this chapter begins with Ratzinger's understanding of the universal—yet concrete—question of death and the concrete—yet universal—answer to death in Jesus Christ. This reflects Ratzinger's tendency to begin with the problem posed by sin (I.A), in this case the ultimate problem of death (isolation), and then to explain how Jesus Christ answers this problem as the incarnate Son in dialogue with the Father in the *communio*

1. Ratzinger argues that, from the beginning (Acts 2:42), the church's life of prayer "finds its center of gravity" in the Eucharist, which Ratzinger describes as "the heart of church life" (*BPO*, 75), "the crux of Christian brotherhood... the heart of the Christian 'secret discipline'..., the center given by Jesus to his new people" (*MCB*, 38), "genuine reality.... the yardstick, the heart of things" (*GINU*, 88), and the "'inmost heart' of the mystery of faith" (*PFF*, 91, referencing 1 Tim. 3:9).

2. Ratzinger argues that "the essential matter of all eucharistic liturgy is its participation in the heavenly liturgy; it is from thence that it necessarily derives its unity, its catholicity, and its universality" (*PFF*, 111).

3. For this reason the Eucharist is the eschatological act of the Church, and the proper context for the Christian cry "Maranatha!" because its prayer "always carries a reference to both present and future."

of love that is the Holy Spirit (I.B). This leads to an examination of Ratzinger's doctrine of the Trinity, as "persons in relation" (II.A), which, in turn, serves as the basis for his anthropology of human persons in relation (II.B). The third step turns explicitly to Ratzinger's sacramental ecclesiology and his teaching on the human *communio* corresponding to the divine *communio* (II.C). Noteworthy, especially vis-à-vis Barth, is the way in which Ratzinger emphasizes the priority and agency of the *one* Church. The *one* Church precedes and guarantees the Christian gathering and works the divine work with Christ in the sacraments. Finally, special attention is given to baptism (III), the sacrament whereby one enters the one Church (and, thereby, the death and life of Jesus Christ), and the Eucharist (IV), the event in which the ecclesial *communio* breaks into history again and again. Baptism reveals the Christian pattern or ethic of transformation that has the Eucharist as its goal. In the Eucharist, this goal comes to meet the Christian but also calls the Christian to live towards it, to pursue the eucharistic vocation, *to be transformed*. Indeed, "being a Christian as such is to be transformed" (*GINU*, 85).

I. The Question of Death and the Answer in Jesus Christ

I.A. Death: Primordial Fruit of Sin and Whence of Human Transformation

Death poses a question to humanity that demands an answer. Ratzinger calls death, "the one question which it is impossible to ignore forever," and "thus a metaphysical thorn [*metaphysischer Stachel*] lodged in man's being" (*NMT*, 23, echoing 1 Cor. 15:55–56).⁴ The force of this demand derives from the pervasiveness of death: all die. Ratzinger, like Zizioulas as we will see, understands death to be the "fate [*Geschick*]" (*ItC*, 298 [280]) of humanity, describing humans as "marked for death" and "obliged to

4. Ratzinger addresses this question repeatedly (e.g., "Faith and Existence," in *FaF*, 35–60; "The Theology of Death," in *EDEL*, 69–103; and "Beyond Death"), leading Laurence Paul Hemming to predict that "discussion of matters of life, and death, and what succeeds death" would be a major theme of Ratzinger's papal teaching (*Benedict XVI 'Fellow Worker for the Truth'*, 176). Ratzinger's emphasis echoes Vatican II (*Gaudium et spes*, 9, 18 and 22; *Nostra Aetate* 1; *Ad gentes* 12) and, in fact, has continued into Ratzinger's papal *oeuvre* (e.g., *Spe salvi*, 6). On the latter, see Geoffrey Wainwright's "The Sting of Death: The Unavoidable Question and the Response of Faith"—an apt title.

die,” because “according to our biological situation it is natural and necessary for us to die” (*GJC*, 75). According to Ratzinger, all philosophies and religions attempt to draw out this stinging thorn, to answer this “primordial question” (*NMT*, 23).⁵ Whereas many moderns think of the Christian answer to death as an “abstruse assertion about an unverifiable future place and an unknown future time,” Ratzinger contends that the answer comprehends the whole reality of human being, including the fundamental problems of injustice and hope (*NMT*, 23; cf. “Beyond Death”; and *EDEL*).⁶ Through silence and trivialization, the modern West tends to deprive death of its character “as a place where the metaphysical breaks through,” rendering it “banal, so as to quell the unsettling question which arises from it” (*EDEL*, 70).⁷ In large part, Ratzinger’s theology is an attempt to present the Christian faith as the true religion *and* philosophy by reiterating the Christian answer to death in a manner accessible to the modern world.⁸

As death is simply the fruit of the underlying problem of *sin*, Ratzinger emphasizes that the true answer to death must address this *root*. While Ratzinger does use the language of “fate” and “necessity” to describe death, he would agree with Wisdom 1:13: “God did not make death, and he does not delight in the death of the living” (cf. *CCC*, 1008). Indeed, Ratzinger describes the cause of death—sin—as “the ontological lie of man” (“Hope,” 82).⁹ As Israel knew, humans were created for

5. On Ratzinger’s emphasis upon the importance of death for the theology-philosophy dialogue, see Wainwright (“Sting,” 47–48).

6. Ratzinger critiques the general direction of liberation theology because he thinks it forgets that “no answer to the questions about justice and freedom is sufficient if it omits the problem of death” (“Freedom Liberation,” 71). For an example of the backlash against the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s censure of some liberation theologians during Ratzinger’s tenure as Prefect, see Harvey Cox (*The Silencing of Leonardo Boff*).

7. Ratzinger also laments the avoidance of death’s question in the Church—for instance, many Christians regard sudden death as a blessing, whereas the Litany of the Saints prays for time to prepare for death (*EDEL*, 71). This silence, fear, and trivialization of death warps views of life as well (*The Ratzinger Report*, 145).

8. Here, Ratzinger reaffirms the claim of the early church, which is evidenced by their sarcophagi decorations of a philosopher with the Gospel in hand (*NMT*, 14).

9. In Ratzinger’s thought, says Aidan Nichols, “sin is an unholy mystery of separation” (*The Thought of Benedict XVI*, 103).

relationship with God and creation, for life—a purpose the Church holds to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the Church, in continuity with Israel understands sin to be “a turning away from Yahweh” (*EDEL*, 84), a “separation” that is “the breaking off of a certain relationship,” namely, “[t]he original trusting, living relationship with God” (*GW*, 87; cf. *ItB*, 72–73). To reject this relationship to God is to claim to be god. Sin, then, is basically idolatry, the attempt to “possess what God had reserved to himself, to be able to do without him” (*GW*, 86). As Ratzinger understands sin as the desire and attempt to usurp God’s place, he identifies pride as the root of all sin (*GW*, 86 and 213). Death demonstrates the foolishness of this pride:

man’s attempt “to be like God,” his striving for autonomy, through which he wishes to stand on his own feet alone, means his death, for he just cannot stand on his own. If man—and this is the real nature of sin—nevertheless refuses to recognize his own limits and tries to be completely self-sufficient, then precisely by adopting this attitude he delivers himself up to death (*ItC*, 302 [285]).¹⁰

As creation’s life depends upon the *communion* God wills for creation, sin—the attitude and act whereby a human “refuses... ‘being-with’”—ultimately leads to death (*EDEL*, 207, a fascinating passage).¹¹ The isolation of death, then, indicates “the impossibility of giving oneself a foothold, the collapse of autarchy,” and is “not merely a somatic but a human phenomenon of all-embracing profundity” (*DZ*, 79).¹² Indeed, sin casts shadows far beyond the grave.

Ratzinger presents the doctrine of original sin as an account of these omnipresent shadows. As sin ruptures both the divine-human and inter-human relationships, humans are born into “disordered relationships,” and this “disruption of

10. The humble love of God in Jesus Christ (cf. Philippians 2:1-11) demonstrates this “god” to be an idol and this prideful idolatry to be foolishness.

11. Thus, “isolation is the real core of our sinful situation” (“Identification,” 21).

12. Note the similarity between Ratzinger and Zizioulas: “Man is a being who himself does not live forever.... since he has no continuance *in himself*” (*ItC*, 302* [284]). Wainright also remarks on this similarity (“Sting,” 56, n. 17). Nicholas Lash rightly notes that although Ratzinger speaks of the “immortality of the soul,” he does not view immortality as the natural property of the soul, but as a gift (“Are We Born and Do We Die?” 9; cf. “Hope,” 74). However, Lash’s emphasis on the purely future-eschatological character of this immortality misses Ratzinger’s basis for arguing for the immortality of the soul: the Christological characterization of human being that occurred through the incarnation and that is *already* a part of Christian existence (“Hope,” 76).

relationships has become a part of the texture of human history” (*GW*, 87).¹³ This is to affirm that sin is not *merely* spiritual, not *merely* interior, but an historical and social reality. As a “spiritual datum [*geistige Vorgegebenheit*],” sin “precedes the individual existence” so that “no one can start from scratch any more, in a *status integritatis* (completely unimpaired by history).” *Original sin*, then, names not “any biological legacy passed on between otherwise utterly separated individuals,” but the distorted state of relationships resulting from the ripple effect of previous sin (*ItC*, 249 [234]).¹⁴ For *sin*

is always an offense that touches others, that alters the world and damages it. To the extent that this is true, when the network of human relationships is damaged from the very beginning, then every human being enters into a world that is marked by relational damage. At the very moment that a person begins human existence, which is a good, he or she is confronted by a sin-damaged world. Each of us enters into a situation in which relationality has been hurt. Consequently each person is, from the very start, damaged in relationships and does not engage in them as he or she ought. Sin pursues the human being, and he or she capitulates to it (*ItB*, 72–73).

Sin, however, is not the last word. Theology, therefore, should never speak it on its own. Rather, “we must always go on to say that God set to work at once to rebuild the relationship and to make it right. If we ever talk about the concept of original sin without mentioning God’s response, then we pass into the realm of the absurd” (*GW*, 88).¹⁵ That is to say, God did not abandon humanity and creation to death, but transformed this sinful way of being in Jesus Christ.

I.B. True Life: The Answer to Death in the Person of Jesus Christ

The answer to death is spoken in Jesus Christ. More precisely *Jesus Christ* is the

13. In other words, “the seat of original sin is to be sought precisely in this collective net,” that is, “the collective grid that forms the site of human existence,” and “that precedes the individual existence” (*ItC*, 249 and 248 [233–34, see n. 14 below]).

14. [*Erbsünde ist eben in diesem kollektiven Netz zu suchen..., nicht in irgendeiner biologischen Vererbung zwischen lauter sonst völlig getrennten Einzelnen*, 234.] It is not clear how Ratzinger squares this with the Council of Trent’s *Decretum de peccato originali*, 3: “...propagatione, non imitatione transfusum omnibus inest unicuique proprium....” Likewise, this account of sin seems to render an “immaculate” conception either irrelevant or impossible—though see Ratzinger’s explanation and “eschatologized” Marian doctrine (*DZ*, 67–69 and 78).

15. Given the popular context of this text, one should read “response” in terms of the historical timeline and not in opposition to Ratzinger’s doctrine of election.

answer: “He himself is life,” for “with Jesus, what matters is precisely his Person, Christ himself” (*JoN*, 286; cf. *ItB*, 30; and *ItC*, 21).¹⁶ Jesus Christ cannot be reduced to words or deeds, or even substance or nature.¹⁷ Yet, he would not be who he is if the divine and human natures were not united in him, if he had not died “for our sins,” and if he had not been resurrected to a life beyond death. In particular, the statement, “Jesus has risen” is “the true *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae* by which the structure of faith and theology are chiefly to be determined” (*PCT*, 184; cf. *DaP*, 3).¹⁸ As Jesus Christ is now the living one, we cannot get behind the resurrection, which “is antecedent to every theology” (*PCT*, 189). If it were not for the resurrection, nothing could be said about justification, sonship, not even the cross. The “first and primordial statement” of Christian theology

is the good tidings that the power of death, the one constant of history, has, in a single instance, been broken by the power of God and that history has thus been imbued with an entirely new hope. In other words, the core of the gospel consists in the good tidings of the Resurrection and, consequently, in the good tidings of God’s action, *which precedes all human doing* (*PCT*, 184–85*).

As the action of God, the resurrection is primarily a *theological datum*. Yet, as “the new life has already begun and will nevermore be snuffed out” and as Jesus Christ’s “*vita nuova* is ordered to the transformation of all life,” the resurrection is also an anthropological and cosmological *datum* (*EDEL*, 119). As we will see in the sections on baptism and the Eucharist, Ratzinger finds the bedrock of theology in the fact that Jesus Christ transformed death and now lives a life beyond it. Yet, his theology is rightly characterized as a *theologia crucis* because Ratzinger does not abstract the

16. As Nichols observes, “What is new about the New Covenant,” for Ratzinger, “is not new themes, but a new person: Jesus, the face of God for us” (“Benedict XVI on the Holy Images,” 362). Ratzinger’s answer to the question of death, and, indeed, his understanding of the question is *determined* Christologically. Ratzinger does defend (ardently) the reasonability and universality of his answer, but argues that it requires the conversion of reason, along with the entire person. Christopher Ruddy grasps the centrality of Jesus Christ (yesterday *and* today) for Ratzinger (“No Restorationist,” 16).

17. Alfred Läpple thinks that his friendship with Ratzinger flourished because both understood Kierkegaard’s statement that “Christianity is not a doctrine, but the communication of a life” (“Interview with Alfred Läpple”).

18. Note the similarities of Ratzinger’s description of the resurrection to Barth’s description of it as the Father’s “justification” of Jesus.

resurrected one from the crucified one.¹⁹ Just as the resurrection does not eclipse the cross, the cross does not eclipse the life and ministry of Jesus before the week of his Passion. These events are integral to Ratzinger's Christology.²⁰ Moreover, Ratzinger argues that a *dialogical* Christology, emphasizing Jesus Christ's filial relationship to the Father, allows the synthesis of history and ontology called for by the Christological formulations of the ecumenical councils and demanded by the biblical witness. This relational Christology, in turn, provides a basis for understanding persons, both divine and human, opening up into the doctrine of the Trinity and an ecclesial anthropology.

I.B.1. Jesus Christ's Transforming Life of Dialogue with the Father.

Though occurring in many different forms, Ratzinger describes all of Jesus Christ's activity as *dialogue*.²¹ Ratzinger draws on the Lucan account in particular, as it "raise[s] the prayer of Jesus to the rank of an essential christological category" (*GJC*, 74), but he also finds prayer at the center of the "Johannine material," which "simply represents the prolongation of Jesus' converse with the Father and of Jesus' existence for men to the point of sacrificing himself on the Cross" (*ItC*, 227 [213]).²² Ratzinger bases this assertion on exegesis, and has explored everything from the calling

19. Cf. Jan-Heiner Tück ("The Cross as the Locus of Truth"); Nichols ("Benedict Images," 360); Terence McGuckin ("The Eschatology of the Cross," especially 369–70, which attends to the interplay of cross and eschatology [resurrection]); and Walter Kasper's criticisms ("Theorie und Praxis innerhalb einer theologia crucis").

20. Especially noteworthy is Ratzinger's *JoN*. Whereas Zizioulas treats Jesus's teaching and ministry (and the Old Testament) as shadows of the truth, Ratzinger treats them (along with the Old Testament) as that which makes the resurrection (i.e., truth) *intelligible*: "Only because its intelligibility was prepared beforehand could the resurrection of Jesus gain any historical significance at all. Mere facts without words, without meaning, fall into nothingness as fully as do mere words to which no reality corresponds. To this extent we can say with complete certainty that the origin of the Easter proclamation is unthinkable without some corresponding announcement by Jesus himself" (*EDEL*, 113).

21. Though Ratzinger presents compelling arguments for this, it is somewhat problematic that Ratzinger initially introduces *dialogue* as a concept *appropriate* for explaining the Christian faith in the modern era, but later (e.g., the "theses" in *BPO*) presents it simply as the exegesis of who Jesus Christ *is*.

22. This reliance on the Lucan emphasis on prayer, even to the point of allowing it to interpret the Johannine material, continues in *JoN*. Therefore, Richard Hays missteps when he asserts that "the Gospel of John imparts the *fundamental* shape to Benedict's portrayal of Jesus" ("Benedict and the Biblical Jesus," 51*).

of the Twelve to Jesus' final exhalation as prayer-events (especially *JoN*; and *BPO*, 15–46).²³ Thus, when Ratzinger identifies the “core” or “center of the life and person of Jesus” as “his dialogue with the Father,” that is, “his constant communication with the Father,” he does so with reference to the specific history of this pray-er (*BPO*, 18 and 15).²⁴ This history leads Ratzinger to claim that “the whole of Christology—our speaking of Christ—is nothing other than the interpretation of his prayer: the entire person of Jesus is contained in this prayer” (*BPO*, 20; cf. *GJC*, 26–27; and *JoN*, *passim*). Jesus Christ's words and acts of prayer do not close in on themselves and are not addressed to no one in particular. Rather, like Israel's prayers, they are addressed to an “other” in the midst of a concrete historical relationship.

Ratzinger pays special attention to the two-way dynamic of Jesus' prayer, especially evident in his baptism, transfiguration and crucifixion. At Christ's baptism, which Ratzinger interprets as an act of prayer, the Father responds: “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”²⁵ Likewise, relying upon Luke's location of the transfiguration squarely within Jesus' prayer life (“while he was praying” [9:29]), Ratzinger describes the transfiguration as a moment in which Jesus' “communication with the Father... becomes visible,” revealing to Peter, John and James “what is actually taking place in Jesus' prayer: he is sharing in God's radiance” (*BPO*, 20). This prayer-event also includes an explicit response: “This is my beloved Son... listen to him!”²⁶ This dialogical dynamic provides the proper vector for interpreting the cross and resurrection. First, Jesus' prayer continues until his death—Ratzinger argues that “[a]lthough the Evangelists' account of the last words of Jesus differ in details, they

23. See Ratzinger's discussion of “prosopographic exegesis” (“Person,” 440–43).

24. Jesus Christ's history, as the one who “converses with God face-to-face, as a friend,” fulfills what began with Moses at the burning bush (*JoN*, 5; cf. *GJC*, 16).

25. So Mark 1:11; and Luke 3:22. Matthew (3:17) has the statement in the third person. Some manuscripts of Luke go on to quote Psalm 2:7: “You are my son; today I have begotten you.”

26. Mark 9:2-8; Matthew 17:1-8; and Luke 9:28-36. Matthew adds “with him I am well pleased,” and the key manuscripts of Luke read “chosen” rather than “beloved.”

agree on the fundamental fact that Jesus died praying. He fashioned his death into an act of prayer, an act of worship” (*BPO*, 22). The resurrection, then, represents the Father’s final (implicit) word in response to Jesus’ prayer. Moreover, the cross itself is a response. Drawing on the Johannine account, Ratzinger argues that not only was Jesus glorifying God on the cross, but—contrary to worldly wisdom—God was exalting Jesus. This is the “mysterious dimension [*geheimnisvoller Doppelsinnigkeit*]” of the cross, which Ratzinger calls “*der Königsthron Christi..., seine Erhöhung*” (*DaP*, 64 [365], cf. Barth). Not only, then, is Jesus named “Son,” he also shares the light (transfiguration), the throne (cross), and the life (resurrection) which are possessed by God alone.²⁷ In order to properly identify the participants in this dialogue of prayer, then, one must come to grips with both a) Jesus’ prayers in word and deed, and b) the filial pronouncements, explicit at Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan and his transfiguration, and implicit in the cross and resurrection.

I.B.2. Jesus Christ: The One Who Is Son.

We can sum up Ratzinger’s exegesis of scripture’s witness to Jesus Christ and its conciliar interpretation in three words: “Jesus is Son.” In Ratzinger’s own words, “Son” is “ultimate simplicity” and “the fundamental Christian option” (*BPO*, 17). First, “Jesus is Son” preserves the absolutely vital link to *Jesus* of Nazareth.²⁸ The Christian faith centers on a concrete human being, not a figure who is both everybody and nobody. Without turning a blind eye to the historical difficulties of the scriptural

27. For instance, whereas Moses simply reflected the light of the Lord for a short while after encountering God on Sinai, the radiance of the transfiguration belongs to Jesus, and the transfiguration reveals “the profound interpenetration of his being with God, which then becomes pure light.... he does not simply receive light, but he himself is light from light” (*JōN*, 310). Cf. Ratzinger’s comments on Chalcedon (*DaP*, 7–10); and his treatment of the importance of subsequent councils (especially Constantinople III) for interpreting Chalcedon (*DaP*, 37–42).

28. It is because Jesus Christ exists on “the real plane of actual concrete human existence,” that he can only be understood by attending to the “[h]uman action, thought, willing and loving [that] have become the instrument of the Logos” (“Commentary-*GS*,” V: 160). Israel’s unique history also plays a key role. Ratzinger parses Jesus’s “obedience,” that is “the criterion by which we interpret the content of his Sonship,” as his “creative acceptance of [Israel’s] tradition and his creative extension of it into the future” *PCT*, 97; cf. *GJC*, 63).

witness, Ratzinger refuses to relinquish the historical claims of the Christian faith.²⁹ Indeed, “Calling Jesus the ‘Son’, far from overlaying him with the mythical gold of dogma, corresponds most strictly to the center of the historical figure of Jesus” (*BPO*, 17).³⁰ Second, the “*is*” in conjunction with “Jesus,” requires the synthesis of both history and ontology and act and being. With regard to act and being, Christian faith claims not only that Jesus acts and speaks in a filial manner, but that he *is* Son: “here there is no ‘I’ separate from the work the ‘I’ *is* the work, and the work *is* the ‘I’... he *is* word” (*ItC*, 203).³¹ The unity of act and being in Jesus Christ, indicates that he is “pure *actualitas*,” and as such, also unites the “polarities” of history and ontology in his person (*ItC*, 210 and 230, but see all of 228–43; cf. “Commentary-*GS*,” V: 160–61; and *JoN*, 298). Christology, therefore, must resist the temptation to allow ontology (that is, incarnation) to subsume history (that is, the *mysterium paschale*) or *vice versa* (“Commentary-*GS*,” V: 160–61; and *ItC*, 229–30).³² Ultimately, the two are mutually

29. On Ratzinger’s Christological and eschatological approach to the difficulties of reconciling faith and history, see Francesca Murphy (“Joseph Ratzinger and Protestant Theology”).

30. While Ratzinger emphasizes the identity of Jesus Christ yesterday, today and forever (cf. Hebrews 13:8 and *NSL*, 3–34), Ratzinger does not understand Jesus Christ as a Platonic ideal, but as a particular, living person whose unique relationship with the Father ensures the continuity of his identity—contra Volf. Volf argues that Ratzinger’s Christology is determined by Platonism and central only because it can be used to support the papacy. Murphy strikes much closer to the reality: the “deeper motivation,” she argues, for Ratzinger’s christological focus “is the preservation of the *newness* of what is done when the Son of God becomes man. What is at stake is the *creative facticity* of the Incarnation, its ‘eventful’ character. A communion between God and human beings is created by the *fact*. Something happens here which Plato could *contemplate* and the Old Testament could *prophecy*, but which only becomes *real* in Christ” (“De Lubac, Ratzinger and von Balthasar : A Communal Adventure in Ecclesiology,” 53).

31. Further, “what faith really states is precisely that with Jesus it is not possible to distinguish office and person.... The person *is* the office; the office *is* the person....” Jesus’ body cannot be separated from his words and deeds: “Jesus’ proclamation was never mere preaching, mere words; it was ‘sacramental’, in the sense that his words were and are inseparable from his ‘I’—from his ‘flesh’. His word opens up only in the context of the signs he performed, or his life and of his death. *The sign*—the culminating point of his life that reveals the center of his ‘I’—is the Paschal Mystery” (*GCC*, 50).

32. While Ratzinger may at different times emphasize one or the other polarity, to posit a *development* in Ratzinger’s thought from salvation-history to metaphysics is to misunderstand Ratzinger’s “theological metaphysics,” contra Maximilian Heim (*Joseph Ratzinger*, 10–11, drawing on Dorothy Kaes).

interpretative: “a properly understood Christology of being and of the Incarnation must pass over into the theology of the Cross and become one with it,” and “conversely, a theology of the Cross that gives its full measure must pass over into the Christology of the Son and of being” (*ItC*, 230 [216]). Yet, at the epistemological level the historical does have a certain precedence, for being discloses itself in doing.³³ This meaningful disclosure, however, presupposes the *is* of creation and its *arche*. As Ratzinger formulates it, “for *history* God stands at the end,” and “for *being* he stands at the beginning” (*ItC*, 242 [228]).³⁴ That is to say that the Cross is the fulfillment of the cosmos, but it has its “precondition and foundation” in the incarnation (*PCT*, 280). In this way, the confession that “Jesus is” affirms that “[t]he cosmos speaks to us of the Cross, and the Cross solves for us the enigma of the cosmos” (*SL*, 181). The third word, “Jesus is *Son*,” articulates the scope of the confession: God and humanity, rejecting static ontologies for a dynamic, relational understanding of the being of God and humanity.

Identifying Jesus simply as “Son” acknowledges the centrality of his relationship to his Father.³⁵ His sonship provides the basis for the unity of act and being, history and ontology because it reaches to the very depths of the being of God and the being of man. Confessing Jesus as “Son” recognizes that “the being of Jesus Christ is a completely open being, a being ‘from’ and ‘toward’, which nowhere clings to itself and nowhere stands on its own,” and “His entire existence is a ‘sending’, a ‘mission’, i.e., a relationship” (*ItC*, 186 [173], cf. 227; and *BPO*, 22). Thus, in saying

33. Cf. Ratzinger’s comments on the necessity of the “Omega” for knowing the “Alpha” (“Commentary-*GS*,” V: 121). Here the influence of Ratzinger’s “true teacher,” Gottlieb Söhngen, shines through (“Presentation on the Centenary of Cardinal Newman’s Death”; and “Funeral Homily for Gottlieb Söhngen, 19 November 1971”).

34. Further [227], “Christianity, which as belief in the creation acknowledges the primacy of the *logos*, the creative meaning as the beginning and origin, also acknowledges it in a specific way as the end, the future, the coming one. Indeed, in this gaze at him who is coming lies the real historical dynamism of the Christian approach.” Ratzinger emphasized Jesus Christ as “Alpha and Omega” from early on in his career (“Commentary-*GS*,” V: 121).

35. Ratzinger speaks of “This relationship, this being of his, which fashions from within and which *is* the person of Jesus” (*BPO*, 21).

“Son” one has also said “Father.” Jesus Christ simply does not exist apart from the Father—that is, *in se*. Ratzinger finds the Johannine material especially helpful in understanding Jesus’ filial existence, particularly John 5:19 (cf. 30): “‘The Son can do nothing of his own accord’, which illumines Christology from the son concept as a doctrine of relativity [...*die die Christologie als Relativitätslehre vom Sohnbegriff her erbella*]” (*ItC*, 186 [172]). The Son, Jesus Christ, receives his very being from another and this “other” is the Father (*BPO*, 21–22). Only because “Jesus *is* truly ‘Son’ in his whole *existence*, ...one who receives his inmost being from another,” one whose “life is a receiving,” can Ratzinger make the radical claim that, “[i]n him is to be found the hidden foundation; in the actions, words, life, suffering of him who is truly Son it is possible to see, hear and touch him who is unknown. The unknown ground of being reveals itself as Father” (*PCT*, 73 [76]). In light of the Son’s total receptivity, Ratzinger applauds Chalcedon and its *ὁμοούσιον* formulation because it “simply puts the fact of Jesus’ prayer into the technical language of philosophical theology, nothing more” (*BPO*, 33, cf. 36).³⁶ Ratzinger emphatically denies the claims that this philosophical language somehow distorts the pure biblical language, indeed, he makes the argument that the Chalcedonian formulation “adds nothing to the New Testament,” but “at the crucial point of its testimony, it defends its literal meaning so that it cannot be allegorized.... Jesus is not only *described* as the Son of God, he *is* the Son of God”

36. Ratzinger argues that the way to Chalcedon was paved by the concentration of the New Testament titles for Jesus to *Christ*, *Lord*, and *Son*, which became a name “Lord Jesus Christ” and a confession about the person named, “Son of God” (*PCT*, 19). Eventually “Son” subsumed the other two titles, for it “comprises and interprets everything else” (*BPO*, 16, cf. 32). Although conciliar Christology has been presented as moving away from Jesus of Nazareth, Ratzinger makes the case that it is “[u]ltimately... nothing other than an interpretation of the life and death of Jesus, which was preordained from the Son’s primal conversation with the Father,” and that the conciliar Christology, “far from overlaying him with the mythical gold of dogma, corresponds most strictly to the center of the historical figure of Jesus” (*BPO*, 32 and 17). Of the interpretations proposed during the Arian controversy, the double *ὁμοούσιον* (as interpreted by the subsequent councils) is the only one that “does not have to interpret anything away but is able to include everything,” and represents “the boldest and most sublime simplification of the complex and many-layered data of tradition to a single central fact that is the basis of everything else” and “the only interpretation that can do justice to the whole range of tradition and sustain the full impact of the phenomenon itself” (*DaP*, 9–10 and 8).

(*BPO*, 36). Yet, the Son of God *is* this human man—son of David and son of Adam. As Jesus transforms human existence through his relation of unity (communion) with both God and humanity, Christology resolves into both the doctrine of the Trinity and an ecclesial anthropology.

II. The Life of God and Human Life

The double *ὁμοούσιον* of Chalcedon recognizes that Jesus Christ *is* both the Son of God from all eternity and the human son who is the *telos* of humanity (*PCT*, 261). As such, he reveals the true being of both God and humanity (*DaP*, 6–7). Ratzinger continually emphasizes that 1) this *person* is the sum total of revelation—there is nothing further or greater to be revealed; and 2) the *humanity* of this person reveals both true humanity and divinity. With regard to 1, “[R]evelation is not a collection of statements—revelation is Christ himself. *He* is the Logos, the all-embracing Word in which God declares himself and that we therefore call the Son of God.”³⁷ Jesus Christ does not reveal propositions or ethical guidelines: “The actual reality which occurs in Christian revelation is nothing and no other than Christ himself. He is revelation in the proper sense” (“Revelation,” 40, citing John 14:9).³⁸ By no means, however, does this result in some sort of “christomonism,” because Jesus Christ “is never alone, but is forever receiving himself from and giving himself back to the Father,” in the communion of the Holy Spirit (*JoN*, 283).³⁹ Furthermore, we see that this God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) “is ‘pro me’ and ‘pro nobis’ not generically, but concretely and personally inviting us to a relationship of union ‘cum Christo’” (“Commentary-GS,” V: 160–61). With regard to 2, the relational unity of God, humanity and the God-

37. “This one Logos, of course, has communicated himself in normative words, in which he presents to us what is distinctively his. Yet *the Word* is always greater than *the words* and is never exhausted by the words” (*OWJC*, 82).

38. For this reason *neither* Scripture *nor* Tradition are “sufficient” revelation, even when combined. Only the “Christ-reality” is sufficient. “The originality of Christianity does not consist in the number of propositions for which no parallel can be found elsewhere (if there *are* such propositions, which is highly questionable). It is impossible to distill out what is specifically Christian by excluding everything that has come about through contact with other milieux” (“The Church’s Teaching Authority—Faith—Morals,” 53).

39. “Jesus’ own ‘I’ is always opened into ‘being with’...” (*JoN*, 283*).

man is revealed in the particular life of Jesus Christ, or in Ratzinger's devotional language, "The face of Jesus Christ shows us clearly what God is, and it also makes visible what man is" (*DaP*, 23). One must look upon the very humanity of Jesus—the *human*—to see the divine:

The historical man Jesus is the Son of God, and the Son of God is the man Jesus. God comes to pass from man through men, nay, even more concretely, though *the* man in whom the quintessence of humanity appears and who for that very reason is at the same time God himself (*ItC*, 194).⁴⁰

For in Jesus Christ the living human flesh becomes transparent to the very life of God:

The whole cult was, as it were, unable to pierce the barrier of images; it could represent, but it could not bring to perfection. Only Christ, who gave himself on the Cross by dying the real death of a condemned person, has no need of images. He does not rend a metaphorical veil in order to enter a metaphorical Holy of Holies; he rends the real curtain, the *σάραξ* [*sic*], the dividing barrier that constrains our earthly existence, and passes through it to the other world to stand before the divine majesty of the living God (*PCT*, 270–71).⁴¹

This completeness of revelation in Jesus Christ's humanity, however, does not translate automatically into our complete comprehension of God, because "the most radical revelation... is at the same moment the cause of the most extreme obscurity and concealment" (*ItC*, 55 [48–49]).⁴² As the human life of Jesus Christ reveals to us the unfathomable depths of the triune life, he thereby saves humanity from our idolatry—demolishing the warped theology and refusing the human-distorting usurpation of that demonic god.

Again, Ratzinger argues that the cross and resurrection are central to what we might call the *idoloclastm* accomplished in Jesus Christ. For humans desire "freedom..., an equality in which all alienation is eliminated," in order to bring about an interior

40. [...*Gott ereignet sich für den Menschen durch die Menschen hindurch, ja, noch konkreter: durch den Menschen, in welchem das Definitive des Menschseins in Erscheinung tritt und der eben darin zugleich Gott selber ist, 182.*] Indeed, "Christ is not mediator, but immediacy, the very presence of God's dealing with us" (*PCT*, 270 [284: *Er ist nicht Mittler, sondern Unmittelbarkeit, die Anwesenheit von Gottes Handeln selbst.*]).

41. [*Der ganze Kult vermochte gleichsam die Bilderwand nicht zu durchstoßen, er stellte dar, aber vollzog nicht. Nur Christus, der am Kreuz sich selber gibt, indem er den realen Tod eines hingerichteten Menschen stirbt, bricht aus den Bildern aus. Er durchschreitet, nicht einen abbildlichen Schleier in ein abbildliches Allerheiligstes hinein, sondern er durchstößt den eigentlichen Vorhang, die σάραξ, die begrenzende Scheidewand unserer irdischen Existenz und geht durch sie hindurch in die andere Welt hinein vor die Himmlische Herrlichkeit des lebendigen Gottes, 285.*]

42. Cf. Barth's comments on veiling and unveiling (for example *CD* I/1, 196).

unity, a cosmic unity, and human communion—in short, humans want “Godhead.” Ratzinger approves of this impulse that drives humans to idolatry, if not the idolatry itself: “[we are] right in this desire but wrong in [our] manner of looking for it” (*EDEL*, 63, cf. 64). The cross “forces us to look at the dangerousness of man and all his heinous deeds,” that is, our idolatrous attempt to be gods that results in the attempted destruction of the one who is truly God and truly human. Yet, the cross also “makes us look upon God, who is stronger, stronger in his weakness” (*Salt of the Earth*, 26). In stark contrast to human idolatry, the cross demonstrates true “almightiness” and “lordship of all,” for on the cross (and in the crib in Bethlehem that is its presupposition), the almighty Lord God “has voluntarily chosen the final degree of powerlessness by delivering himself up to his weakest creature.” Thus,

[t]he highest power is demonstrated as the calm willingness completely to renounce all power; and we are shown that it is powerful, not through force, but only through the freedom of love, which, even when it is rejected, is stronger than the exultant powers of earthly violence (*ItC*, 149).

This affirmation of the God of Jesus Christ, however, cannot be made on the basis of the cross alone. No, “[o]nly since Easter can we really utter the first article of faith; only on the basis of Easter is this profession rich and full of consolation: I believe in God, the Father Almighty” (*BPO*, 120).⁴³ Moreover, while idolatry assumes a miserly divinity and leads to “the grasping audacity of Prometheus” (*EDEL*, 64), the “excess or superfluity [*Überflus*]” (*ItC*, 262 [246], cf. 257) of the prodigal God shines forth on the cross: “Excess is God’s trademark in his creation” and

the real foundation and form of salvation history, which in the last analysis is nothing other than the truly breathtaking fact that God, in an incredible outpouring of himself, expends not only a universe but his own self in order to lead man... to salvation (“The Sign of Cana,” 682 and 685).

Nothing external necessitates this divine profligacy.⁴⁴ That God’s own righteous mercy

43. “The Lamb with his mortal wound tells us that, in the end, it is not those who kill who will be the victors; on the contrary, the world is sustained by those who sacrifice themselves” (*BPO*, 114).

44. Regarding this *internal* motivation, it seems that while Ratzinger says, “[i]t belongs to God’s nature to love what he has created; so it belongs to his nature to bind himself and, in doing so, to go all the way to the Cross” (*MROC*, 73–74), he means something like *personal character* rather than *nature*, as indicated by his statements, “God is God by his very nature, but it is not nature as such that is God”

motivates this salvation reveals the extent of God's *Überfluss*, for in saving idolaters God "does not calculate," but "goes far beyond what need be" and "infinitely surpasses the failing efforts of man" (*ItC*, 260).⁴⁵ In fact, God accomplishes this salvation through the "divinization" of human persons, who "can become God, not by making [themselves] God, but by allowing [themselves] to be made 'Son'" (*EDEL*, 64–65). In order to understand how humans can be transformed into "sons," we will examine Ratzinger's understanding of the triune life of God and the "we" character of human life.

II.A. The Triune Life of God

The divine life is a dialogue between Father and Son in the communion of the Holy Spirit from all eternity, now fully opened to humanity in Jesus Christ. Ratzinger presents what might be called a *narrative* doctrine of the Trinity, generally eschewing scholastic-style definitions in favor of pointing to Jesus Christ's life of dialogue, prefigured in Israel.⁴⁶ In sum, "God *is* as he *shows* himself; God does not show himself in a way in which he is not. On this assertion... is grounded the doctrine of the Trinity; indeed, it *is* this doctrine" (*ItC*, 165).⁴⁷ As discussed above, the "Christocentric emphasis is, as such, always a trinitarian emphasis" (*OWJC*, 132), because the "'I' of Jesus refers absolutely [*reine Verniesenheit... ist*] to the 'Thou' of the Father and is not self-sufficient" (*ItC*, 21 [19]). Therefore, "Faith in the triune God is nothing but the

(*TaT*, 172–73), and "this being is pure relation (not substantiality)" (*ItC*, 186–87).

45. Ratzinger here identifies Jesus Christ with the excess of the righteousness of God (cf. Barth).

46. The key example is Ratzinger's *ItC*, which he later described in the preface to the new edition as a work of "narrative Christology" (29). Fergus Kerr has been a consistent, if not forthright, critic of Ratzinger's seeming disregard for the Thomist tradition, among other things (see *Twentieth Century Catholic Theology*, 183–202—the criticism becomes more obvious if one keeps in mind Kerr's "The Cardinal and Post-Conciliar Britain"; "Ratzinger's Hick"; and "Ratzinger's Thomism").

47. Yet, Ratzinger also describes the doctrine of the Trinity as "negative theology," noting that the main concepts were all condemned at some point. The doctrine is composed, then, of "poor stammering utterances—and no more," for "these condemnations of the later formulas of faith form an intimate part of them: it is only through the negation, and the infinite indirectness implicit in it, that they are usable. The doctrine of the Trinity is only possible as a piece of baffled [*durchkreuzte*] theology" (*ItC*, 172 [160]).

explanation of what takes place in Jesus' prayer, in which the Trinity appears in all its brilliance" (*GJC*, 27). The doctrine of the Trinity not only recognizes and expresses "the dialogue of love within God himself," confessing, "Yes, in God himself there is an eternal dialogue between Father and Son, who are both truly one and the same God in the Holy Spirit" (*JhN*, 345 and 320), but goes on to claim that God *is* this dialogue: "Even before the world was created, God is already the love [i.e., the Spirit] of the Father and the Son" (*GJC*, 27).

Ratzinger argues that the self-revelation of the Lord's name to Israel opened the way toward this dialogical ontology. The divine name, YHWH, emerged from Israel's encounter with the Lord, the relationship of divine call and human response. Thus, the heart of the Old Testament is the self-naming of God, which "implies the ability to be called on, to speak, to hear, to answer" (*ItC*, 22). Ratzinger contends that the revelation of the divine name, and not Israel's concept of God, stands out as the revolutionary element of the Old Testament—for there is a radical difference between a concept, which "tries to perceive the nature [*Wesen*] of the thing as it is in itself," and a name, which

does not ask after the nature of the thing as it exists independently [*unabhängig*] of me; it is concerned to make the thing nameable, that is, "invocable [*anrufbar*]," to establish a relation to it... to the end that it comes into relation to me and in this way becomes accessible [*zugänglich*] to me.

Thus,

When God names himself after the self-understanding of faith, he is not so much expressing his inner nature as making himself nameable [*macht sich nennbar*]; he is handing himself over to men in such a way that he can be called upon [*rufbar wird*] by them. And by doing this he enters into coexistence with them; he puts himself within their reach [*erreichbar*]; he is "there" for them (*ItC*, 134 [123], but see the "Preface to the New Edition" and all of 77–113).⁴⁸

This reference to the God of Israel immediately raises the question of the unity of God:

48. Thus, the God of Israel "never becomes a God of the philosophers; he remains the living God, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob" (*MCB*, 46–47). For this reason, Ratzinger often distinguishes between the *person*, Jesus Christ, as the object of Christian faith, and the doctrines, propositions and concepts with which we describe and seek to understand this person, e.g., "faith is not the acceptance of a system but the acceptance of this person who is his word" (*ItC*, 205; cf. "Church's Teaching," 63; and *OWJC*, 82). It is exactly this *personal* dimension of faith that is lacking in Tracey Rowland's account of Ratzinger's theology (*Ratzinger's Faith*).

how can Christians claim that their faith in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is in continuity with Israel's faith in *one* God?

With regard to the *una substantia, tres personae* formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity, Ratzinger devotes little attention to the *una substantia*, focusing instead on the *tres personae* and their unity (oneness) through relationship. While Ratzinger acknowledges that “the substance is *one*” (*PCT*, 182), he pushes towards a “theological metaphysics,” arguing that “person... does not live on the level of substance... but on the level of dialogical reality, or relativity toward the other.... Relation is here recognized as a third fundamental category [*eine dritte eigentümliche Grundkategorie*] between substance and accident” (“Person,” 444 [*Dogma und Verkündigung*, 211–12], drawing on Augustine). This emphasis makes Ratzinger's doctrine of the Trinity, like his Christology, “a doctrine of relativity” (*ItC*, 186).⁴⁹ In fact, Volf accuses Ratzinger of collapsing persons into relations, and understandably so in light of Ratzinger's definition of *person*: “this being [person] is pure relation (not substantiality)” or

The three persons.... are not substances that stand next to each other, but they are real existing relations, and nothing besides.... In God, person means relation, being related, is not something superadded to the person, but it *is* the person itself.... the person exists only *as* relation (*ItC*, 187).⁵⁰

Yet, Volf's criticism does not attend to Ratzinger's *actualism* (also evident in his emphasis on the unity of being and act in Christology). In particular, Ratzinger goes on to qualify the above statement: “*Noch konkreter gesagt?*”

*die erste Person zeugt nicht in dem Sinne, als ob zur fertigen Person der Akt des Zeugens eines Sohnes hinzukäme, sondern sie ist die Tat des Zeugens, des Sich-Hingens un Sich-Ausströmens. Sie ist mit diesem Akt der Hingabe identisch. Man könnte also die erste Person bestimmen als die Hingabe in fruchtbarem Erkennen und Lieben; sie ist nicht der Hingebende, an dem es den Akt der Hingabe gibt, sondern sie ist selbst die Hingabe, reine Aktwirklichkeit ([*Dogma und Verkündigung*, 211*], cf. “Person,” 444).*

There is nothing static about these persons in relation; God's being is wholly dynamic,

49. Paradoxically, it is exactly the truth of this “relativity,” or what he refers to earlier as “the absoluteness of the relative” (*ItC*, 180), that Ratzinger attempts to protect by combating the “dictatorship of relativism.”

50. [“*Person ist die reine Relation der Bezogenheit, nicht sonst*” (*ItC*, 183 [170]; cf. “Person,” 444 and 445 [211]).]

“*actualitas divina*.... God is absolutely ‘in act’” (*ItC*, 175 [162]).⁵¹ Ratzinger’s identification of persons and relations does not *reduce* persons to relations (contra Volf and Alan Brown) because it occurs within the context of a dialogical actualism that is personal all the way down and a personalism that is irreducibly dynamic. Being neither precedes action nor becomes personal through it and the persons have no existence apart from acting in relation. *Being is persons-in-active-relations*; the “absolute” of God is “absolute ‘relatedness’... *relatio subsistens*.”⁵² Thus, *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* name persons inextricable from dynamic relationship: “the true God is..., being-for (Father), being-from (Son), and being-with (Holy Spirit)” (*TaT*, 248). On these grounds, Ratzinger differentiates divine and human personhood—whereas human relationships are added to the already existing person or nature, the divine persons only and always exist as relatedness. Thus, while allowing that “the concept of *persona* absolutely dictated itself” to theology, Ratzinger emphasizes that “*das Bekenntnis, Gott sei Person in der Weise der Dreipersonlichkeit, einen naiven, anthropomorphischen Personbegriff sprengt.... sodass der Begriff Person, so viel er erhellt, doch auch wieder als unzulängliches Gleichnis sich enthüllt*” (*ItC*, 182 and 179–80 [167], NB “*Weise*”). The theological serviceability of *person* comes from the very “vagueness [*Schwebende*]” of the term against its relational-dialogical background from its theatrical and literary roots (*ItC*, 182 [169]; cf. the whole of “Person”). In particular, theological uses of *person* must constantly combat the tendency to understand human persons first as self-sufficient individuals who then enter into relationships, an understanding incompatible with the oneness of the three-personed God.

51. Ratzinger draws on Schrödinger’s wave theory in physics as an “exciting simile” for God’s existence, though “parcels of waves” describe “a being [unlike God] that has no substance but is purely actual.” Later, Ratzinger indicates that his relational ontology does not negate “substance metaphysics”: “*neben der Substanz der Dialog, die Relatio [sic], als eine gleichermaßen ursprüngliche Form des Seins steht.*” Yet, “*Die Alleinherrschaft des Substanzdenkens wird gebrochen, Relation als eine gleichrangige Urweise des Wirklichen entdeckt*” (*ItC*, 183 [170] and 184 [171]).

52. Ratzinger frequently contrasts the dynamic relationality of the biblical God, that is “being-in-relation” (“Covenant,” 651), with “the philosophical God” (*ItC*, 147) or “the God of the philosophers” (*MCB*, 46–47). As we will see, although underemphasized, Zizioulas shares this dynamic account of personhood. It is not “a being that enters into relationships,” but “being [*dynamic!*] in relation.”

Although affirming the substantial unity of God, Ratzinger works to develop a personal (that is, actual-relational) account of the unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.⁵³ The ontological actualism and personalism described above are central to Ratzinger's account of oneness, for they refuse the ontological primacy of "thought thinking itself in solitude, ...an absolute and indivisible ego shut in on itself" (*CEP*, 31). Rather, the eternal life of God, as an event of three persons, "does not exemplify loneliness but ecstasy, a complete going-out-from himself" (*PCT*, 22 and 350), it is "self-transcendence, 'unselfishness'" and "communicability, ...fruitfulness" (*ItC*, 179–80). In recognizing this, Ratzinger argues that "the confession of Christianity continues to be, like that of Israel, a confession of the one God" and, in fact, deepens Israel's confession by affirming that God did not become something alien to his being in his encounter with Israel, but exists from all eternity as "an encounter with God himself" (*PCT*, 21; drawing on Henri de Lubac's *The Christian Faith*). That is to say, the unity of God is a dynamic "we" (*CEP*, 30-31).⁵⁴ God is one *because* of God's tri-personhood, not *despite* it. Indeed, Ratzinger argues that the *communio* we see in the interaction between Father and Son in the Holy Spirit's bond of love forces a recognition of "the plural in the unity of God," and thereby points the way to

the final elimination of dualism as a means of explaining plurality alongside unity; only through this belief is the positive validation of the many given a definitive base. God stands above singular and plural. He bursts both categories.... The multi-unity that grows in love is a more radical, truer unity than the unity of the "atom" (*ItC*, 179).⁵⁵

In God, unity does not erase plurality and difference, but affirms it. Furthermore, because the persons are one in being, the unity is equality.⁵⁶ Ratzinger connects this

53. "The mediation of Father and Son comes to full unity not when it is seen in a universal, ontic *consustantialitas* but as *communio*. In other words, it is not derived from a universally metaphysical substance but from the person..." ("Holy Spirit," 326).

54. Again, drawing on Lubac (*The Christian Faith*; and *Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man*—note Ratzinger's foreword to the latter, commending what he calls "an essential milestone on my theological journey," that he expects to be "no less restorative and helpful today than it was fifty years ago" [11 and 12]).

55. In other words, "God can subsist only in a multitude of relations... and therein form a perfect unity and also the fullness of being" (*ItC*, 175).

56. As Ratzinger emphasizes 1) the aboriginality of *both* unity *and* plurality and

unity and equality to the divine love, that is, to the person of the Holy Spirit:

The Father and the Son do not become one by dissolving into one another. They stay face to face, for love is established as a face-to-face meeting.... If then each of the Persons stays himself, and if they do not mutually eliminate each other, the unity cannot consist of each Person by himself but in the fruitfulness in which each of them offers himself and is himself. They are one inasmuch as their love is fruitful and goes beyond them. In the Third Person the Father and Son give themselves to each other, and in this gift they bring it about that each of them is himself and that they are also one (*GJC*, 28).⁵⁷

Ratzinger contends that while the names *Father* and *Son* illumine the dynamic particularity of the first and second persons of the Trinity, *Holy Spirit* does not to the same extent. Building on Augustine, Ratzinger offers *love* and *gift* as proper names that highlight “the particularity of the third Person as giving and receiving, i.e. being as gift and being as reception, as word and response—characteristics which are so completely one that unity not subordination arises within them” (“Holy Spirit,” 326). As we will see, Ratzinger’s understanding of the Holy Spirit as *communio*, “having his highest selfness precisely in being fully the movement of *communio*,” has profound implications for his understanding of the relationship between God and humanity, particularly in his *communio* ecclesiology (“Holy Spirit,” 327).

II.B. Human Life: Jesus Christ

Ratzinger’s anthropology hinges upon the *σάρχ ἐγένετο* of John 1:14, which he understands as the assumption of human being and not merely the assumption of

difference, and 2) the entirety of Jesus Christ’s life as revelation, it is not surprising that Ratzinger interprets Jesus Christ’s submission to the Father’s will as revelatory of a *taxis* in the divine life: “Jesus subordinates himself *as Son* entirely to the Father,” but argues that it is this very submission, that is, “giving up the autonomy that is closed in upon itself” that “makes him fully equal with the Father, truly equal to and truly one with the Father” (*JoN*, 343; cf. *BPO*, 41). Ratzinger distinguishes this subordination from (ontological) subordination-*ism* (“Holy Spirit,” 326, for example). Ratzinger argues the knowledge of the Father demonstrated by the Son entails “perfect communion in knowledge,” deriving from “communion in being.... unity in being” (*JoN*, 340).

57. “When [the Spirit] is named by that which is the divinity of God, by what the Father and Son have in common, then his essence is just that, the *communio* of Father and Son. The particularity of the Holy Spirit is evidently that he is what the Father and Son have in common. His particularity is being unity.... The Spirit is Person as unity, unity as Person” (“Holy Spirit,” 326).

human flesh (“Commentary-GS,” V: 160).⁵⁸ As seen above, this action of God allows Christianity “to present theology as anthropology” (“Commentary-GS,” V: 159), but it also provides an anchor for anthropology: “God ‘is’ man—it is in this formula that the whole greatness of the Easter reality has first been fully apprehended and has become, from a passing point in history, its axis, which bears us all” (*PCT*, 190; cf. *ItC*, 292–93; and *FaF*, 88).⁵⁹ Although it is God who “becomes human,” it is humanity that is truly transformed, for as Jesus Christ’s dialogue with the Father in the Holy Spirit opens the divine life to humanity, the way is also opened for humanity to become God.⁶⁰ Ratzinger does not understand this divinization in terms of nature, energy, or essence, but finds “the full ontological depth” of the *assumptio hominis* in the *personal union*

58. “[T]he living God, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob... becomes the God of Jesus Christ and thus the God who has taken on our flesh and blood and *our whole human nature*” (*MCB*, 46*, cf. Barth).

59. In the incarnation, cross and resurrection, “the Word becomes the ‘verbification’ of the flesh. Each penetrates the other.... The flesh itself is ‘logicized’, but precisely this verbification of the flesh effects a new unity of all reality, which was obviously so important to God that he let it cost him his Son on the cross” (“Liturgy and Sacred Music,” 386). Ratzinger’s emphasis here resonates with Barth’s later emphasis on the “humanity of God.” Aaron Canty makes the case that Ratzinger owes this understanding of Jesus Christ as the “center” or “axis” of history to Bonaventure (“Bonaventurian Resonances in Benedict XVI’s Theology of Revelation”). It is not sufficiently clear, however, that Ratzinger appreciated Barth’s emphasis on Christ because of his studies of Bonaventure (as Canty supposes), rather than *vice versa* (as indicated by Ratzinger’s “Commentary on *Dei Verbum*,” III).

60. Regarding *God becoming human*, Ratzinger says, “the Logos so humbles himself that he adopts a man’s will as his own and addresses the Father with the I of this human being; he transfers his own I to this man and thus transforms human speech into the eternal Word, into his blessed ‘Yes, Father’” (*BPO*, 41). With regard to the *assumptio hominis* opening the divine life to humanity: “In Jesus Christ, God has not only spoken to men but has also finally and radically made it possible for them to speak to him; for in him God became man and, as man, finally stepped out of his totally different being and entered into the dialogic situation of all men.... Thus the question of how changeable man can address a totally different, unchangeable God is resolved. In Christ, God has taken a piece of this world’s time and of changeable creatureliness, drawn it to himself, and finally thrown open the door between himself and his creatures. In Christ, God has become God more concretely, more personally, and more ‘addressably’, a ‘partner of men’” (*MCB*, 46–47). Moreover, “He has entered into history, has come to meet man, and thus man can now go to meet him. He can unite himself with God, because God has united himself with man” (*TaT*, 172–73). This “change,” however, simply reveals to humanity what (better, *who*) God has been from all eternity. Even the self-sacrificial death of Christ on the cross does not change God, but requires humans to change their idolatrous theology: “God has undertaken that which is speculatively impossible, namely, His own identification with humanity, thereby assuming to Himself those things in humanity which are contrary to the divine: finiteness and death” (“Identification,” 23).

whereby human existence is conformed to the eternal Son's filial existence in Jesus Christ (*PCT*, 160).⁶¹ Rather, because this union is personal, it "is not a juxtaposition but a mutual indwelling," that "involves no amputation or reduction in any way of human nature," but "brings him for the first time to his real fullness" (*BPO*, 38).⁶² With regard to the fullness of Jesus' humanity, Ratzinger particularly stresses the importance of the rejection of monothelitism at the third council of Chalcedon for opening up the full implications of the double *ὁμοούσιον*:

Jesus has a human will which is not absorbed by the divine will. But this human will follows the divine will and thus becomes one will with it, not in a natural manner but along the path of freedom. The metaphysical two-ness of a human and divine will is not abrogated, but in the realm of the *person*, in the realm of freedom, the fusion of both takes place, with the result that they become *one* will, not naturally, but personally. This free unity—a form of unity created by love—is higher and more interior than a merely natural unity. It corresponds to the highest unity there is, namely, trinitarian unity (*BPO*, 39).⁶³

In this light, the transformation wrought by the Son's *assumptio hominis* becomes clear: in Jesus Christ humanity "has become a pure Yes to the Father's will," and in this way "the Son transforms the anguish of a man into his own filial obedience, the speech of the servant into the Word which is the Son" (*BPO*, 39 and 41). Divinization means becoming Son, and the incarnate Son—the *personal union* of God and man—is the purpose of the incarnation and the sum total of revelation (cf. *Dei Verbum*, 2; and "Commentary-DV," III). In him, "God's dialogue with man, God's entry into mankind in Jesus, the man who is God, has achieved its goal," for the Word's purpose is not to communicate *something*, but to be the *personal union* of God and humanity (*ItC*, 263). Again, this event comes to pass in Jesus Christ's prayer in the Spirit—not as state, but as pure *actualitas* (*ItC*, 210). This emphasis on the *hypostatic union* (understood as *caritas*

61. This union is *eternal* and *indissoluble* (*SL*, 95).

62. Furthermore (cf. Barth): "the unity of divinity and humanity in Christ which brings 'salvation' to man.... abolishes all dualism or parallelism of the two natures, such as had always seemed necessary in order to safeguard Jesus' human freedom," for "when the human will is taken up into the will of God, freedom is not destroyed; indeed, only then does genuine freedom come into its own."

63. "The two 'wills' are united in the way in which two wills can be united, namely, in a common affirmation of a shared value. In other words, what unites the two wills is the Yes of Christ's human will to the divine will of the Logos. Thus, in concrete terms—'existentially'—the two wills become a single will while remaining, at the ontological level, two independent realities" (*BPO*, 92).

actualitas) as the *telos* of the *assumptio hominis* leads Ratzinger to understand the cross as an event of love, and only as such as the satisfaction of the righteousness of God.

In opposition to those who understand the cross to be a sort of cosmic reckoning of accounts, Ratzinger exegetes the cross as an act of love that reveals both the depths of the hypostatic union and the extent of the rebellious idolatry of humanity, even as humanity is transformed. Paradoxically, “the Cross is, first, a break, ...being cast forth..., but in that very way it becomes a new center of gravity..., for the bringing together of what is divided” (*TaT*, 71). In contrast to this, Ratzinger outlines the “cruelly mechanical” theory of satisfaction in its “vulgarized form [*Vergröberung*]” in which “it looks as if the Cross is to be understood as part of a mechanism of injured and restored right.”⁶⁴ Ratzinger judges this soteriology deficient, for according to it “the infinitely offended righteousness of God was propitiated... by means of an infinite expiation,” indicating that God “insists on a precise balance between credit and debit,” yet as only God can provide sufficient credit, “[God] gives first secretly with the left hand what [God] takes back again ceremonially with the right” (*ItC*, 281). This leads to the falsehood that God’s “unrelenting righteousness demanded a human sacrifice, the sacrifice of his own Son”—where “sacrifice” is understood as “destruction.” Ratzinger finds the main faults of this soteriology in its separation of Jesus Christ’s person and work and its view of the cross as “a feat that God must demand because he himself is under an obligation to the concept of order” (*ItC*, 233–34). In place of this image, which “is as false as it is widespread,” Ratzinger proposes what he describes as a more biblical, Pauline account that takes up “the guiding thread” that runs through Anselm’s account, “the little word ‘for,’” and allows it to define the righteousness of God and the transformation of humanity (*ItC*, 281 and 233). This opens the way for an account of

64. Ratzinger argues that even the “classical form” given to satisfaction theory by Anselm “is not devoid of one-sidedness” and that “the perfectly logical divine-*cum*-human legal system erected by Anselm distorts the perspectives and with its rigid logic can make the image of God appear in a sinister light” (*ItC*, 231 and 233). Ratzinger could go some way, then, with critics of Anselm such as Mark Heim (*Saved from Sacrifice*); and Denny Weaver (*The Nonviolent Atonement*), though he would ultimately part company with them.

the cross that does not set God's love and righteousness in opposition and attends to the transformation of humanity wrought on the cross.

Ratzinger interprets the cross as an event wherein humanity becomes a true covenant partner through God's love for and affirmation of humanity. On the cross "God vouches for the indestructability of the covenant" and demonstrates "the self-commitment" that is "the very being of God," by bearing the death that results from breaking this covenant ("Covenant," 649, referencing Genesis 15:12–21). The cross demonstrates "genuine Passion," which "consists in God himself, in the person of his Son, suffering Israel's rejection," as "God takes the destiny of love destroyed upon himself; he takes the place of the Sinner and offers the Son's place to men"—an action whereby God's heart "overthrows its righteousness by mercy and by that very action remains righteous" (*BPO*, 64).⁶⁵ God's righteousness does not sit back and wait for human conciliation, but itself goes forth to right the relationship, as Ratzinger notes, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19).⁶⁶ As *God's* exodus and reconciling act, "[t]he cross.... stands there, not as the work of expiation that mankind offers to the wrathful God, but as the expression of that foolish love of God's that gives itself away to the point of humiliation in order thus to save man" (*ItC*, 281). The good news of Jesus Christ is not that some cosmic scale has been balanced or that God's love edged out his wrath, but that God refuses *to be* God without us:

The Cross is the approbation of our existence, not in words, but in an act so completely radical that it caused God to become flesh and pierced this flesh to the quick; that, to God, it was worth the death of his incarnate Son. One who is so loved that the other identifies his life with this love and no longer desires to live if he is deprived of it; one who is loved even unto death—such a one knows that he is truly loved. But if God so loves us, then we are loved in truth. Then love is truth, and truth is love. Then life is worth living. This is the

65. Elsewhere, Ratzinger describes the cross as "the Passover of Jesus Christ: in the *ἀγάπη εἰς τέλος*, in the radical love that become a total exodus from himself, a going-out-from-himself toward the other even to the radical delivery of himself to death" (*PCT*, 189).

66. As we will see, while this relationship requires active reception on the part of the human person, it depends upon grace, that is, "the real agent here can only be God," and "by its very nature it can only be received.... Salvation is not a 'work' of man" ("Commentary-*GS*," V: 162; cf. Barth).

evangelium (PCT, 81).⁶⁷

By emphasizing the primacy of God's gracious action, Ratzinger does not ignore sin or Jesus Christ's suffering, but places them into the proper context of covenant-love. Thus, the suffering that Jesus endures on the cross is not the purpose of the incarnation, but "the form that love takes in a world characterized by death and self-seeking" (*ItC*, 289). What is important is not that Jesus suffered "enough," but that suffering no longer simply be equated with the absence of God (Jesus remains Son through it all), for Jesus suffers in "a new way... that is not a curse, but a love that transforms the world," through which he "has taken up humanity—a lost sheep—onto his shoulders and brought it back to the Father through the night of sin" (*GJC*, 48).⁶⁸ In this way death itself has been transformed from an ending into a new beginning.

The cross both reveals and accomplishes the transformation of humanity into a covenant partner, united with God in a dynamic personal relationship. Like Barth, Ratzinger holds that, "there clearly emerges, from the unconditional nature of God's action, a true 'two-sidedness': the testament becomes covenant" ("Covenant," 649, cf. 650; and *PCT*, 261). Furthermore, just as with the Father and Son, this "two-sidedness" only exists as union in love, that is, in the Holy Spirit. This "one-ness of man and God" happened definitively in Jesus Christ, thus, *he* is "the truly decisive, redemptive factor, ...the real future of man, on which all lines must finally converge" (*ItC*, 229). That is to say, as the unity of God and man, Jesus Christ is the *telos* of humanity, or in Ratzinger's preferred idiom, the *last* or *eschatological Adam*.⁶⁹ Here, then, is the heart of Ratzinger's

67. When Ratzinger glosses the gospel as God's word to humanity: "It is good that you exist—no, 'It is necessary that you exist,'" it seems that he is not referring to a "natural" necessity but an existential-volitional necessity.

68. "In the last analysis pain is the product and expression of Jesus Christ's being stretched out from being in God right down to the hell of 'My God, why have you forsaken me.... It is not pain as such that counts but the breadth of the love that spans existence so completely that it unites with the distant and the near, bringing God-forsaken man into relation with God. It alone gives the pain an aim and a meaning. Were it otherwise, then the executioners around the Cross would have been the real priests; they, who had caused the pain, would have offered the sacrifice" (*ItC*, 291). See also Ratzinger's reflections on the "different—better and stronger" word spoken by Jesus' blood compared to Abel's (*GCC*, 96, cf. Hebrews 12:24).

69. Ratzinger calls the identification of Jesus Christ as "the *new Adam*, the *eschatological* image of God" the "fundamental idea" of *Gaudium et Spes* ("Commentary-

anthropology: the measure of humanity is not found in an historical or biological forbearer, an abstract idea, or an extrapolated future, but in the covenantal union of God and man that occurs in Jesus Christ, for “in him the Creator’s conception of man finds its full expression” and “the creation of man first attains its true goal” (*DaP*, 22). This leads Ratzinger to an understanding of the *imago Dei* as the *divinization* of humanity that occurs in Jesus Christ: when the second person of the Trinity becomes a human, humanity becomes “Son” (*BPO*, 35, 41, and 92). To bear the *imago* is to exist as a *person*, more specifically, to exist as Son, and for this reason Ratzinger argues that the concept of *person*, “constitutes the link between doctrine about God and doctrine about man” (“Commentary-*GS*,” V: 131).⁷⁰ It is not that *personhood* is an innate possession of every human, but that *in Christ*—to whom *imago Dei* “is perfectly applied”—all humans may become persons (*GJC*, 47).⁷¹ Indeed, the true humanity of Jesus Christ involves a double *unio*, not only the union of God and man, but also the union of all humanity in Jesus Christ, for “in the last analysis mankind is ‘one man’” (*ItC*, 312).⁷² Ratzinger

GS,” V: 160). Rowland (*Ratzinger’s Faith*, 33–34) notes the importance of the “eschatological Adam” for Ratzinger’s anthropology, as does Nichols (*The Thought of Benedict XVI*, 47–48 and 89), but Murphy recognizes that Ratzinger has attempted a *synthesis* of the relational and Adamic in his christological anthropology (*Christ, Our Joy*, 115).

70. That is to say, the concept *person* allows theology to name this transformation. Although generally appreciative of the anthropology of *Gaudium et Spes*, Ratzinger thinks it cannot fulfil its promise because “the term ‘person’ plays no part.”

71. When Ratzinger here describes Jesus Christ as “the restored image of God,” it may appear that he understands salvation as a *restitutio ad integrum*. However, he interprets the beginning, nature, and essence of creation *Christologically*: “Jesus is Christ, God is man. Hence man’s future means being one with God and so being one with mankind, which will be a single, final man in the manifold unity that is created by the exodus of love” (*PCT*, 160, 156, and 190). Yet, even as Jesus Christ is the *telos* of creation, he is so as the fulfillment of the *arche*, the Logos that stands at the beginning of creation. Therefore, Ratzinger does not shy away from affirming that there is a *logos*, or rationality, to creation that allows for discussion of natural law, orders of creation, etc. He holds, however, that this *logos* is only fully revealed in the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, that is *ho eschatos*, and theology must always check itself against him—who is not simply the repetition of Adam, minus sin. See Ratzinger’s brief but revealing comments regarding the desirability of an ethics constructed on the basis of Jesus Christ, but his defense of natural law as a viable pathway for Christian ethics because “Christ is the Logos incarnate,” and as the “reason” of creation, “He wishes therefore to awaken our human reason to its power” (“Current Doctrinal Relevance of the Catechism of the Catholic Church”).

72. “[M]an... in the end is Jesus Christ” (*FaF*, 88). Ratzinger explains: “Christ

describes this eschatological unity:

the union that has taken place at the one point “Jesus of Nazareth” must attain the whole of mankind, the whole one “Adam,” and transform it into the “body of Christ”.... Humanity cannot go beyond him—to that extent Christ is the end; but it must enter into him—to that extent he is the real beginning.... The fact that God’s final decision for man has already been made means—according to the conviction of the Christian faith—that there is such a thing as finality in history, even if this finality is of such a kind that it does not exclude the future but inaugurates it (*ItC*, 263–64).⁷³

In this way, Ratzinger’s emphasis on “the little word ‘for’” brings him to the *corpore* personhood of Jesus Christ and his understanding of salvation as something accomplished not merely on the cross, but *in* Jesus Christ, whose being-in-act continues after the cross in the ascension and the sending of the Spirit and the building up of his body, the church.

II.C. Church, Sacraments, Liturgy: Our Life in Christ and Christ’s Life in Us

Just as Jesus Christ cannot be isolated from his relationship to the Father and the Spirit and Christology demands the doctrine of the Trinity, Jesus Christ cannot be isolated from his body and bride, the Church, and Christology demands ecclesiology. In light of the Spirit’s work, “a narrow *solus Christus* is excluded, for the distinctive thing about Christ is that He has built and continues to build a body for Himself” (“Identification,” 26). In this work, the *telos* of the incarnation becomes clear: “Jesus Christ... is not just the promise of forgiveness; he is also the gathering together of the dispersed Adam into the *communio* of *agape*” (*PCT*, 261), the eschatological Adam who desires “to create a body for himself, to find a Bride—he sought a response. It was really for [the Church] that the Word went forth” (*SL*, 208; cf. *CtC*, 23, referencing Jn. 11:52 and Matt. 12:30). Therefore, the “we” form of the church—its existence as a

is not mediator but immediacy” in terms of this double *unio*: Jesus is “the very presence of God’s dealing with us, which is fulfilled in us through him, the one son of Abraham, so that we become ‘one’ in him (Gal 3:28). Thus there is, on the one side, the one God; on the other, Christ, together with whom we, too, are ‘one’” (*PCT*, 190 and 270)

73. Again, note the similarities to Barth. Ratzinger does not interpret this as a merely future possibility, for Jesus Christ’s fulfillment of *the imago* “is an event which affects every human being; consequently human nature in every human being is henceforth Christologically characterized” (“Commentary-*GS*,” V: 160).

gathering of persons—comprises an essential element of the church and salvation. Becoming a Christian necessarily involves joining the “I” together with the many “yous” that become a “we,” and “the most profound reason for this ‘we’ character of Christianity” is “the fact that God himself is a ‘we’..., so that being ‘we’, as the fundamental form of divinity, precedes all worldly instances of ‘we’, and the image and likeness of God necessarily refers to such a being ‘we’ from the very beginning” (*CEP*, 30–31). Ratzinger, however, emphasizes that this irreducibly ecclesial dimension of salvation is always qualified by Jesus Christ—and never *vice versa*. In the first instance, although the gathering of the church becomes a part of the gospel, “the point of convergence of this new people is Christ; it becomes a people solely through his call and its response to his call and to his person” (*CtC*, 23).⁷⁴ Second, while “Identification with Him is always identification with all that belongs to Him” (“Identification,” 26) and “Jesus and the church are not separable,” the church cannot simply be identified with his church because “Jesus is always infinitely more than the Church” (*DaP*, 8). Finally, although both God and the church are a “we,” and the communion of the church derives from the communion of the trinity, Ratzinger is wary of “a new way of thinking in terms of correspondence that overstretches the ecclesiological applicability of statements about the Trinity” (*CEP*, 32, n. 8). From this basis and with these qualifications, Ratzinger goes on to develop an ecclesiology of sacramental prayer.

II.C.1. Church: Filial Participation in *Communio*.

Ratzinger understands the entire existence of the church as a participation in Jesus Christ’s filial dialogue with the Father—that is, participation in the personal being of Jesus Christ. To find the church’s “true and ever-new origin, which is also her firm foundation,” one must look for the prayer of Jesus, for “[t]he Church is born in that prayer in which Jesus gives himself back into the Father’s hands and the Father commits everything to the Son” (*BPO*, 18). Again, only through the *assumptio hominis*, whereby “Jesus’ human consciousness and will, his human soul, is taken up into that

74. See “Catholicism,” 7–8, for more on the integral relation of the church to the gospel.

exchange [the Son conversing with the Father]” is “human ‘praying’... able to become a participation in this filial communion with the Father” (*JoN*, 7). That is to say, the human “capacity” for this participation is a gift resulting from the *assumptio hominis*, even as it fulfills creation. Crucially, this gift demands a response, without which it is impossible to have true fellowship with Jesus Christ. Furthermore, while this response must be concrete and personal, it cannot be an act of a person apart from the church, for fellowship with Jesus means “that all embracing fellowship that Paul calls the ‘Body of Christ’,” because “[s]haring in Jesus’ praying involves communion with all his brethren” (*BPO*, 27). This communion is the true unity of humanity, not the unity of the common nature or substance, but the *personal* unity that is “higher and more interior than a merely natural unity,” mentioned above (*BPO*, 39). For this reason, there is a similarity between the unity of Father-Son: “The Son can do nothing of his own accord” (John 5:19 and 30), and the Son and his disciples, whom he tells, “Apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). Yet, Ratzinger (*ItC*, 186) discerns a key difference: while Jesus expresses his unity with the Father “in the indicative”: “I and the Father *are* one” (Jn. 17:11*); he expresses the unity of the church “in the form of a prayer” with the petition “that they *may be* one even as we are one” (Jn. 17:22*). In this twofold way, then, as an eschatological petition and as an active participation, the church exists as prayer.

As the church is a communion of persons—a union of persons with Jesus Christ—it is built up through personalization. This personalization establishes the particular identity of the members of the church, even as *all* become “sons in the Son,” participating in Jesus Christ’s filial relationship with the Father in the Spirit. Paradoxically, only incorporation into the *one* body of Christ accomplishes “the breakthrough out of the limited scope of humanity, out of its monadic enclosure,” because in Jesus Christ “personalization and socialization no longer exclude each other but support each other” and “perfect unity.... and perfect individuality are one”

(*ItC*, 239).⁷⁵ To be a “son in the Son” is to exist as Jesus Christ, as “a completely open being, a being ‘from’ and ‘toward’, which nowhere clings to itself and nowhere stands on its own...., not standing on one’s own and in oneself, but living completely open in the ‘from’ and ‘toward’” (*ItC*, 186–87). The Christian will fall short of Christ’s perfect “from” and “toward,” but Ratzinger emphasizes that our salvation depends primarily on the act of God, who “draws man up into his uniqueness and newness” (“Covenant,” 642). Yet, Ratzinger also emphasizes that becoming “sons” (divinization) involves concrete and ongoing response to the prevenient act of God:

we become God by participating in the very gestures of the Son...., by letting the dialogue we are carrying on with the Father penetrate into the flesh of our daily lives.... becoming ‘the Body of Christ’... by agreeing each day to receive ourselves from him; by offering ourselves again each day to him; by giving each day to him our body as an occasion for the Word. We become God by walking after him (*GJC*, 60–61).⁷⁶

Again, the initiative is always God’s, but God’s ever-antecedent Word elicits a response and brings forth fruit (reminiscent of Isaiah 54:11). For this reason, Ratzinger contrasts Israel’s sonship, which comes about “merely because of the choosing and summoning call of God,” with Christian sonship, which derives from “being planted in the innate Son of the Father (John 1:18), with whom we are *one single* body, one single ‘seed of Abraham,’” meaning that when Christians address God as “Father”, their address is built not *only* upon the call of God, but upon “the *fact* of our true childhood in Christ Jesus” (*MCB*, 49, referencing Gal. 4:6 and Rom. 8:15-17). Sonship really occurs in the person of Jesus Christ (*being-in-act-with*), and our participation in his sonship will involve a corresponding relationship (*being-with*) and ethic (*being-in-act*).

75. Ratzinger here draws on Gal. 3:28 and Teilhard de Chardin, though he later distances himself from Teilhard’s biological-evolutionary understanding of Christ. More importantly, it is worth noting that although Ratzinger frequently uses the language of “*Individualisierung*” to parse this personalization (for instance *ItC*, 239; and *PCT*, 156 [162]), it should probably be interpreted as “particularization” as Ratzinger explicitly denounces individualism and uses “*Besonderung*” in parallel discussions.

76. Ratzinger therefore interprets the creation of the church-body as the fulfillment the incarnation: “a body thou has fitted to me” (Heb. 10:5, quoting Ps. 40:6 [LXX])—incidentally, Ratzinger’s dialogical anthropology seems akin to the Masoretic rendering of this text: the true human as the divinely opened ear.

II.C.2. The Church's Prayer: Sacraments and Liturgy.

Ratzinger understands the liturgy and sacraments as the primary locus and fullest realization of the Church's participation in Jesus Christ's sonship. That is to say, the liturgy is "the prayer of the Church, a prayer moved and guided by the Holy Spirit himself, a prayer in which Christ unceasingly becomes contemporary with us, enters into our lives" (*SL*, 7).⁷⁷ Just as Jesus Christ's dialogue with the Father involved both word and response, in the event of the liturgy the church both receives and responds to the divine word:

The essence of Christian worship is that it is the announcement of the Glad Tidings of God to the congregation bodily present, the answering acceptance by the congregation of this announcement, and the whole Church talking together to God, though this latter is closely interwoven with the announcement of God's message; for instance, the announcement of that which Christ did for us at the Last Supper is, at the same time, praise of God Who willed so to work in us through Christ, it is a remembrance of the salvific deeds of God in our regard and at the same time a cry to God to fulfil and complete the work then begun, at once a profession of faith and a profession of hope, at once thanksgiving and petition, at once announcement of the Good Tidings and prayer ("Catholicism," 7–8).

Given Ratzinger's emphasis on revelation and this dynamic of divine address in the liturgy, he seriously qualifies the *mysterium* of the liturgy. As an encounter with Christ through the Holy Spirit, "it is not the purpose of the liturgy to fill us with awe and terror in the presence of sacred things but to confront us with the two-edged sword of the Word of God" ("Catholicism," 9). Indeed, while no means denying the work of the Holy Spirit throughout creation, Ratzinger contends that after the *assumptio hominis* it would be *ungodly* to seek an exclusively private and individual encounter with Word in isolation from the liturgical gathering. Rather, "God acts precisely through the *Body* of Christ... divine action is always *theandric*..., and thus action mediated by... the God-man Jesus Christ and his corporeality," therefore "nothing authorizes us to relegate everything concerning the community to the sphere of the merely human." In terms of article 5 of Melanchthon's *Augsburg Confession*,

Since the coming of Christ, the "ubi et quando visum est Deo" is no longer an unknown somehow and somewhere, but rather its name is *Christ*, and we

77. Ratzinger's understanding of the Christian life could be summed up with Paul's two words of exhortation: "ἀδιαλείπτως προσεύχεσθε" (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

cannot try to be more divine than God, since he has bound his indisponibility to the Body of Jesus Christ in this manner (*CEP*, 125* [2008 trans., cf. 126–27 in 1988 trans.]).⁷⁸

Before proceeding to examine Ratzinger’s understanding of the sacraments, we must first come to grips with his emphasis on the “contemporaneity” of Jesus Christ.

The sacraments prevent individualistic and purely “spiritual” participation in Jesus Christ’s prayer by connecting worship to the physical, historical and social.⁷⁹ That is to say, the sacraments “*guarantee* [prayer] a suitable orientation, inserting it into the common prayer of the Church and thus into Christ’s dialogue with the Father” (*GCC*, 19*). The church cannot make this connection or engineer this participation herself, but must receive it from the Lord, as Ratzinger’s definition of sacrament makes clear: “[s]acrament means, I give what I myself cannot give; I do something that is not my work; I am on a mission and have become the bearer of that which another has committed to my charge” (*CtC*, 115). As embodiments of grace, the sacraments perpetually highlight the empty-handedness of humanity *in se*, even as they open the way to the fullness of communion. Jesus Christ’s disciples demonstrate this dynamic, for their communion with him consisted “precisely in having ‘nothing’ to call their own,” even as “Jesus is also entirely from the Father, has being only through him and in him and would not exist at all if he were not a continual coming forth from and self-return to the Father” (*CtC*, 114–15). In fact, Ratzinger holds that “all the fundamental liturgical acts of the Church have a christological structure; they are communications of him who, because he is God’s visible Word, is truly the founder of the Christian sacrament,” and ultimately, as Augustine says, “[t]he sacrament [*mysterium*] of God is nothing and no one but Christ” (*PCT*, 47, quoting from *PL* 33:845). The sacraments ground the church in creation and history because they derive from “the Word made

78. Note that Thomas Oden thanks Ratzinger for his “interest” in Oden’s systematic theology and presents a proposal for a modest “theandric” revision to Christology (*The Word of Life*, xx and 527–34).

79. When sacramental, the “Christian faith is never just spiritual and inward, never just a subjective or a personal and private relationship with Christ and his word, but is entirely concrete and ecclesial,” because “[t]he sacramental structure corrects... the tendency to confine religion not just to the purely spiritual but also to the purely individual” (*PFF*, 166 and 30).

flesh, ...the Redeemer, who is, at the same time, the Mediator of creation.”⁸⁰ On this basis

The materiality and historicity of the sacramental liturgy is thus always at the same time a christological confession: a reference to the one God who did not shrink from taking on our flesh and, by doing so, has drawn to his heart, in the historical turmoil of man’s life on earth, the burden and hope of history as well as the burden and the hope of the cosmos (*PCT*, 30).

Jesus Christ, then, is “the pole of the Christian place of worship” (“Catholicism,” 12), who binds the church “to the ‘once-only’ of the incarnation and of the Easter events, ...to God’s action in history” (“The Theological Locus of Ecclesial Movements,” 496). Yet, this connection to Jesus Christ, the risen one living in the power of the Holy Spirit, also liberates the church from the historical and physical.

In other words, the sacraments are the instruments and signs of the divinization of humanity. As the concretization of adoption (“sons in the Son”), a sacrament “draws man out of his own material and transitory world and sweeps him up into the Being of God,” effecting “sacramental union with Christ, and hence with God.” Again, although this “kinship with God represents a new and profoundly altered stage of human existence” (“Covenant,” 642), it “means becoming *communio* and thereby entering into the *mode* of being of the Holy Spirit,” not an alteration of human *ousia* (“Holy Spirit,” 327*⁸¹). The possibility of this sacramental *communio* depends solely on the Holy Spirit—the personal power of the resurrection whereby the limitations of human physicality and history were transcended, without stripping Jesus Christ of his physicality and historicity.

Christ as the Lord can be there among us and for us only because the Incarnation was not his last word. The Incarnation is perfected in the death on the Cross and in the Resurrection. That means: Christ can come only because he has gone before us in the way of life of the Holy Spirit and shares himself through him and in him (*PFF*, 184).

The Spirit empowered contemporaneity of the living Jesus Christ, that is, his *presence*

80. Ratzinger interprets this as a deepening in continuity with the Old Testament.

81. “Worship gives us a share in heaven’s *mode* of existence” (*SL*, 21*).

today, while *spiritual*, is in no way disembodied or private.⁸² Rather, it occurs sacramentally, which leads to a circularity in Ratzinger's thought with regard to this encounter. On the one hand, it is "[t]hrough the sacraments" that "Christ unceasingly becomes contemporary with us, enters into our lives" (*SL*, 7). On the other, "[t]he new presence of Christ in the Spirit is... the necessary presupposition for there being sacraments or any presence of the Lord in the sacraments" (*PFF*, 184). Yet, Ratzinger's *historical* understanding of Jesus Christ and the work of the Spirit anchor this circularity to history.

In the first instance, Ratzinger appeals directly to the history of Jesus Christ. Now, in light of the resurrection, the church's encounter with Jesus cannot be limited to the past, but must include "the three dimensions of time" (cf. Hebrews 13:8) and, in light of his identity with the eternal Son, the *arche* and *telos* of creation, encountering him also involves "a stepping beyond time" ("Jesus Christ Today," 68, cf. 69). However, as Jesus Christ is "*the same* yesterday, today, and forever," we must "listen to the Christ of yesterday, as he shows himself in the sources, especially in Holy Scripture" if we want "to come close to the whole Christ and not to some coincidentally perceived part" ("Jesus Today," 70).⁸³ Yet, while Ratzinger recognizes scripture as the authoritative prophetic-apostolic *tradition* of God's self-revelation in the person of Jesus Christ, he does not think it exhausts this revelation, that is, the *event* of

82. Note that *NSL*, Ratzinger's latest volume on liturgy, begins with an essay titled "Jesus Christ Today" (3–34, with a new preface), also includes "The Resurrection as the Foundation of Christian Liturgy" (73–97, originally titled "The Meaning of Sunday"), and concludes with "Conversion, Penance, and Renewal" (188–226).

83. Cf. Ratzinger's methodology in *JoN*. Given this deference to Scripture and Ratzinger's emphasis on "[i]ntimate friendship with Jesus, on which everything depends" (xii), it is no surprise that many evangelical Protestants have lauded *JoN*. For instance, Craig Blomberg's review commends the book to evangelical readers and notes "the number of pages on end where the reviewer finds himself underlining, agreeing with, and including exclamation points, thank you's, and even smiling faces in the margins of his copy of the book" ("Review"). Such readers, however, would likely part ways with Ratzinger's *totus Christus* and the pneumatology of abiding (in apostolic succession, especially the primacy of Peter). In fact, *Jesus of Nazareth* can be read as *apologia* that the proper home for "personal relationship with Jesus" is in the Roman Catholic Church—that is, as a pastoral response not only to "historical Jesus" research, but also to the mass exodus (so to speak) from Catholicism to the evangelical and charismatic churches, especially in the global south.

traditio (παράδοσις) in which the “Father gives the Son over to the world and... the Son for his part allows himself to be given over to the ‘nations’” (“Revelation,” 46).⁸⁴ Nevertheless, by anchoring to the historical Jesus Christ through the biblical witness, Ratzinger gains his justification for his second, historical-pneumatological, anchor for his sacramental ecclesiology: the Spirit *abides* in Jesus Christ.⁸⁵

In light of the Spirit’s *constant* indwelling of Christ, Ratzinger argues that the Spirit accomplishes the work of drawing others into personal communion through *abiding*.⁸⁶ Through this abiding the church participates in the Spirit’s ongoing work of *tradition* and *reception* and thereby becomes “the true subject of our knowledge of Jesus,” because “[i]n the Church’s memory the past is present because Christ is present and lives in her” (*BPO*, 27).⁸⁷ Moreover, Ratzinger identifies the *successio apostolica* as the concretization of this abiding, understood in terms of the Roman primacy that “exists in order to guarantee these essential components of the Church’s life and ensure their orderly relation with the local ecclesial structures,” making primacy, “the real core of the sacramental concept of the Church” (“Theological Locus,” 499–500).⁸⁸ The language of *guarantee* notwithstanding, Ratzinger does not conceive of this *abiding presence*

84. Ratzinger also addresses here the “non-identity” of scripture and revelation. While occasionally indicating that scripture is the norming norm, for instance when Ratzinger says, “there exists something like a certain independence of scripture as a separate, and in many respects perfectly unambiguous, criterion in face of the Church’s magisterium” (“Revelation,” 48), Ratzinger ultimately remains convinced that the ministry, by which he means *successio apostolica*, is the “criterion of the word. It guarantees the word” (“Revelation,” 29; cf. “Sources and Transmission of the Faith,” 32).

85. See “Holy Spirit” for Ratzinger’s treatment of *abiding*. Another, related circularity: one the one hand, “we can know the Spirit by contemplating... Christ” (*PCT*, 358); on the other, Ratzinger speaks of “interpretation of the Christ-event itself on the basis of the *pneuma*, which means on the basis of the Church’s present... the Church which is his Body in which his Spirit is active” (“Revelation,” 41–42).

86. “Whoever looks for the Spirit only externally... misunderstands the fundamental activity of *pneuma*: unifying love entering into *abiding*”—to the extent that Ratzinger finds the Spirit “precisely in the gift that *has been given*” (“Holy Spirit,” 334*).

87. For a concrete exposition (in dialogue with Martin Hengel) of the relationship between personal recollection, historical reality, church tradition and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in relation to the composition of the Gospel of John, see *JoN*, 230–31.

88. It seems in direct opposition to Barth and his followers that Ratzinger asserts that the being of the church is not dialectical or apocalyptic, but organic—to be understood in terms of historical continuity and development.

as the possession of the church. Rather, the sacrament of ordination preserves the character of the sacraments—of faith—in a special way through “[t]he opposition of gift and receiver,” testifying that “the gift of grace that always comes from without and can be attained only in receiving” (*CtC*, 120). This character becomes especially clear in the structural “interrelationship of imposition of hands and prayer,” that is, the combination of historical continuity and crying out for the grace that will never be a possession.⁸⁹ This crying out for and reception of grace (i.e., *prayer*), forms the heart of the sacraments, whereby humans are transformed into the Bride that participates in Jesus Christ’s *communio* with the Father in the Spirit.

The sacraments are both the instruments and the signs of this transformation. As a sign, a sacrament “expresses a relationship,” the right relationship between Father and Son in the Spirit, and in so doing, “it does not rest in itself but is *always on the way* to something else.” This dynamic requires the believer to “enter into its referential context... enter upon the way that it is,” and in this way the sacrament becomes an instrument of this transformation (*PCT*, 47*). Like scripture, the sacraments themselves are not “sufficient” for this transformation, but can only be instruments by which we receive God’s revelation, that is enter “into the Christ-reality, the source of that double state of affairs which Paul alternately describes with the words ‘Christ in us’ and ‘we in Christ’” (“Revelation,” 40). This “double state” will always be a gift, never a possession, never our work, our accomplishment.⁹⁰ Therefore, even as God gives himself to us, God “gives our existence a new direction” (*SL*, 22), that is, accomplishes our *conversion*, “the movement of our visible life toward a relationship with God” (*PCT*, 48).⁹¹ By

89. “This thought becomes stronger and clearer when we realize that the Church does not derive from herself even this gesture of sacramental prayer: she enters thereby into the apostolic form, into the tradition of the apostles; and it is precisely this that constitutes the sacrament: that it is a question, not of what the Church has devised for herself, but of what she has received—which precisely because it has been received, is the *certain point of contact* with the power of the Holy Spirit that comes from the Lord” (*PCT*, 242).

90. “He must first accept me as one of his own, and then I can enter into this acceptance and accept it for my own part, learn to live it” (*PFF*, 163).

91. Here, the sign and instrument converge, for “the occurrence of the insight that reveals the sign as a sign is simultaneous with conversion” (*PCT*, 48).

receiving the sacraments, Christians are “accepting a share in Christ’s destiny,” in other words, “the sacramental event of ‘Christianization’ [*Christwerdung*],” for “this reception entails transformation” (*GCC*, 30 and 33). This transformation occurs in the church, “where [Jesus] has permanently committed himself to sharing in man’s destiny,” because the church is not incidental to this transformation (*GCC*, 29–30). Rather, the church—the sacramental human *communio* that corresponds to the trinitarian *communio*—is the goal of this transformation: we must lose ourselves, but the Lord restores us “by giving... back [the] ‘I’ in the ‘we’ of the community of saints” (*CEP*, 126). Ratzinger judges baptism and the eucharist to be the two central sacraments in our transformation into Christ’s body: “[t]he act that does this for us is baptism” and “[t]he celebration of the Eucharist is the constant reestablishment of our bodily unity with the Lord and one another” (*MCB*, 50—cf. Barth). It is to these two sacraments that we now turn.

III. Baptism

Being baptized is “the call to share in Jesus’ relationship with God,” that is, in his dialogue with the Father in the Spirit (*PCT*, 32). The dialogical structure of the earliest baptismal rites bear witness to this and provide the paradigm for understanding Christian confession and faith: “the call from outside and the reply to it” (*ItC*, 92; cf. *PCT*, 34 and 109).⁹² Joining this dialogue requires that we identify ourselves with Jesus Christ and his body, and Ratzinger understands baptism to be “the concrete form which the act of identification takes” (“Identification,” 9 and 26).⁹³ Nothing within creation provides the basis for this identification, which is only “possible because it really occurred in Jesus and therefore became a possibility for us all” (*DZ*, 47). In Jesus Christ God identified himself with humanity and humanity was identified with God, and only in light of this double identification is the new intellectual, moral and social

92. For a glimpse of the epistemological implications, see *DaP*, 52.

93. Ratzinger intentionally appropriates “identification” from liberation theology and redefines it.

identity possible (“Identification,” 24).⁹⁴ Baptism draws the baptized into the second, human-God, identification by establishing “a communion of name between the human individual and the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,” whereby the baptized is “associated with the existential sphere [*Existenzbereich*] of that name,” that is, “the indestructible aliveness of God [*die unzerstörbar Lebendigkeit Gottes*]” (PCT, 31 and 32 [32]). Thus, God continues to link himself to humans in the way he linked himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: “Being baptized means entering into a communion of name [*Namengemeinschaft*] with him who is the Name and thus becoming more truly than Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the attribute of God.” Again, the resurrection is the *sine qua non* of this identification because “God is the God of the living, not of the dead” (PCT, 31 [32]; cf. Mt 22:31-32; Mk. 12:36-27; and Lk. 20:34-38). As this communion in the divine name is something shared by all who identify with Christ, it requires communion with all who share this name, i.e., the ecclesial *communio*.⁹⁵ To be baptized, therefore, means “[t]o be born of God” and “to be born into the whole Christ, Head and members” (PCT, 33 [33]). Although Jesus Christ is *for* all and *open* to all, there exists a “real frontier” that “runs... between being with Christ, on the one hand, and, on the other, being without him or against him,” and “the decisive step is taken in baptism” (EDEL, 227, cf. Barth). This is not the last step, however, because baptism demands a baptismal way of life of penance and ongoing purgation of our idolatry.

III.A. *Metanoia*: Reception, Response, Conversion

Ratzinger uses the term *metanoia* as a catchall description for what occurs at—and after—baptism. To understand *metanoia* is to have the pulse of Ratzinger’s theology: “*metanoia* is not just any Christian attitude, but the fundamental Christian act *per se*, understood admittedly from a very definite perspective: that of transformation,

94. Again, if Jesus Christ is not true God and true man, baptism is meaningless: “Theo-christology.... is *how* the belonging to God that Jesus spoke of actually takes place” (EDEL, 115).

95. Again, “the identification of each human person with all other human persons is possible, because all do stand or can stand in the context of this fundamental [double] identification” accomplished in Christ (“Identification,” 24).

conversion, renewal and change” (*PCT*, 60 [62]).⁹⁶ Ratzinger uses *metanoia* to capture the depths of Christian transformation, which is not only noetic and ethical, but ontic: “To be a Christian, one must change not just in some particular area but without reservation even to the innermost depths of one’s being.” For this reason, *metanoia* perfectly describes *faith*, because “faith is located in the act of conversion, indeed, “it is a conversion [*Bekerbung*], an about-turn [*Kehre der Existenz*], a shift of being [*Wende des Seins*]” (*ItC*, 88 [79 and 80], drawing on Heidegger).⁹⁷ By emphasizing that *metanoia* involves both *reception* and *response*, Ratzinger highlights that 1) conversion is neither natural for humanity nor against human nature, and 2) while humans cannot convert themselves, conversion does require human cooperation. Thus, Ratzinger allows that humans are “open to the truth” by nature, and that “sin has not quite extinguished in the heart of man the capacity to recognize the voice of God,” while continually stressing that “[n]o one can make himself a Christian” (*ItC*, 88). With regard to its possibility, “[c]onversion... always has its source from without; it is a gift which always comes... from Christ, who comes to meet us” (“Biblical Foundations of Priesthood,” 622; cf. *NMT*, 52–53; and *ItC*, 93).⁹⁸ In rather stark terms: “God intervenes where there is a human vacuum; he starts at the point at which, from the human point of view, nothing can be done” (*DaP*, 79).⁹⁹ This is not, however, to say

96. Ratzinger develops a “philosophy of metanoia” (that is, freedom and conversion) to critique the deficiencies of modern western philosophy (*PCT*, 171).

97. “[B]elief is... conversion” (*ItC*, 51).

98. Note the trinitarian dynamic of conversion: “the Holy Spirit leads us to Christ, and Christ opens the door to the Father” (*SL*, 178). As the Word always precedes human activity, Ratzinger argues that infant baptism is justified. Furthermore, Ratzinger asks “what gift could be more precious and purer than this,” as it “gives us in advance the fact of being loved by eternal love” that is, “the gift of love that was waiting for us even before we began to breathe” (*GJC*, 29)? Note, though, that Ratzinger does not understand infant baptism to stand alone, but to be part of a whole that includes baptism, catechism and confirmation—i.e., a believing response.

99. Therefore, “baptism can take place only passively, as *being* baptized, for no one can make himself a son. [A son] must *be* made” (*PCT*, 32 [32]). Ratzinger here evidences his debt to Barth’s doctrine of election as he argues that because God’s name is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, “we ourselves are destined [*bestimmt werden*] to be sons, to enter into the Son’s relationship with God” (*PCT*, 32 [32]). Cf. Ratzinger’s early appreciation for Karl Barth’s doctrine of election (*MCB*, 75–84).

that there is not a human, earthly element in baptism.

Indeed, Ratzinger argues that baptism has two necessary elements “the activity [*Handeln*] of God” and “the cooperation [*Mitbandeln*] of man” (*PCT*, 41 [43]). Ratzinger describes this cooperation as “obedience, humility in the face of God’s word” (*DaP*, 22), in which “[t]here exists no antithesis between purely active conferral and purely passive reception,” because baptism is “an active reception,” or “active passivity and passive activity” (*PCT*, 107, n. 27 and 41).¹⁰⁰ Moreover, by the grace of God, the church’s reception of the word becomes the transmission of the word—analogous to the way Jesus’ human words and actions in response to the Father themselves reveal the Father and in the same way the apostles’ words became scripture. So while the church is a creature of the Word—“[t]his Word is set above the Church” and “repeatedly goes before her in every place, calls her together, and builds her up”—the Word is also “within her and is entrusted to her as a living agent” and “in certain respects” the church is “the Word and the answer in one” (*PFF*, 142).¹⁰¹ This means that *metanoia* does not occur in isolation, and baptism “is not an isolated autonomous decision of the subject but essentially a reception: a sharing in the already existing decision of the Church” (*PCT*, 37 [38]). Being bound to the community, however, actually results in freedom, because it “throws open the frontier between the ‘I’ and the ‘not-I’” (*NMT*, 52). That is to say, “the liberation of man consists in his being freed from himself,” that is, “the being-taken-out-of-himself... not continuing to be himself, but in going out from himself... and, in relinquishing himself, truly finding himself.” Becoming part of the whole does not destroy “the other, the particular, the apparently not-necessary and free,” but affirms it and gives it lasting life, that is *reality* (*PCT*, 171

100. [*Es gibt nicht ein Gegenüber von rein aktivem Spendem und bloss passivem Empfangen; die Spendung im Tauf-dialog verweist vielmehr auf ein aktives Empfangen*, 112—the German better indicates that Ratzinger has in his sights the false opposition between the activity of the clergy and the passivity of the laity.]

101. “In order to be present and effective in history, the Word of God needs this agent, and yet the agent for her part cannot exist without the life-giving power of the Word—indeed, it is this that makes her a living agent” (*PFF*, 142).

[179]). Yet, to receive this lasting “I” paradoxically requires the sacrifice, the death, of the “I.”

III.B. Baptism into Death

Ratzinger describes the *metanoia* involved in baptism as “a death-event.” Following Paul, especially Galatians 2:20, Ratzinger thinks that conversion involves much more than the revision of opinions and attitudes. In baptism, the baptized “exchange... the old subject for another. The ‘I’ ceases to be an autonomous subject standing in itself. It is snatched away from itself and fitted into a new subject” (*NMT*, 51).¹⁰² The old subject cannot simply be revived, but must die, so radical is sin, so profound its distortion of relationships, and so utter the resulting isolation.¹⁰³ This is to say, “[w]ithout a certain exodus, a breaking off with one’s life *in all its aspects*, one cannot become a Christian” (*TaT*, 71*). As baptism requires “a break with one’s own prehistory” (*TaT*, 70), Ratzinger argues that “it is a permanently valid principle that a human being becomes a Christian not by [natural] birth but by conversion” (*DaP*, 119), and that “[n]obody is born a Christian, not even in a Christian world and of Christian parents” (*TaT*, 87).¹⁰⁴ Ratzinger argues that this “break,” epitomized in the threefold renunciation in baptism (*OWJC*, 50), also involves an “exodus” from culture, and despite the church’s development as “a separate, active entity with her own many-layered intercultural character,” this “cultural break” is just as necessary as it was for

102. This new subject, the “greater ‘I,’” is Jesus Christ’s “I,” and “to become one with Christ means to lose one’s ‘oneself,’ to cease to regard one’s own ego as an absolute,” for becoming one in Jesus Christ “will always call us to let the separating particularity of our own egos, the self-assertion of human selfhood, melt into the community of the new man Jesus Christ... to break up [the] merely private ego and merge into the unity of the body of Christ” (*MCB*, 54–55). The language of “melt” and “merge” somewhat distorts Ratzinger’s point.

103. Baptism begins “a life-long conversion” and is “the fundamental pattern of the Christian existence, as the phrase about the ‘remission of sins’ is intended to remind us” (*IC*, 335, in agreement with Barth, cf. Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:3; and Ac. 2:38).

104. “It is not blood kinship with the Lord that makes a person blessed—not flesh and blood, not race and descent, not blood and soil, not nation and class—but the spiritual kinship of faith” (*DaP*, 110, drawing on Matthew 12:46–50 and Mark 3:31–35).

pagans baptized in antiquity (*TaT*, 70, 71 and 80).¹⁰⁵ This renunciation of self, family, history and culture ultimately serves their affirmation. Baptism is “a way of saying Yes” to the Creator and, therefore, “must include acceptance of myself as his creature and love of the Creator’s creation in me” (*ItB*, 95). It is *egoism* that must be excluded, not the self.¹⁰⁶ Likewise, the rejection of the world, the “Christian line of demarcation,” should not lead to isolationism, because it “ultimately serves a universal openness” (*MCB*, 70).¹⁰⁷ This baptismal death that is both *against* and *for* depends upon Jesus Christ’s own death, prefigured in his baptism.

All baptism into communion in God’s name is based upon Jesus Christ’s baptism. In his baptism, “the mystery of death and Resurrection, sin and redemption, sin and forgiveness is prefigured.... An old life is buried, so that a new one can arise.” As Jesus had no sin, no idolatrous self, to bury, “his acceptance of baptism is an anticipation of the Cross, whereby he begins to share in our lot and to take upon himself our sins and our death” (*OWJC*, 84). In this way, his baptism “anticipates the entire drama of his life and death and at the same time explains them to us.” Entering into baptism made public what Ratzinger describes as Jesus’ “deliberate descent, which he began at the moment of his Incarnation...—a descent that will lead him to the Cross and into the grave, into Sheol, the world of the dead” (*OWJC*, 85).¹⁰⁸ While this obedience to the Father’s will required a break with Israel’s specific history of sin (and humanity’s more general history of sin), Jesus’ baptism also fulfilled Israel’s history with God, for instance, accepting “the lot of the Servant of Yahweh, the lot of one who is

105. Given this break, Ratzinger fails to make it perfectly clear how the church’s culture—which he assumes—emerged.

106. Cf. Ratzinger’s comments on the *maladie catholique* (*PCT*, 79).

107. Ratzinger holds out hope that the break with culture might prove to be a “healing Pasch,” whereby culture, “through an apparent death comes to new life and becomes then for the first time truly itself” (*TaT*, 63).

108. Although more muted, Ratzinger’s understanding of Christ’s descent into hell is quite similar to Balthasar’s—meaning that Alyssa Lyra Pitstick’s accusation of heresy against Balthasar on this point also includes the Pope (*Light in Darkness: Hans Urs von Balthasar and the Catholic Doctrine of Christ’s Descent Into Hell*), though see Edward Oakes for a defense of Balthasar’s (and by extension, Ratzinger’s) orthodoxy (“The Internal Logic of Holy Saturday in the Theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar”).

dispossessed of himself and represents others” (*DaP*, 30). The descent into water connects baptism both to the death and chaos symbolized by water in the Old Testament and to the event of Israel’s crossing the Red Sea: “Baptism is a kind of passing through the Red Sea. A death occurs within it. It is more than a bath or washing—it touches the very depths of existence, as far as death itself. It is a crucifying communion with Christ” (*SL*, 223, drawing on Romans 6:1–11).¹⁰⁹ Thus, baptism differs from initiation into a mystery religion, for it is not “a conjuring-up of fire and light,” but “being immersed in the death of Christ” (*TaT*, 89, n. 3). In this way, Ratzinger connects baptism to the problem of death discussed at the beginning of this chapter. As the Christian life begins in baptism and thereby “is grounded in *the sacrament of death*,” Christianity “touches the roots of human existence in a way that extends into the very realm of death.... the only real question,” and also answers this question with resurrected life, wherein “lies the greatness of its claim” (*PCT*, 38–39*). To this great claim to life we now turn.

III.C. Baptism into Life

Only as the sacrament of death is baptism the sacrament of resurrected life.¹¹⁰ The two dimensions can be distinguished, but, just as with cross and resurrection, they cannot be opposed to each other. Baptism is *one* sacrament, in which “the unity of death and resurrection proclaims itself in a single symbolic action” (*PCT*, 39). The *taxis* matters to Ratzinger, for while “[Jesus Christ’s] death is ordered intrinsically to the resurrection” (*EDEL*, 115), his resurrection reveals that only this death—the self-sacrifice of love—leads to life: “sacrifice alone leads to life... only the giving of oneself in the mystery of death leads to the land of the living” (*PCT*, 39).¹¹¹ At this point,

109. Cf. Ratzinger’s discussion of the water symbolism of baptism, concluding, “[i]mmersion in this element of death [water] is the radical exorcism in which the baptismal rite achieves its goal” (*PCT*, 38–39).

110. Baptism “is the sacrament of death and—by that fact, but also *only* by that fact—the sacrament of resurrection” (*PCT*, 33).

111. “[T]he way to truth and the hazard of love lead through the Red Sea... the Promised land can be reached only through the mortal passion of truth” (*PCT*, 38); and “the most precious spring in the world pours from the cross and from death, or rather, from the radical surrender of self” (*DaP*, 46).

Ratzinger finds continuity between baptism and the faith of Abraham, for just as “Abraham believed that he would have an heir from the already dead womb of Sarah—life out of death,” so too “Christian faith trusts in God who raised Jesus from the dead; it is always a faith that believes in the God who gives life out of death” (*FaF*, 38). The final word in this *taxis*, however, is life. Thus, the baptismal waters symbolize the fresh, flowing water of the spring, the “source of all life” (*PCT*, 39), that flows from the center of Jerusalem and “constantly transforms the wilderness of the world into fruitful land” (*SL*, 223)—in short, “water is life. Water fructifies the earth. Water is creative. Man lives by water” (*DaP*, 46). The emergence of new life from this water, then, is “the true Exodus,” the one beyond our ability to make, for it depends upon *the* act of God—Jesus Christ—who “has stridden through the Red Sea of death itself, descended into the world of shadows, and smashed open the prison door” (*SL*, 138). Baptism is the sacrament of death-to-*life* because in it “this Exodus is made ever present,” and “[t]o be baptized is to be made a partaker, a contemporary of Christ’s descent into hell and of his rising up therefrom, in which he takes us up into the fellowship of new life” (*SL*, 138). This fellowship of life could not be more radical, for the baptized are allowed entry into “a communion of name with God” (*PCT*, 33), which Ratzinger calls “the native place of life indestructible” (*EDEL*, 115). This life of communion with God is linked inextricably to communion with Christ’s body, the church, so the baptismal ethic is irreducibly ecclesial.

III.D. The Baptismal Ethic

Although wary of those who would reduce the Christian life to an ethical “program for changing the world,” Ratzinger teaches that baptismal decision must surpass “mere speech” and encompass the moral task (*ItC*, 68).¹¹² Indeed, *metanoia*, turning to God, “is an ethical concept,” because “the holiness of the God of Israel and

112. “Morality is an integral component of Christianity, but this morality is always part of the sacramental event of ‘Christianization’ [*Christwerdung*]*—*an event in which we are not the sole agents but are always, indeed, primarily receivers. And this reception entails transformation” (*GCC*, 33).

of the God of Jesus Christ includes a very precise ethic” and in baptism we affirm and renounce in accordance with God’s holy ethic (*PCT*, 61 and 22).¹¹³ Yet, Ratzinger refuses to provide a list of “thou shall”s and “thou shall not”s, because in continuity with the act baptism—“a being baptized, a being-presented-with the gift of faith”—the moral path will always be “a being-led and a being-carried” (*PCT*, 37). That is to say, there is “no absolute norm except for the necessity of an obedient decision” to join in the ethic of Jesus Christ (“Free Expression and Obedience in the Church,” 214). As discussed earlier, Ratzinger understands all of Jesus Christ’s activity as prayer: “He is always the one who receives. The Son does not simply design [*entwirft*] his own existence; he receives it in a most profound dialogue with God.” Therefore, baptism, as “entrance into the Son’s existence,” means “prayerful communion with the Father,” and “praying means not just the occasional recitation of formal prayers but that inner openness to God that causes [one] to be attentive to God in every decision that [one] makes” (*PCT*, 32 [33]). The baptismal ethic, then, does involve *imitatio Christi*, but because of the unity of Christ’s person and work, Ratzinger understands Christian ethics as primarily assimilation: *unio cum Christo* (*MCB*, 54–55).¹¹⁴

As self-sacrificial love is both the *telos* of this union and the way in which this union is realized, Ratzinger describes the baptismal ethic as “sharing in the *martyria* of Jesus.” Though certainly including confessing Christ upon pain of death, Ratzinger has in mind “the fundamental form of our participation,” which “is not spectacular, but perfectly ordinary” (*EDEL*, 98).¹¹⁵ Though ordinary, this everyday *martyria* “demands an individual’s whole strength, mind, will and heart,” for it is a process through which the “I” of the baptized is conformed to the “I” of Christ (*PCT*, 36). Ratzinger

113. This emphasis on *metanoia* and “the rejection of ‘works’ does not signify a rejection of the moral task but, on the contrary,” indicates that Ratzinger judges “[t]urning to truth, to rightness and to love, precisely as a process of receiving” as “the highest human activity of which we are capable” (*EDEL*, 100).

114. There is no place in Ratzinger’s thought for filial activity—even *imitatio*—apart from its basis in adoption.

115. Further, *martyria* “is not something that starts when a person lets his name go forward for imminent execution,” but “consists in the daily readiness to give greater weight to faith, to truth and to what is right than to the benefits of not getting involved.”

highlights the ordinary acts of penance and making the sign of the cross as examples of this *martyria*. Rather fascinatingly—and, perhaps, brilliantly—Ratzinger presents a revised doctrine of purgatory as an ethical process rooted in “the christological grace of penance,” that is penance as *purgatio* (*EDEL*, 231). Purgatory, Ratzinger teaches, is not a place, “some kind of supra-worldly concentration camp,” but the continuation of the transformation that began with the act of baptism (*EDEL*, 230).¹¹⁶ In baptism, the baptized makes a “valid fundamental decision,” and thereby “is accepted in grace,” but this acceptance occurs despite “the defective permeation of the effects of that decision throughout the being of the whole person.” As “what saves is the full assent of faith” and “this basic option is buried under a good deal of wood, hay, and straw,” the act of penance—*purgatio*—is necessary for our salvation (*EDEL*, 231).

Against those who would interpret this as teaching salvation by works, Ratzinger argues that he “does not replace grace by works, but allows the former to achieve its full victory precisely as grace,” for the gift of divine mercy “does not exonerate [the baptized] from the need to be transformed” (*EDEL*, 230).¹¹⁷ Moreover, penance itself does not “produce” this transformation, but is a “plunging into our baptismal existence... in which *God* again and again acts on us and draws us back to himself” (*GCC*, 33*).¹¹⁸ Ratzinger teaches that making the sign of the cross is another “renewal of our baptism and the renewal of the words by which we became Christians” (*GJC*, 18–19).¹¹⁹ By physically inscribing the cross on the body, the believer connects

116. “Purgatory is understood in a properly Christian way when it is grasped christologically, in terms of the Lord himself as the judging fire which transforms us and conforms us to his own glorified body” (*EDEL*, 229, referencing Phil. 3:21).

117. Further, “This insight would contradict the doctrine of grace only if penance were the antithesis of grace and not its form, the gift of a gracious possibility.”

118. Ratzinger argues that the point is not the fire, but “the transforming power of the Lord himself, whose burning flame cuts free our closed-off heart, melting it and pouring it into a new mold to make it fit for the living organism of his body.” Further, “Encounter with the Lord *is* this transformation. It is the fire that burns away our dross and re-forms us to be the vessels of eternal joy” (*EDEL*, 229 and 231).

119. Elsewhere Ratzinger describes it as “a kind of summing up and re-acceptance of Baptism” (*SL*, 178).

the whole of their earthly life to the cross and thereby accepts “the real and radical martyrdom of genuine self-renunciation [that] is and remains the basic condition for following Christ” (*DaP*, 15).¹²⁰ Although penance and the sign of the cross are profoundly personal, Ratzinger argues that they connect the baptized to self-sacrifice, “the mystery of God,” and thereby point the way forward to “the most compelling challenge,” that is, “one that can never be carried to a final conclusion,” to take up the dialogue of personal and cultural reconciliation that “causes the *logos* to resound” (*ItC*, 95). In other words, through these actions “[t]he baptized man himself becomes a spring” (*SL*, 223).

IV. Eucharist

IV.A. The Basis of the Eucharist in Jesus Christ’s Sacrifice

While he critiques those who look for the meaning of the Eucharist only in the Last Supper, Ratzinger does emphasize the historical Last Supper as the summing up of everything that had gone before it. In particular, Ratzinger views the Eucharist as the culmination of Israel’s *tōdab* [thanksgiving sacrifice] (*FoF*, 54–59, based on Hartmut Gese’s work).¹²¹ However, through this *tōdab*, Jesus symbolically welds together the Passover celebration and the encounter at Sinai, “the two founding acts whereby Israel became and ever anew becomes a people” (*CtC*, 27).¹²² That is to say, this meal “is the making of a covenant and, as such, is the concrete foundation of *the* new people” (*CtC*, 28*). The meal, however, is not the “origin” or “true source” of the Eucharist, and even when combined with Jesus’ words of institution and death it is “insufficient”

120. Further, to make the sign of the cross is a profoundly *theological* act because it is “to accept the *inner* essence of the cross, namely the radical love expressed therein, and thus to imitate God himself. For on the cross God revealed himself as the One who pours himself out in prodigal fashion; who surrenders his glory in order to be present for us; who desires to rule the world not by power but by love, and in the weakness of the cross reveals *his* power which operates so differently from the power of this world’s mighty rulers.”

121. In fact, in looking at the whole structure of Jesus’ life it becomes clear that “the whole of Christology, indeed the whole of eucharistic Christology, is present in the *tōda* spirituality of the Old Testament” (*FoF*, 57).

122. Ratzinger describes it as “welding together Sinaitic covenant theology and prophetic theology” and interprets the Passover symbols of lamb and bread as “the christological basis and the anthropological consequence” (*PFF*, 97 and 100).

(*GINU*, 39). Rather, the Eucharist springs from Jesus' words of institution, death *and* resurrection:

From out of this whole matrix—[in which] he transforms his death, that irrational event, into an affirmation, into an act of love and of adoration—emerges his acceptance by God and the possibility of his being able to share himself in this way. On the Cross, Christ saw love through to the end.... Jesus died praying, and in the abyss of death he upheld the First Commandment and held on to the presence of God. Out of such a death springs this sacrament, the Eucharist (*GINU*, 39).¹²³

While the words of institution do not stand alone, they do provide the proper matrix for interpreting Jesus' passion as his *act*, indeed as his *tōdab*—much like Ratzinger's view of the importance of the Old Testament. With these words of institution, "This is my body, this is my blood," Jesus "is designating *himself as the true and ultimate sacrifice*," anticipating his death, and undergoing a spiritual death in which he "*transforms death into the spiritual act of affirmation, into the act of self-sharing love*" (*GINU*, 32 and 29). Jesus thereby opens the way not only to a fully Christian understanding of *sacrifice*, but also to *participation* in that perfect sacrifice.

The unique character of Jesus' sacrificial death is indicated by the fact that his words make it intelligible. Until his death and resurrection, interpreted by these words, death was *illogical* and it would have been impossible to link it to λογικά λατρεία as Paul does in Romans 12:1. In the Lord's Supper, "death [is] transformed into a word of acceptance and self-surrender. The il-logical fact of death had become the concern of the Logos: the Logos had died; and as a result, death had become life" (*FoF*, 38; cf. *SL*, 50 and 58). Crucially for Ratzinger, this allows a new interpretation of sacrifice. For, "throughout the entire history of religions" sacrifice has aimed at communion with deity, "giving to God, union with God" (*FoF*, 93), but this actually "comes to pass in Jesus Christ, in him who gives God nothing but himself and, thereby, us in him"

123. Ratzinger argues that attempts to celebrate the Eucharist with a simple shared meal "are a step back behind the *turning point of the Cross and the Resurrection*, that is, behind the essentials that are the basis for Christianity in all its novelty.... abandoning the mystery of Easter and, thereby, the very center of the mystery of Christ" (*GINU*, 65).

(*GINU*, 32–33; cf. *PFF*, 95).¹²⁴ By attending to Jesus Christ’s own cultic interpretation of his death, Ratzinger claims to have arrived at a truly *catholic* doctrine of sacrifice, that is, 1) “genuinely New Testament,” highlighting “the inner unity of both Testaments”; 2) preserving “the complete Catholic inheritance” while giving it “a new profundity”; and 3) “receptive” to the intentions of the Reformers (*FoF*, 58)! Negatively, Ratzinger denies that sacrifice consists “in the surrender of things or in any kind of destruction,” even as he acknowledges that sacrifice involves surrender and destruction (*ItC*, 287).¹²⁵ Positively, Ratzinger argues that Jesus’ sacrifice and the sacrifice of the Mass consist “in the absoluteness of love, as it could only be poured out by the one in whom God’s own love had become human love; and it consists in the new form of representation included in this love, namely, that he stood for us and that we let ourselves be taken over by him” (*ItC*, 287).¹²⁶ Everything here depends upon God, because “the sacrifice itself comes from the incarnate love of God, so that it is God who *gives himself*, taking man up into his action and enabling him to be both gift and recipient” (*FoF*, 94). As the baptized are “in Christ,” they are able to participate in this sacrificial dynamic.¹²⁷ Thus, the cross remains “the inner presupposition of all eucharistic theology,” but Ratzinger interprets the eucharistic sacrifice, not as the continuation of Jesus’ suffering on the cross, but as “being united in a concrete sense with the Body of Christ” and “living eternally in the Resurrection,” that is, as the continuation of Jesus Christ’s prayer (*PFF*, 94 and 120; cf. *FoF*, 37–38).

124. With the Lord’s Supper, “all this vain and eternal striving to bring ourselves up to God can be seen as unnecessary,” although it “allows... a glimpse of the real thing” (*GINU*, 32–33). Further, with regard to Israel, “What had always been intended and could never have been achieved in the Old Testament sacrifices is incorporated in him.”

125. Note that Ratzinger interprets the cross as *God’s* self-sacrifice. This underwrites Ratzinger’s thesis that sacrifice is not to be identified with destruction. God does not destroy himself in this sacrifice, even when he submits himself to death. Cf. Robert’s Daly’s recent about-face (*Sacrifice Unveiled: The True Meaning of Christian Sacrifice*) to a position quite similar to Ratzinger’s.

126. “Christ gives glory to God by sacrificing himself and thus bringing human existence within God’s own being” (*PFF*, 96).

127. “Jesus transforms death into the spiritual act of affirmation, into the act of self-sharing love; into the act of adoration, which is offered to God, then from God is made available to men” (*GINU*, 29).

In light of the binding character Ratzinger assigns Jesus' words of institution for subsequent eucharistic doctrine, the lack of importance he assigns to Jesus' actions in the Last Supper for subsequent eucharistic practice is striking. This dichotomy highlights some of the problems Ratzinger's historicization of the Spirit creates. Drawing on Paul's comments in 1 Corinthians 11:18-22 and the work of J.A. Jungmann, Ratzinger argues that the "determining element" of the Mass is the thanksgiving prayer of anamnesis, which "already expresses whatever element of the 'meal' the liturgical action actually contains" (*FoF*, 50). Ratzinger acknowledges that the meal element was likely prominent through the apostolic era, but argues that it is the later practice that is normative because "'Church' in the narrower historical sense does not come about until the attempt to win the whole of Israel has failed," and while "the Last Supper is certainly... the foundation of the dogmatic content of the Christian Eucharist," it is not the foundation of the "liturgical form," because "in itself it is not yet Christian" (*FoF*, 41).¹²⁸ Such a distinction between form and content is problematic on Ratzinger's own grounds, because elsewhere he argues that the liturgical form teaches us the content of the faith—but his thesis would mean that Christian *scripture* was produced in the context of this "not yet Christian" liturgy. To return to the issue at hand, Ratzinger describes subsequent developments as "not a decline from its origins but the true fruits of those origins," for "what is fine, sublime, about the Church is that she is growing, maturing, understanding the mystery more profoundly" (*GINU*, 65 and 70). As Ratzinger argues that the authority to celebrate the Eucharist comes from "[o]nly Jesus Christ himself, in the 'sacramental' form he has committed to the whole Church," a gap appears in Ratzinger's grounding, for while Ratzinger can appeal to a meta-form, he has just denied the concrete form Jesus gave at the Last Supper. When Ratzinger appeals to the historical continuity of ordination as "the guarantee of [the Eucharist's] identity" through time, he binds himself to affirming even the most radical

128. This does not require a "hiatus between Jesus and the Church," however, because what is fulfilled in the Christian liturgy was present *in nuce* in the Last Supper and the earliest shared meals (*FoF*, 50).

developments as “justified” and “well-founded” as “the Church could not have been celebrating the Eucharist unworthily for nine hundred years” (*GINU*, 70). In this way, Ratzinger’s historicization of the Spirit becomes the basis for his arguments for ecclesial forms.

IV.B. *Communio*: Eucharist and Church

The Eucharist is *communio*, κοινωνία. Far more than a ritual meal, the Eucharist “is the shared prayer of the Church, in which the Lord prays together with us and gives us himself,” and as such “the heart and center of our worshipping life” (*FoF*, 152).¹²⁹ The self-giving of God, God’s personal theophany, is the Eucharist’s *conditio sine qua non*, for what the communicant receives in the Eucharist “is not a piece of body, not a thing, but him, the Resurrected one himself—the person who shares himself with us in his love, which runs right through the Cross,” that is, “the Lord Jesus Christ, both God and man” (*GINU*, 81 and 82; cf. “The Meaning of Sunday,” 25).¹³⁰ As Jesus Christ is risen, we receive his “living and actual presence,” and thereby receive our life in the Eucharist (“Meaning Sunday,” 11). Ratzinger uses the concept of κοινωνία because it “unites two realities which, in our language, can seem quite unrelated: Eucharist and community, that is, communion as sacrament and communion as a social and institutional reality” (*BPO*, 75). Community, sacrament, and Christ are inextricably linked. Ratzinger describes the church as “the *ḥabbûrâ* [fellowship] of Jesus in a very deep sense—the fellowship of his Passover, the family in which his eternal desire of eating the Passover with us (cf. Lk. 24:15) is fulfilled,” and shares “a love which goes as far as death,” and “gives us a share, a participation, in his own life, which, in death, is

129. Ratzinger contends that this center requires “a many-layered whole in which to live,” and therefore “presupposes baptism... penance.... marriage and ordination, the social and the public structure of the Church.... personal prayer, family prayer and the paraliturgical prayer of the parish community.”

130. Ratzinger argues that God could be no closer than he is in the Eucharist, small and humble. Fear is called for, as “God’s holiness enters in among us” (*PPF*, 107), but not the heathen fear of the *mysterium tremendum*, because the sacrifice of the cross, the basis of the eucharistic sacrifice, reveals that God is “not the great unknown, whom we can but dimly conceive.... capricious and blood thirsty or too far away and too great to hear” (*GINU*, 103).

divided up among us all” (*BPO*, 84). While Jesus Christ is the divine human *κοινωνία* and “becomes communicable in the Easter mystery,” Ratzinger argues that we are only able to participate in this *κοινωνία* through the Eucharist, which is why Ratzinger claims that the Eucharist is 1) “constitutive of the Church, the Body of Christ,” and, therefore, 2) “necessary for salvation” (*BPO*, 93).¹³¹ With regard to 1, Ratzinger argues that the Eucharist “is the New Covenant, ...is the renewal of the assembly at Sinai,” and “on the basis of the word and the Body and Blood of Christ, it brings into being the People of God” (*PFF*, 105).¹³² Yet, even as “[t]he Church is built up in the Eucharist,” it is also true that “the Church *is* the Eucharist” (*PFF*, 103).¹³³ Thus, with regard to 2, Ratzinger holds that Eucharist (and Church) are necessary for salvation because salvation *is* *κοινωνία*. To be saved is to be in *communio* with Christ, and to be in *communio* with Christ is to receive communion, to become church, to become body.

Ratzinger prefers to describe the ecclesial-eucharistic *communio* using the Pauline language of “body of Christ.”¹³⁴ Ratzinger takes this language realistically, as more than a first century analogy between a body and a people, because to receive the Eucharist is to “receive the Body of the Lord” (*PFF*, 103). As Jesus Christ is a single, concrete resurrected body, Ratzinger emphasizes that there is just *one* church and just *one* Eucharist. This one Eucharist “is instrumental in the process by which Christ builds

131. While Ratzinger holds that one enters the church at baptism, he also argues that “it is only participation in the eucharistic liturgical assembly that makes a person a true member of the Christian fraternal community. If a man never takes part in the brotherly meal of Christians, he cannot be considered as belonging to the brotherhood. The brotherly community of the Christians consists of those, and only those, who come with at least a certain regularity to share in the eucharistic celebration” (*MCB*, 73).

132. Further, “The Eucharist gathers people together; it creates for human beings a blood relationship, a sharing of blood, with Jesus Christ and, thus, with God, and of people with one another.”

133. Ratzinger describes this as a “dynamic ecclesiological perspective,” that attends to “the content of the Eucharist” as “the living process through which, time and again, the Church’s activity of becoming the Church takes place” (*GINU*, 114–15). For this reason, “[t]he necessity of the Eucharist is identical with the necessity of the Church and vice versa” (*BPO*, 93).

134. Early in his career, Ratzinger preferred to use “People of God” to describe the church, but after Vatican II associated it with purely or overly sociological ecclesiologies.

himself a Body and makes us into *one* single Bread, *one* single Body” (*GINU*, 114, cf. 108; *PFF*, 103; and *IC*, 334). Jesus Christ, not the local church, is the primary actor in the Eucharist, bringing the church into being “through the *one* table that the Lord has spread for us all” through this action the church “is united, ever and again, through the *one* Body we all receive” (*GINU*, 115). Ratzinger does allow that Christ fully gives himself in every Eucharist, being “entirely present in each place, so that wherever the Eucharist is celebrated, the whole mystery of the Church is present” (*GINU*, 119–20).¹³⁵ However, although there are many assemblies and the church exists as “a network of eucharistic fellowships,” the one church precedes these assemblies and “the Eucharist can be celebrated rightly only if it is celebrated with the whole Church” (*GINU*, 115 and 120). With this emphasis on the *oneness* of Christ’s body, it is no surprise that Ratzinger argues, “[t]he Eucharist is celebrated with the one Christ, and thus with the whole Church, or it is not being celebrated at all” (*PFF*, 106).¹³⁶ And while it does appear that Ratzinger at times identifies this one church with the Roman Catholic Church, it is not quite this simple, for Ratzinger would “in no way deny the saving presence of the Lord in the Evangelical Lord’s Supper” (*PFF*, 248). Even so, Ratzinger’s emphasis on the precedence of the one gives his ecclesiology a decidedly historical, rather than eschatological, cast, and raises questions about the ultimate being of particularity.

Many persons are gathered together in the many eucharistic assemblies and thereby these many people become the one body of Christ. In Ratzinger’s words, “the *one* bread makes us into *one* body; the Church is simply that unity created by eucharistic Communion, the *unity of the many in and through the one Christ*” (*PFF*, 104). Ratzinger here draws on Augustine’s understanding of receiving the Eucharist as becoming what is received—reversing the normal process of eating and digestion: “we ourselves become what we eat.... the man who eats this bread is assimilated *by it*, taken into it; he is fused

135. Again, Ratzinger speaks of the presence of the “whole,” “undivided,” and “indivisible Christ.”

136. Again, “the body of Christ is just *one*, and hence the People of God can only be *one*.”

into this bread and becomes bread, like Christ himself” (*BPO*, 89). In other words, through “the process of interiorization,” that is, “entering into the liturgical word and the liturgical reality—which is the presence of the Lord,” the people of God experience “a *participatio Dei*, a participation in God and hence in life and freedom” (*FoF*, 70).¹³⁷ Christians always receive this life of *communio* together and through each other. While simply sharing a meal could never accomplish this *communio*, it is proper to speak of the Eucharist as a shared meal, because “the Church’s members are pledged to give ‘life’ to one another, spiritual *and* physical life,” therefore the *koinonia* of the Church “is always ‘table fellowship’ in the fullest sense” (*BPO*, 80).¹³⁸ That is to say, this table fellowship reconciles those who had previously been divided by race, gender, social status, etc., by bringing about peace, but this peace of reconciliation depends upon the unity of person and work in the new man, Jesus Christ, who “is our peace” (*GINU*, 117–18, referencing Eph. 2:14—see 108–09 for a more detailed exposition). That is, Ratzinger explains,

why the Eucharist itself was often simply referred to as “peace”: it was the place of the presence of Jesus Christ and was thereby the sphere of a new peace, the sphere of a table fellowship that transcended all boundaries and limits, in which everyone was at home everywhere.... It was with the inmost element of their faith, with the eucharistic assembly, that they early Christians thus did something politically most significant: they created spheres of peace and built, as it were, highroads of peace through a world of strife (*GINU*, 118).¹³⁹

In this way the *oneness* of the church does not lead to isolationism or an “us-versus-them” attitude, but to *mission*. The eucharistic assembly involves both *synaxis* and *missa*. Thus, “[t]he Lord does not assemble the parish community in order to enclose it but in order to open it up,” and therefore “[t]o be with the Lord means to be willing, with

137. Further, Ratzinger stresses the unity of “*participatio Dei*” and “liturgical participation,” that is “interiorization... under the guidance of the common prayers of the Church and the experience of the Body of Christ which they contain.”

138. While “the social question is at the theological core of the Christian concept of *communio*,” the social dimension depends upon the theological. Thus, Ratzinger judges that the replacement of the Eucharist with a simple gathering actually “severs the foundations” (*FoF*, 70) of the human community through the “the yielding of the objectivity of the sacrament to the subjectivity of individual experience, of what is properly theological to what is a purely sociological and psychological field” (“Meaning Sunday,” 22).

139. “[W]hat unites [the Church] today is not the private interest of this group or that, but the interest that God takes in us” (*GINU*, 110).

him, to seek all the children of God” (*FoF*, 148).¹⁴⁰ The Eucharist, then, is truly *catholic* in that it not only includes all churches, but also aims at the unity of *all* in Christ. For the Eucharist is a cosmic liturgy, reflecting that the “real end of creation, its underlying purpose—and conversely that of human existence as willed by the Creator—is this very union, ‘that God may be all in all’” (*PFF*, 102, cf. 1 Cor. 15:28).¹⁴¹ We now turn our attention to the outworking of Ratzinger’s emphasis on *oneness* to the relationship between divine and human action.

The oneness of Christ and his body means that the Eucharist brings about not only *communio* of relation, but *communio* of act as well. Ratzinger continually stresses that “God himself acts and does what is essential” (*SL*, 173) in the Eucharist, and therefore the Eucharist is “the mystery of God” (*FoF*, 95).¹⁴² In this way, the Eucharist continues the pattern set with Abraham and at Sinai in which it was the activity of God that created Israel. Ratzinger hereby excludes any *ex opere operato* understanding of the Eucharist, for it depends upon the activity of the Lord:

the heart of the eucharistic sacrament is the celebration of the holy mystery in which the Lord assembles his people, unites them, and builds them up by taking them into his sacrifice and giving himself to them, letting himself be received by us. The Eucharist... is an assembly in which the Lord acts upon us and brings us together (*GINU*, 95–96; cf. *PFF*, 121; and *OWJC*, 103).

One cannot forget, however, that this action is mediated by Jesus Christ, the God-man. Ratzinger, therefore, has a strong, albeit usually implicit, doctrine of the continuing priesthood of Jesus Christ. Thus, “[a]t the most profound level, the Eucharist has to do with Christ alone. He prays for us; he puts his prayer on our lips, for only he can say: This is my Body—This is my Blood” (*GINU*, 119) Again, Jesus Christ both mediates the divine Word to humanity and the human response to God. By receiving the

140. Ratzinger draws on the mission of Jesus revealed in Jn. 11:52: “to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad,” to describe the Eucharist as a vocation to a mission of grace, “acting on behalf of the others who are still ‘outside’, approaching them” (*BPO*, 83 and 76).

141. The liturgy cannot be a hobby of the few or the private concern of Christians, for eucharistic liturgy is “the bond which holds heaven and earth together” and therefore concerns “the human race and the entire created world” (*FoF*, 134–35).

142. This is what distinguishes Christian worship from all other worship and “makes the Eucharist irreplaceable; this is the guarantee of its identity.”

Eucharist, Christians are “entering into communion with Jesus Christ... him who alone could overcome the limits and thus, with him and on the basis of his existence, becoming capable of resurrection oneself” (*GINU*, 81). The Eucharist, then, is “participation in... that which the Lord himself and only he can do.” Ratzinger interprets this *communio* so radically that he argues: “ultimately, the difference between the *actio Christi* and our own action is done away with,” for we have become one body and one spirit and “[t]here is only *one* action, which is at the same time his and ours” (*SL*, 174).¹⁴³ The radical *oneness* of this *communio* in body and act raises the question of what happens to particular bodies and actions in *communio*.

Despite the appearance (and accusations) of monism, it does not seem that Ratzinger envisions eucharistic and ecclesial *communio* as removing plurality and particularity. With regard to the plurality and particularity of local churches, Ratzinger could not be clearer that he understands the one Church to be the *arche* and *telos* of the local churches.¹⁴⁴ Yet, Ratzinger acknowledges that the Eucharist does not occur apart from the local *synaxis*, where the eucharistic assembly “builds a cell of Christian brotherhood... nourished by the living and effectual presence of the Lord” (*BPO*, 99). Furthermore, he argues that the unity of these cells in the one Lord “does not destroy what is distinctive of the individual communities but builds them up and maintains them as a real communion with the Lord and with one another” (*BPO*, 100). Indeed, cells in their multiplicity “point ahead to the multiformity of the one Body” though

143. Further, “The uniqueness of the Eucharistic liturgy lies precisely in the fact that God himself is acting and that we are drawn into that action of God.” This is not to say, however, that the Eucharist somehow “grant[s] us any quasi-magical assurance of salvation. It always demands and involves our freedom.... the risk of losing our salvation always remains; our gaze remains fixed on the judgment to come” (*PFF*, 105).

144. In his words, “however much it lives in the here and now, in a particular place, seeking the consent of the local community, Christian liturgy is essentially Catholic, that is, it proceeds from the whole and leads back to it, it leads to unity with the pope, the bishops and the faithful of all times and places. The Catholic element is not something added on externally, a legislative restriction of the community’s freedom, but something from the Lord himself who seeks everyone and seeks to bring them all together.... the community receives [the Eucharist] from the whole, in the same way that it receives its own self, as a community, from the whole” (*FoF*, 148–49).

they “cannot stand side by side as autonomous, mutually independent entities” (*CtC*, 29). Ratzinger presents a similar case for the plurality and particularity of persons in the one “we” of the church, describing it as “eucharistic personalism” (*SL*, 87). While union of the “I” and “thou” into the “we” of the *communio* is the goal of human existence,

[t]he eucharistic fellowship of the Church is not a collectivity, in which fellowship is achieved by leveling down to the lowest common denominator, but fellowship is created precisely by our each being ourself. It does not rest on the suppression of the self, on collectivization, but arises through our truly setting out, with our whole self, and entering into this new fellowship of the Lord (*GINU*, 82).

Just as Christ’s humanity was not generic humanity, so too will our *koinonia* with other humans be concrete, specific and particular. Ratzinger highlights that personal reception requires an “interiorization,” that, while in no way individualistic, aims at the preservation of the person through destroying the isolation that threatens the person’s life by overcoming the barriers between God and humanity and between human persons (*SL*, 87). Even bodily particularity is ensured, for the very bodiliness of Jesus’ resurrection—“which includes and ratifies Incarnation”—“demand[s] that prayer should be expressed in a bodily form, involving all the dimensions of bodily expression” (*FoF*, 71).¹⁴⁵ That Ratzinger understands the Eucharist to preserve particularity emerges especially clearly in his description of the eucharistic vocation.

IV.C. The Eucharistic Vocation

While the Eucharist is the goal of all true human action and therefore cannot aim at something else, i.e., an *ethic*, it does call for a way of life and a specific ethic this side of the *parousia*. In general, Ratzinger argues that the Eucharist confronts participants with a choice, “shake off the Eucharist, with the enormous demands and power it sets up in life, or to surrender to it, to hold fast to it” (*GINU*, 126, cf. 128–29).¹⁴⁶ To surrender to the Eucharist, we must “receive him by welcoming him with

145. “The Lord gives himself to us in bodily form,” therefore “we must likewise respond to him bodily” (*GINU*, 91).

146. This surrender is to be equated neither with “moral striving” (*PFF*, 100) nor with “functionality,” which Ratzinger calls “the poverty of our age.” In fact, the

our whole life,” that is, when “we carry him out into our everyday lives” (*OWJC*, 103). This will lead, like accepting baptism through penance, to martyrdom, for *eucharistia* is participation in Jesus’ offering of his whole self back to the Father in gratitude (*tōdab*) (*GJC*, 67).¹⁴⁷ Though this full reception may indeed involve our physical deaths, Ratzinger’s point is that someone who receives Holy Communion, that is, a “Christian,” will be

someone who knows that in any case he lives first and foremost as the beneficiary of a bounty and that, consequently, all righteousness can only consist in being himself a donor, like the beggar who is grateful for what he receives and generously passes part of it on to others (*ItC*, 260).¹⁴⁸

The Eucharist does not exist as something over against us—a mere thing, rather, “the true plane of Christian existence” is the process in which we are “drawn into the Pascha of the Lord,” thereby “becoming Eucharist” and escaping the captivity of “the moralism of our activity” (*PFF*, 120). Ratzinger highlights that this ethic is *logical* as it is “the unity of word, sacrament and obligation” (*PCT*, 268). The unity depends upon the indwelling *logos* (the law or obligation), which becomes “the inner direction of our lives,” and “speaks to us in our conscience” (*GINU*, 105). Without this inner presence we would not be capable of receiving the Eucharist, participating in Christ’s *eucharistia*. Such participation is “really... a serious business,” because “we are praying within the sphere of death and resurrection, that is, where the real petition in all our petitions has been heard: the petition for the victory over death; the petition for the love that is stronger than death” (*GINU*, 90–91). Yet, because this petition has been heard, *serious* does not mean *joyless*.

the special significance of the Eucharist for our time “consists precisely in that it takes us out of functionality and reaches the basis of reality” (*GINU*, 88).

147. Ratzinger describes Jesus learning this *eucharistia* from his mother (*GJC*, 25ff.). Crucially, Ratzinger again argues that Jesus’ daily prayer was not just a few moments of speech or silence, but a progressive act in which “he commits himself—sacrifices himself” (*PCT*, 268).

148. Ratzinger especially highlights kneeling as a “cosmic gesture” signifying “that we are imitating and adopting the attitude of him who, though he was ‘in the form of God’, yet ‘humbled himself unto death’.... [W]ords could not replace such a confession” (*FoF*, 74–75).

While the return of Christ is still future, the eschaton itself is both “not yet” and “already.” The “already” means that the eucharistic life will have a joyous, celebratory, festal character. In fact, Ratzinger calls joy “the end toward which all liturgy is directed... joy which can arise only from the encounter between man and God, from the removal of the barriers and limitations of earthly existence” (*PFF*, 112). Indeed, he specifies the true novelty of Christianity in this: “Christ’s Resurrection enables man genuinely to rejoice.” Paradoxically, the Eucharist, the Feast of the Resurrection, enables this joy because “it bears within it the mystery of the Cross, which is the inner presupposition of the Resurrection” (*FoF*, 65). Only because our death has been borne on the cross and defeated in the resurrection can Christians feast joyously. Ratzinger teaches that at the very heart of the Eucharist “is the answer to the question of death, for it is the encounter with that love which is stronger than death.” In this light, to receive the Eucharist really means “giving the Lord the reception due to the Victor” (*FoF*, 130). In another paradox, while the ultimate purpose of the Eucharist is “being pleasing to God,” when we celebrate the Eucharist without any purpose beyond pleasing God, faith emerges, and that faith gives rise to mission, “in which the world becomes a living sacrificial gift, a holy city in which there is no longer any temple, because God the ruler of all is himself her temple, as is the Lamb” (*PFF*, 94 and 122).¹⁴⁹ This *eucharistia*, the ethic of the slain and risen Lamb, surpasses all other ethics because it calls us to change not just our actions, but our very being, and not just calls us, but actually transforms us as well.

V. Conclusion: Our Being is in Becoming *Eucharistia*

The question of death leads Ratzinger to the Eucharist, *the* event of transformation in which the church both prays for deliverance from death and receives the gift of participation in the divine life. This deliverance and gift are based upon the

149. The Eucharist will always include “gratitude for the gifts of the earth” (*FoF*, 50). Although basically undeveloped, Ratzinger here opens the door to an ethic of cosmic dimensions—and as Pope has frequently encouraged such a cosmic ethic.

crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ—the incarnate Son in dialogue with the Father in the Holy Spirit. He is the true human pray-er and the true divine answer to prayer in one person. As Jesus Christ opens up both to the Father and all humanity in the *communio* of the Holy Spirit, Ratzinger’s understanding of human transformation is inextricably linked to his doctrine of the trinity and his corporate, ecclesial anthropology.

While the human problem tends to be the point of departure in Ratzinger’s writings, God’s prevenient Word to humanity is the foundation of his theology. Yet, God’s transforming Word finds humanity in rebellion against God. This rebellious sin, understood primarily as idolatry, ruptures the relationship between God and humanity, leading to death, “the absence of relationship” (*EDEL*, 82, cf. 84). Death, then, is the God-forsaken realm, not simply annihilation, but “simultaneously being and nonbeing, ...which is, curiously, something other than complete nothingness” (*EDEL*, 81). This sinning-unto-death indicates just how radical the human need for transformation is. The transformation humanity desperately needs depends upon the divine *basis* of transformation, revealed by God’s journey into God-forsakenness to rescue humanity from death. In Jesus Christ’s death, God commits himself radically to humanity, indeed, “God vouches for the indestructibility of the covenant” (“Covenant,” 649). Thus, Ratzinger holds that transformed humanity not only comes from sin and death, but at root comes from “the little word ‘for’”—God’s will to be *for* humanity, even if it costs the incarnate life of his Son (cf. Barth). In suffering and death, Jesus Christ “becomes sheer ‘pro-existence’” (*JoN*, 332). Further, his resurrection to an eternal life, a life of full participation in the communion of love between the Father and Son in the Holy Spirit, reveals not only the *basis*, but the ultimate *telos* of our transformation.

This divine communion, or relationship of love, is the ultimate *telos* of Christian transformation. Like Barth, Ratzinger understands this communion in terms of *covenant* and stresses its “two-sidedness” (“Covenant,” 649, cf. 650; and *PCT*, 261). Again, like Barth, Ratzinger highlights the *taxis* proper to this covenant relationship by

distinguishing clearly between the prevenient divine act and the human act made possible by it. In no uncertain terms, “Salvation is not a ‘work’ of man” because “the real agent here can only be God” (“Commentary-GS,” V: 162).¹⁵⁰ As the reception and response to the ever-prevenient Word, Christian prayer reveals this *taxis* even as it participates in it. Indeed, the insight that prayer is the very *event* of covenant relationship penetrates to the very core of Ratzinger’s theology. Barth allows prayer to be the *form* of his theology and gestures towards a materially epicletic theology, but Ratzinger shows how prayer is the very *subject* and *content* of theology. This is the real brilliance of Ratzinger: yes, *lex orandi lex credendi*, but Jesus Christ is the *lex orandi*. In fact, Jesus Christ *is* prayer (*BPO*, 20; *GJC*, 26–27; and *JoN*)!¹⁵¹ His being-in-dialogue not only objectively transforms *humanity*, but also opens the way for particular persons to be transformed through participating in his prayer, as well as being the dynamic *telos* of our transformation. In Christian prayer, we participate in the very being of Jesus Christ, and thereby the very being of God. For this reason, Ratzinger speaks of the *telos* of our transformation as “divinization,” but as he interprets it as a way of *being-in-relation* and not as a confusion or mixing of substance, he is not far from Barth (*GJC*, 60–61).

However, inasmuch as Ratzinger places the *one* Church alongside Jesus Christ as the guarantee and even agent of human transformation, a chasm opens between Barth and Ratzinger. There appears to be substantive agreement between Barth and Ratzinger at several points, especially Ratzinger’s insistence that the “Word is set above the Church” and “repeatedly goes before her in every place” and that this *synaxis* is ordered to *missa*. Yet, Ratzinger also insists that the *one* Church precedes and guarantees the gathering of the churches, because the Word is “within her and is entrusted to her as a

150. In fact, “God intervenes where there is a human vacuum; he starts at the point at which, from the human point of view, nothing can be done” (*DaP*, 79). In other words, “No one can make himself a Christian” (*ITC*, 88), because “[c]onversion... always has its source from without; it is a gift which always comes... from Christ, who comes to meet us” (“Biblical Priesthood,” 622).

151. While Volf and Brown accuse Ratzinger of reducing persons to relations, his christology demonstrates his dynamic understanding of relations and indicates that when he describes persons as nothing other than relations it is his way of saying that persons do not *first* exist and *then* relate, but have *no* being *outside* of (dynamic) relations (cf. 93 and n. 50 above).

living agent” and “in certain respects” the Church is “the Word and the answer in one.” Indeed, this *one* Church is necessary for *God’s* work in the world: “to be present and effective in history, the Word of God needs this agent” (*PFF*, 142). Thus, while human transformation is *God’s* act, this act is *mediated* by the *one* Church. The *one* Church, as active *mediatrix*, stands with Christ on both sides of the divide between Creator and creature, Reconciler and the reconciled, Savior and the saved.

Given the exalted status of the *one* Church as *mediatrix*, it is no surprise that Ratzinger cautions against identifying specific churches with it.¹⁵² This results in a two-fold ecclesiology. On the one hand is the *one* Church, already *perfect* (in tense and holiness and glory), and on the other hand are the churches that are *not yet* the *one* Church but are becoming. Thus, Ratzinger puts forward both a static ecclesiology of *guarantee* and *institution*, and a dynamic ecclesiology of *becoming* and *event*. This static ecclesiology of the ever precedent *one* Church, however, stands in tension with some of the key themes of Ratzinger’s theology of human transformation.

- 1) While Ratzinger repeatedly stresses the work of the Holy Spirit in establishing personal particularity (specifically historical and physical particularity), the historical precedence of the *one* Church calls into question the meaningfulness and even reality of that very particularity because it already exists in perfection regardless of whether or not one becomes a member and does not change when one is added to it.¹⁵³ Ratzinger’s use of both *particularization* and *melt* or *merge* to describe human transformation highlights this tension.
- 2) Ratzinger claims that Jesus Christ is the *alpha* of creation because he stands at the beginning with regard to ontology and that Jesus Christ is the *omega* of creation because he stands at the *telos* with regard to history. Yet, Ratzinger’s doctrine of the

152. We leave to the side the question as to whether these cautions indicate Ratzinger’s affirmation of the ecclesiality of other churches or simply his refusal to identify the *one* Church with one’s experience of the present, local Roman Catholic Church (in which case Ratzinger “underhandedly” identifies the *one* Church as the Roman Catholic Church, as Walter Kasper argues).

153. This appears to be Volf’s main concern, though he incorrectly identifies this as *monism*.

one Church makes history a matter of *protology*: its institution, its historical beginning, guarantees its ultimate being. A concrete example of this is found in Ratzinger's discussion of ordination. The inclusion of the (verbal) prayer reminds the participants that it depends upon the divine act, but the answer to that prayer is already given in the laying on of hands, the sign of the historical apostolic succession which *guarantees* ordination's efficacy. While Ratzinger protests against *ex opere operato* understandings of the sacraments, it is unclear how his doctrine ultimately differs.

- 3) This emphasis on historical institution as guarantee historicizes the abiding of the Holy Spirit, whereas elsewhere Ratzinger emphasizes the work of the Holy Spirit in *liberating* creation from its temporal causality and limitations.
- 4) Finally, by viewing the laying on of hands and the verbal prayer as two different activities (with parallels in all the sacraments, especially baptism and the Eucharist), Ratzinger has *guaranteed* the being of the *one* Church and its work in human transformation, in a way that even Jesus Christ's own being was and is not guaranteed. In Ratzinger's description of Jesus Christ there is nothing alongside prayer that guarantees his being. Rather, his entire being is prayer, responding to the Father's call and with no guarantee other than the Father's love (that is, the Holy Spirit)—though what other guarantee or assurance is necessary?

Thus, while Ratzinger appears to agree with Barth that “*being* a Christian can only take the form of *becoming* a Christian ever anew” (*DaP*, 24 [323]), this “ever” only extends so far. In the *one* Church, this being is a given, a *datum*, guaranteeing the Christian's being and indicating that the dynamism of the Christian life actually has its goal in *stasis*. Right at the crucial juncture, then, Ratzinger hedges his account of *becoming* human with the *historical* givenness of the *one* Church, which as the *telos* of humanity indicates the *eschatological* givenness of human being. Institution, *givenness*, precedes and encompasses the event of becoming that is prayer. In the concluding chapter we will explore further the implications of this position.

CHAPTER 4

JOHN ZIZIOULAS: BECOMING ECCLESIAL PERSONS

EUCCHARISTIC TRANSFORMATION FROM DEATH TO LIFE IN COMMUNION

Zizioulas frames the question of human transformation in this way: “How is man hypostasized by baptism and what does he become?” (*BaC*, 53). The answer is that the baptized “becomes Christ and Church” (*BaC*, 58). By becoming Christ—sharing in the filial relationship that makes Jesus the person (*hypostasis*) he is—humans fulfil the purpose of creation: participation in the divine life of communion between Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the mediation of this life to the rest of creation. Thus, “there is in fact only one mystery, that of Christ, in which the entire mystery of our salvation is contained” (“Reflections Baptism,” 644), though Zizioulas views “the Eucharist and sacraments as the continuation of this fully physical form of communion” (*LCD*, 8, cf. 38). This transformation to life in communion begins in baptism, but its *primary* (not exclusive) *locus* is the Eucharist, on the one hand the prayer of the gathered church both asking and thanking God for this life, and on the other hand God’s gift of the divine *communio*. This is to say that transformation “takes place *epiclestically*,” where what was given yesterday is not taken for granted today, for “*epiclesis* means ecclesiologically that the Church *asks to receive from God what she has already received historically in Christ as if she had not received it at all, i.e. as if history did not count in itself*” (*BaC*, 185). It is to expositing Zizioulas’s epicletic understanding of human transformation that this chapter is dedicated.

Humanity does not become Christ and Church naturally. Indeed, the nature of *creation* is that, in and of itself, it tends towards death (I.A). This does not mean that to be created is to be fallen, but that creation’s sinful rejection of *communio* with the

Creator—*sin*—dooms it to death (I.B). However, the Father, unwilling to abandon creation to this fate, sent his Son to recapitulate creation by bringing it into the Father-Son communion in the Holy Spirit (I.C–D). This Jesus Christ *is* salvation: life in *communio*. Humans receive this relationship by being incorporated into his Body, the church, in baptism (II.A). On this side of the final *parousia*, Christians participate in this life in faith, still afflicted by sin and death (II.B). Through this transforming participation, Christians exist as God exists, in the *imago Dei*, living a life of freedom and love, not simply as a Christian, but as a member of an ecclesial *ordo* (II.C–E). Thus, transformation is ordered to and comes from the celebration of the Eucharist. In the Eucharist, God transforms the gathered local church so that it exists in the way God exists: *otherness* in communion (III.A–B). While the gathered church exists epiclectically, the prerequisite for the eucharistic moment in which Christ becomes present is the bishop (III.C–D). The Eucharist calls the church not only to gather together in celebration, but to return to the world, acting as the priests of creation as they mediate the life received in the Eucharist to all of creation (IV.A). In this way, the universal communion that is the goal of history, its *eschaton*, continually breaks into and transforms the present (IV.B).

I. Human Transformation from Death to Life in Jesus Christ

As creation was called forth by God *ex nihilo*, it will necessarily die, that is, return *ad nihilum* apart from God. Death is not a punishment *per se*, but the natural end of creation attempting to exist without receiving its life from God. Sin, then, is idolatry: attempting to replace the Creator as the source of life with creation. In this way, humans still seek life ecstatically, exercising the *imago Dei* as they reach out for life. This eventually results in death, however, for creation simply does not possess the ability to sustain itself eternally. While creation in isolation from the Creator necessarily dies, this isolation is not necessary. Jesus Christ demonstrates this through his free relationship of love with the Father in the Spirit. This person exists as God exists, not grasping futilely after some imagined idol, but living the life of God as a man. Furthermore,

through work of the Spirit all humanity may participate in the divine life of communion by being incorporated into Christ. As the person who is both *many* and *one*, he is the salvation of humanity, the realization of the Creator's will for all creation. This radical transformation, then, comes from the absurd "being-into-death," has its *basis* and *goal* in the pneumatologically catholic person of Jesus Christ, and occurs through ecclesial participation in Christ's communion in the divine life and the mediation of this life to all of creation.

I.A. Death: The End of Creation *in se*

Zizioulas contends that death is the only possibility for creation *in se*. Humans, as *created* beings, simply do not have the capacity to sustain our own lives. In opposition to all who presume that the world, in part or in whole, is unbounded, eternal or infinite, Zizioulas holds that the world, as *creatio ex nihilo* and therefore distinct from the eternal Creator, is bounded and unable to sustain itself.¹ When separated from God, then, these limitations destine creation for death, a return *ad nihilum*. Although in a sense "the 'natural' development of the biological hypostasis," Zizioulas views human death as tragic because we are created for life and constantly attempt to transcend our boundedness (*ekstasis*) through art, history and eros (*BaC*, 51). Despite this *ecstatic* tendency, humans fail to achieve the freedom of true existence because we sin, attempting to grasp our being ourselves, rather than receiving our existence from God. This failure leads to death, which "for a person means ceasing to love and to be loved, ceasing to be unique and unrepeatable" (*BaC*, 49).² Thus, humans die, not as a punishment *per se*, but as recipients of the fate of a contingent creation separated from its Creator and Sustainer.

1. At the heart of Zizioulas's thought is this created-uncreated dialectic, revealed in Christ and attested to by the Chalcedonian definition. See especially his "'Created' and 'Uncreated'" (*C&O*, 206–85); and "Creation and Salvation" (*LCD*, 83–119).

2. To jump ahead, "life for the person means the survival of the uniqueness of its hypostasis, which is affirmed and maintained by love" (*BaC*, 49).

The key to Zizioulas's understanding of death is the dialectic between created and uncreated he finds in the Chalcedonian definition.³ The council's affirmation that the hypostatic union did not abolish the distinction between natures—leaving them unchanged and unconfused—leads Zizioulas to the following reflections. The natures united in the person of Jesus Christ are *absolutely* different, meaning that the relationship between Creator and creation is free from necessity and that created existence is the “fruit of freedom” (*C&O*, 255). Unlike the self-sustaining existence of the Creator in love and freedom, the existence of humanity as part of the *creatio ex nihilo* is not self-sustaining because of creation's incapacity for generating love freely. For life (existence) depends upon *both* love *and* freedom: “Freedom without love leads to death, as does love without freedom. That, unfortunately, is an essential element of creation” (*C&O*, 263). Yet, the resurrected life of Jesus Christ reveals that death is only the destiny of creation *in se* and that creation need not remain *in se*.⁴ The created may live beyond death, but it must receive this life through relationship with the uncreated (*C&O*, 259–60). Creatures, particularly human persons, have the capacity for this life in relationship with the Creator, but it is a capacity marked by our incapacity to achieve this in and of ourselves.

This failed *ecstasis*, known as “sin” in the Christian tradition, tragically defaults the human vocation of becoming free persons. The tragic element of humanity, then, lies not in the biological (as if our createdness somehow prevented us, *tout court*, from becoming persons), but in our “tending towards becoming a person through it and failing.” Moreover, “Sin is precisely this failure” (*BaC*, 52). At his best, but not consistently, Zizioulas expounds this failure in terms of idolatry: “Adam succumbed to the temptation to declare himself ‘God’ and set out to redirect creation from the

3. This paragraph draws heavily on Zizioulas's essay, “‘Created’ and ‘Uncreated’” in (*C&O*, 250–85). Revealingly, Zizioulas describes this piece as his “attempt to render unto Plato the things of Plato and unto Christ the things of Christ” (*C&O*, 285). Paul McPartlan calls the Chalcedonian definition the “kernel of Zizioulas' theological system” (*The Eucharist Makes the Church: Henri de Lubac and John Zizioulas in Dialogue*, 150).

4. On the importance of this *in se*, see Zizioulas's “Preserving 2,” especially, 37.

uncreated God to his own created self.... deciding that everything should refer to him” (*LCD*, 98).⁵ As nothing on the created side of the created-uncreated dialectic is capable of sustaining everlasting life, idolatry leads, necessarily and ineluctably, to death:

When we are told that Adam died because he fell by making himself into God, we are being correctly told that making oneself God—i.e. the ultimate reference-point of existence—is something on the level of ontology, not psychology. Death intervenes not as the result of punishment for an act of disobedience but as a result of this individualization of nature to which the whole cosmos is subjected (*BaC*, 105).

Zizioulas, then, understands death as the existential consequence of this failure, not as a juridical penalty specifically created by God to punish sin (“Preserving 3,” 37–38).⁶ Thus, although humans tend towards lives of ecstatic freedom through eros, art, and history, the fact that God called creation forth *ex nihilo* means it can only return *ad nihilum*, i.e., die, when it is separated from God through sin.

I.B. Does Zizioulas Collapse Creation and Fall?

For those accustomed to thinking about creation and sin according to Western paradigms, Zizioulas’s account may appear to give short shrift to sin, denigrate creation, or open the door to dualism.⁷ Indeed, many commentators have accused Zizioulas of collapsing the Fall into Creation.⁸ While Zizioulas certainly opens himself

5. Note that Zizioulas argues that sinful humans are improperly related, not entirely without relationships.

6. According to Zizioulas’s understanding, death is the most serious consequence of sin, but it is not a punishment *per se*. Zizioulas explicitly attacks Augustine, but see also the Second Council of Mileum (416), canon 1: “whoever says that Adam, the first man, was made mortal, so that, whether he sinned or whether he did not sin, he would die in body, that is he would go out of the body not because of the merit of sin but by reason of the necessity of nature, let him be anathema”; and the Second Council of Orange (529), canon 2.

7. Richard Fermer, for instance, accuses Zizioulas of dualism because of Zizioulas’s distinction (treated below) between the biological and ecclesial hypostasis (“The Limits of Trinitarian Theology as a Methodological Paradigm,” 171, n. 51). Zizioulas, although occasionally making statements that leave his position open to a charge of dualism, is certainly not a dualist: “We do not have a body, we are bodies” (“Orthodoxy and Ecological Problems: A Theological Approach”)—contra Miroslav Volf’s claim that Zizioulas teaches “the person *has* a body and consciousness” (*After Our Likeness*, 81).

8. Rowan Williams cautiously notes that “there is *in the vocabulary* a surprising elision between creation and fall in a couple of instances” (“Review: *Being as Communion*,” 103*). Similarly, Douglas Farrow equivocates: Zizioulas “*appears* to conflate creation and fall” (“Person and Nature,” 102*); and Paul Cumin asserts—while acknowledging a few exceptions—that in Zizioulas, “the distinction between

to this understanding with such phrases as “What is created is, by nature, tragic,” or “[i]dolatry, i.e. turning created existence into an ultimate point of reference.... is *natural* for created existence,” he simply does not equate creation or createdness with the Fall or fallenness (*C&O*, 257; cf. *BaC*, 102).⁹ Rather, as even Miroslav Volf acknowledges, Zizioulas teaches that “[t]he Fall consists merely in the revelation and actualization of the limitations and potential dangers inherent in creaturely existence” (*AOL*, 81–82). As we will see, that Volf intends the “merely” to be derogatory indicates that he has not perceived how *serious* and *absolutely unnecessary* Zizioulas understands the break in communion to be that “reveals” and “actualizes” the limits and incapacity of creation to sustain itself. Even without grasping the full implications of Zizioulas’s understanding of *being as communion*, his later ecological writings clearly demonstrate that Zizioulas views creation as good and the salvation of creation as *the* goal of the incarnation.¹⁰ Most importantly, these criticisms reveal both how consistently Zizioulas weaves all of his teaching into the ontological loom of personal communion and how important it is to exegete Zizioulas in light of this loom—even if one ultimately wishes to critique it. Wary of the denigration of creation that has dogged Christianity, these critics appear to think that anything less than an affirmation of the absolute goodness of creation *in se* collapses into gnostic heresy.¹¹ Zizioulas, however, does not

creation and fall seems to have been dropped entirely” (“Looking for Personal Space in the Theology of John Zizioulas,” 363). Other critics have been less measured. Volf stridently critiques Zizioulas at this point, “Creation and Fall coalesce into a single entity in Zizioulas’s thinking” (81); and Edward Russell declares, “Zizioulas equates... biological existence with fallenness, and sin appears to be a matter of necessity” (“Reconsidering Relational Anthropology,” 178).

9. Compare these statements in the section on biological hypostases: “suffer from createdness,” “‘passion’ is closely connected with createdness,” and “a biological hypostasis is an intrinsically tragic figure” (*BaC*, 50–54).

10. See any of Zizioulas’s writings on ecology, for instance “Ecological Asceticism: A Cultural Revolution”; or “Proprietors or Priests of Creation”; or the three-part “Preserving God’s Creation.” Given Zizioulas’s emphasis on death as *tragic* and on salvation as the salvation of creation *as such*, Paul Cumin missteps when he describes Zizioulas as a theologian for whom “‘created’ and ‘person’ are fundamentally incommensurable” and “any attempt to be a created person is an attempt to be an oxymoron” (362 and 363).

11. Observe here the distinction Zizioulas makes between createdness and materiality (stressing that the truly radical divide is between created-uncreated, not material-immaterial): “To be subject to death is not a consequence of materiality, for it is our createdness, not our materiality, which makes us subject to death. Just as it is

understand anything *to exist* in isolation. Thus, while he does not collapse creation and Fall, he does not understand creation *to be*, much less to be *good*, apart from God.

In fact, Zizioulas argues that sin is the attempt of the created to exist *in se*. This sin, this rupture of the gracious relationship of the Creator with creation, leads to death.¹² Ralph Del Colle and Rowan Williams, then, correctly understand Zizioulas's harmatology when they describe sin as, "really the constriction of Adam apart from Christ" ("Person' and 'Being' in John Zizioulas' Trinitarian Theology," 74); and "the separation of being from communion" ("Review," 101), respectively. This sinful existence could be called an *ousianic* existence, i.e. being *kata physin*, according to the essence or nature. Yet such an "existence" does not merit the name as "[l]iving according to the nature (*kata physin*) [amounts] to individualism, mortality, etc., since man is not immortal *kata physin*" (*C&O*, 165).¹³ Thus, the aforementioned references, which appear to collapse sin and creation, actually affirm the created-uncreated dialectic.¹⁴ They should be interpreted as statements that the nature, or *ousia*, of creation is not and cannot be divine, unbounded, or eternal. As Turner recognizes: "The threat of non-being was not initiated by the Fall. This possibility [of non-being] is present from creation and is the result of the difference between divine being and created being" (444). In short, it is necessary that creation separated from God perish, but this

not evil, materiality is not the cause of death. It is because they had a beginning, and came out of nothing, that death is always a possibility for creatures" (*LCD*, 94). Cf. Robert Turner ("Foundations for John Zizioulas' Approach to Ecclesial Communion," 456).

12. That sin leads to death, the absolute cessation of existence, should answer the first half the criticism made by Russell: "Zizioulas underemphasizes two key aspects of sin; its gravity and its relation to eschatology" (178). The second half, however, stands, highlighting that Zizioulas has not answered explicitly the question: Why do sinful creatures continue to exist, even for a moment? See the section below, however, on the *eschatological* dimension of his relational ontology—from which one could extrapolate an answer.

13. Cf. Paul's language of *κατὰ σάρκα*. "Living, on the other hand, according to the image of God means living in the way God exists, i.e. as an image of God's personhood, and this would amount to 'becoming God'. This is what the *theosis* of man means in the thinking of the Greek Fathers" (*C&O*, 165–66).

14. As Jerry Skira grasps, to say that creation *in se* cannot live "should be taken to mean that the absolute origin of creation (and the continuing life-giving to creation) resides in the creative power of the eternal Trinity" ("The Ecological Bishop," 203).

separation is not necessary! Fallenness, then, is a distorted way of being in relation to God.¹⁵ Thus, humans remain persons and retain their *ecstatic* freedom (the *imago Dei*), while losing that which was the goal of that freedom: participation in the divine life.¹⁶ In order for creation to avoid its fate of returning *ad nihilum*, a new Adam is necessary, a human who looks to the Creator for life, receives it as a free gift of communion and mediates it to the rest of creation—Jesus Christ is this Adam.

I.C. Jesus Christ *is* Salvation

Zizioulas's soteriology determines his understanding of death and life. Quite simply, his soteriology is this: Jesus Christ himself is salvation.¹⁷ Although Zizioulas is best known for his doctrine of the Trinity and his ontology of communion, and rightly so as he devotes most of his writing to these topics, Zizioulas anchors all of his theology in Jesus Christ, for “the New Testament and all subsequent Christian doctrine simply point to the person and event of Jesus Christ... all doctrine simply recalls the event of Christ” (*LCD*, 9).¹⁸ In fact, Zizioulas understands the early Christian identification of Jesus Christ's *life* as both *being* and *truth* to be crucial for all theology, to the extent that “it is solely upon this basis that the great achievements of Trinitarian theology of the fourth century can be judged to their full value” (*BaC*, 80, but all of

15. Again, sinful humans are still *persons*, or relational beings, but self-contradictory “dying beings” because of their self-referential (idolatrous) way of being in relation.

16. Extremely important is Zizioulas's differentiation between the divine communion and our *participation* in the divine communion (*BaC*, 93–94). As Alan Brown observes, “for Zizioulas, it is not possible to ‘project’ the mode of being of the Church onto the divine being, since the mode of being of the Church already is the mode of being of divine being; and, for Zizioulas, there are not ‘two communions’, one divine and one human—rather there is one divine communion, in which humans participate, this participation being the ecclesial mode of being that is the Church” (“On the Criticism of *Being as Communion* in Anglophone Orthodox Theology,” 70).

17. “Christ is the truth not because he is an epistemological principle which explains the universe, but because he is life and the universe of beings finds its meaning in the incorruptible existence in Christ, who takes up into Himself (*ἀνακεφαλαιώσας*) the whole of creation and history. Being is inconceivable outside of life, and because of this the ontological nature of truth resides in the idea of life” (*BaC*, 80; cf. Brown, 54).

18. Cf. Aristotle Papanikolaou: “The incarnation is not the event in which the divine energies are communicated in their fullness to the human nature, it is the event in which the human nature itself exists, *is*, in the person of Christ” (“Divine Energies or Divine Personhood,” 369).

“Truth and Communion,” 67–122, is pertinent). As observed above, the Chalcedonian definition provides the terminological muscle for most of Zizioulas’s christological work. Thus, when he defines “salvation” as “the union of the created with the uncreated,” Zizioulas does not mean a generic union, but the *person* of Jesus Christ, in whom created and uncreated are united “unconfusedly, immutably, indivisibly, inseparably... without the distinction of natures being taken away” (*LCD*, 108; and *NPNF2*–14, 264–65). Outside of this person, Jesus Christ, there is no salvation—no created-uncreated union, and therefore no life and no being for creation. As a person is not an idea, commodity, property, or function, but “an identity formed through a relationship,” our salvation must involve receiving Jesus Christ’s unique filial relationship, sharing in his sonship (*LCD*, 111).¹⁹ As Zizioulas emphatically states, “The Christian approach to God as Father originates exclusively from this relationship of the Son to the Father, and the right that the Son bestows on us to address God as Father with him” (*LCD*, 26). As we shall see, Zizioulas understands the Christian life of *faith* to be the mode of participation in Jesus Christ’s filial relationship with the Father that is proper to history.

As Zizioulas understands personhood in terms of relations, to be saved means to become a new person by being brought into new relationships with God and creation (personal and non-personal creation) through Jesus Christ. We do not become *possessors* of life, but receive life just as Jesus Christ receives his life as Son through the Spirit from the Father—paradigmatically in the resurrection.²⁰ “Real life cannot be brought to an end by death and will never prove false. Real life springs from the resurrection, which is to say from Christ who himself transcends biological death” (*LCD*, 99). Furthermore, participation in this life means that we also participate in Jesus Christ’s mediation of his life to creation. Salvation requires this mediation because

19. Zizioulas’s logic actually runs the other direction—from Jesus Christ’s sonship to a doctrine of personhood.

20. Without the resurrection, we would not know what true life is, because “Man is under the impression that he is in possession of life, but what he calls life is in fact no more than a process of dissolution. Death masquerades as life: its claim to be life is a tragic consequence of the fall” (*LCD*, 99).

If man is to endure, all creation must endure, for man cannot live without creation. If man is to survive death, all creation has to be transformed so that no part of it succumbs to death.... The salvation of the world must be the salvation from death (*LCD*, 101–02).

Therefore,

Christian dogmatics... must take the threat to our existence very seriously. It must insist that the death of every single person, even of every single entity, is an outrage, and say clearly that creation has become captive to death (*LCD*, 101).

Though Zizioulas does not explicitly mention it with any frequency, the resurrection provides the center of gravity for all of his doctrine. Crucially, Zizioulas understands the resurrection as “the Spirit’s act in transcending all limits, and all dissolution and death” (*LCD*, 107, cf. 106–09).²¹ The resurrected Jesus Christ, living a life unthreatened by death in the power of the Spirit, is the eschatological Adam, the head of all creation.

I.D. Jesus Christ’s Recapitulation of Creation

Zizioulas expounds a fairly robust doctrine of recapitulation, but one obscured for many westerners by his refusal to understand sin juridically. Zizioulas appears to confirm these western suspicions by hurrying past the Crucified to the Resurrected, thereby allowing the Resurrection to eclipse the Cross.²² As McPartlan notes: “Calvary is... the backdrop to the Resurrection for Zizioulas. In itself [the Cross] is a failure,” merely “an event in the preparatory Economy which tells us *nothing* about Theology [God in himself]” (247 and 249).²³ As before, the “in itself” makes all the difference.

21. Cf. Papanikolaou: “Instead of following Christ or being sent by Christ, the Spirit realizes (*conduire*) the Resurrection of Christ” (“Divine Energies or Divine Personhood,” 364).

22. The Cross does not absorb Zizioulas’s attention as the Resurrection does, but he is not *silent* about it: “The Cross of Christ, and especially the idea of his descent into Hades, are the only way to communion with God. Only in utter incapacity can human capacity be realised” (*C&O*, 242).

23. Alan Lewis (seconded by Alan Torrance) argues that “Zizioulas seems reluctant to acknowledge the death of Jesus as significant for God’s being.... This surely evades the finality and reality of the death of Jesus, presupposing an ontology in which God swamps non-being with the power of being, rather than receiving non-being into himself and thus going beyond it” (“The Burial of God,” 350, n. 31). In response, Zizioulas writes, “The Cross is precisely this passage [from being subjected to natural causation, death and individualism to immortal life in freedom and love] which God himself went through in the Incarnation, i.e., owing to the fact that the Son freely assumed human nature. This passage of the Cross is as real as anything, and it is implicit in all my references to Christology. The fact that I insist that Christ finally overcame the tragic aspect of human personhood and the necessity of

The Resurrection does not eclipse the Cross, but gives it *meaning*, and thereby gives humanity true *being*: “All things in Christology are judged by the resurrection.... The fact that *finally* death is conquered gives us the right to believe that the conqueror of death was also *originally* God” (*BaC*, 55, n. 49).²⁴ For this reason, Zizioulas recommends a “beyond redemption” Christology which does not stop with redemption from sin “but reaches beyond that, to man’s destiny as the image of God in creation,” thereby including the “negative (redemption from the fallen state)” and the “positive (fulfilment of man’s full communion with God; what the Greek Fathers have called *theōsis*)” (*C&O*, 237).²⁵ This is to say that redemption must give way to recapitulation: yes, Christ redeemed the fallen, but he did so that human persons might again be the crown of creation.

biological nature because of his Trinitarian personhood (i.e., because the Father raised him from the dead in the Spirit; Romans 4:25; 8:11; Acts: 3:15) and *not* because of God’s receiving non-being into himself... does not turn my position into a ‘docetic tendency’” (*C&O*, n. 87, 142–43, citing Alan Torrance’s *Persons in Communion*, 304). Moreover, Zizioulas asks whether the only way to affirm the history of Jesus Christ “to be real and not ‘docetic’” is to affirm that God accepts non-being and evil into his being, which would result in the assertion that the defeat of evil and death involved God making evil and death part of his own being! Lewis and Torrance gesture towards a real lacuna, *viz.*, Zizioulas does not attend sufficiently to the *particularity* of the life and death of Jesus Christ, but his point nevertheless stands that a resurrectionless cross simply would not be good news: “with the aid of love as an analogy, we shall be able to reach an understanding of the Christology of the cross (a person who loved us so much as to die for us); but without an ability to follow it into the resurrection (a person who conquered death) Christology brings with it nothing ontological” (*BaC*, 108). Furthermore, it seems that Lewis and Torrance misjudge Zizioulas, for death is “overwhelmed” by the personal coincidence of “freedom and love” in the Son, not abstract power—a concept requiring the *ousianic* ontology Zizioulas assiduously avoids.

24. In the words of John Manoussakis, “Theologically, then, it is the resurrection that is the ‘final cause’ of the crucifixion” (“The Anarchic Principle of Christian Eschatology in the Eucharistic Tradition of the Eastern Church,” 30). Consult *LCD*, 108–14, and especially 104, to see why Zizioulas’s eschatological ontology does not involve adoptionism.

25. Zizioulas draws on the insight found in Irenaeus *in nuce* and developed by Maximus “that the Christ event would still be realised even if there had not been the Fall” (*C&O*, 237, n. 42). Here, it is difficult to understand how Zizioulas could mean the particular, irreplaceable, Jesus Christ—cf. the criticisms of Farrow, especially his accusation that “it is often semantically impossible to substitute the name ‘Jesus’ where Zizioulas has the title ‘Christ,’” although it is not clear that this is because of “a Eutychianizing process” (92–101, quote at 97). Note that Zizioulas uses “redemption” to describe what Barth describes as “reconciliation”—both stress that salvation is bigger than this.

God created humans to be the priests of creation, entrusted with the personalization of all creation in order that it might enter into personal communion with the source (*aitia*) of eternal life.²⁶ Christ fulfilled this vocation to mediate life to all creation, which God willed from the beginning and will be the eternal calling of human persons. Thus, to fulfill their vocation, all human persons are called to the transformative union with Christ's body, the Church.

Now it is this role [priest of creation], which Christ performed personally through his cross and resurrection, that he assigned to his Church, which is his Body. The Church is there precisely in order to act as the priest of creation who unites the world and refers it back to God, bringing it into communion with him. This takes place in the Church particularly through the sacraments. The meaning of the sacraments, for example that of baptism, is that through it the attitude of the fallen Adam is reversed. Man dies as to his claim to be God in creation, and instead recognises God as its Lord. Through the path of asceticism, the Church educates man to sacrifice his own will, his self-centredness, and subject himself freely to the will of God, thus showing that man has reversed the attitude of the first Adam ("Proprietors Priests," 6–7).

The priesthood of Christians certainly has no meaning or being apart from Christ's priesthood in the Spirit, yet in the Spirit, "[h]is priesthood is realized and portrayed in historical existence here and now as a eucharistic community" (*BaC*, 231). The community's sacramental *koinonia* does not surpass, but affirms, the cross and resurrection.²⁷ In particular, Zizioulas understands the Eucharist, viewed Christologically and eschatologically, to be this life of personal *koinonia*, calling it: "the summing up or the anacephaleosis of the entire reality of the salvation of the world" ("The Orthodox Church and the Third Millennium," 30). In order to become a member of Christ's body, to fulfill the call to share his filial relationship to the Father, to participate in this life of eternal communion in the power of the Holy Spirit, and to mediate this life to all of creation, humans must be baptized.

26. As Williams notes: "redemption is neither an *extra nos* transaction, nor an event of illumination or revelation, but the establishing of communion" ("Review," 101). Though as the latter it illuminates and reveals.

27. Contra Russell (179). Likewise, Russell's critique that Zizioulas "focuses on the signifier and not the thing signified" fails to grasp that, for Zizioulas, the sacraments are not "a window to higher things," but "the very substance of a transformed cosmos" (*C&O*, 298).

II. Becoming Ecclesial Persons in Baptism

Through baptism humans both die and are resurrected—transformed into *new* persons who share Christ’s definitive relationship to the Father. The baptismal death means the end of this person’s idolatrous way of living and the baptismal resurrection means a new life through the reordering of *this* person’s relations, so that continuity will be seen in retrospect. Baptism cannot be accomplished alone, but requires the call of the church and the response of the baptized. Baptism does not provide a worldly guarantee of this death and resurrection, and the baptized still experience the death and decay of a world separated from the giver of life. Before the Parousia of Christ, then, Christians exist in faith, experiencing their baptism continually—Cross, death, and resurrection—as they repent of their idolatrous tendencies to seek security in the past and in creation, instead turning towards their life in the future and loving those around them. That is to say, the baptized become like God, existing in the way the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit exists—as persons who love in freedom. For this reason, understanding human transformation requires a doctrine of the Trinity and an account of the basis of God’s freedom to love. Unlike God, Christians will never be the source of their eternal life and therefore will never possess eternal life. Christians must always receive their life anew in the Eucharist, the event in which the church becomes the body of Christ, the celebration to which baptism is ordered.

II.A. Baptism as Death and New Birth

In order to escape the fate of death, to live truly, our relationships must be reconstituted so that we become *new* persons.²⁸ Zizioulas understands baptism as this reconstitution, simultaneously the death of our old, idolatrous way of being and the birth of our new, *Christ-ian* way of being. In his words, “Baptism is essentially nothing other than the application to humanity of the very filial relationship which exists

28. NB: *new*—“For the *created* to escape this destiny, it needs a new birth, that is, a new way of being, a new *hypostasis*” (*C&O*, 263), cf. note 15 above. See below for Zizioulas’s understanding of *schesis* (relation) and *hypostasis* (person).

between the Father and the Son” (*C&O*, 241).²⁹ As Zizioulas understands persons in terms of relations, his statement, “Baptism gives ‘sonship’” (*C&O*, 109), leads to the radical conclusion that through baptism, “every baptized person becomes ‘Christ’” (*BaC*, 58, n. 54).³⁰ Through the new *schesis* received in baptism the baptized’s “identity is now rooted not in the relations provided by nature, but in the uncreated Father-Son relationship” (*C&O*, 109).³¹ This, however, does not mean that baptized persons cease to be biological, but that they cease to be biologically *determined*.³² Again, Zizioulas does not conflate creation and fall, and he does not propound an immaterial or anti-biological soteriology—quite the opposite:

[In order] for the unsuccessful hypostasis to succeed, it is necessary that eros and the body, as expression [*sic*] of ecstasy and of the hypostasis of the person, should cease to be the bearers of death. Two things therefore appear to be indispensable: (a) that the two basic components of the biological hypostasis, eros and the body, should *not* be destroyed...; and (b) that the *constitutional make-up of the hypostasis* should be changed—not that a moral change or improvement should be found but a kind of new birth for man (*BaC*, 52–53).

As the death involved in baptism means the cessation of the *way* in which these natural

29. Zizioulas refers the reader to the biblical narratives of Christ’s baptism and the early baptismal rites, citing Galatians 3:27; Tertullian, *De Bapt.* 7-8; Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autol.* 1.12; and Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* 21.1.

30. Cf. Brown, who argues that Zizioulas, unlike Ratzinger, does not *reduce* the person to the relation, or *schesis* (65). Our ecclesial hypostasis *is* Christ’s (cf. the discussion of Christ’s *catholic* personhood below). Thus, “the Church becomes Christ Himself in human existence, but also every member of the Church becomes Christ and Church.... It is characteristic that according to the Fathers every baptized person becomes ‘Christ’” (*BaC*, 58 and n. 54, citing on 113, n. 115, Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.*, 21.1; Tertullian, *De Bapt.*, 7-8; and *Const. Apost.*, 3.16—though all three treat post-baptismal chrismation and only the first explicitly names Christians “christs”). Elizabeth Groppe is on the right track, “In baptism, the human person is incorporated into the very *hypostasis* of Christ,” but shies away from acknowledging the full ontological implications with “the baptized share *in a very profound sense* in Christ’s personhood” (“Creation *Ex Nihilo* and *Ex Amore*,” 479*).

31. Baptism “‘hypostasizes’ the person according to God’s way of being” (*BaC*, 19). As Brown notes, 1) “Zizioulas’ argument consists precisely in showing that the *λόγος* (meaning) of personhood is found in Jesus Christ and nowhere else,” and 2) “this baptismal incorporation into Christ” whereby “one is hypostasized into [Jesus Christ’s] catholic mode of being constitutes the meaning and fulfillment of history” (71 and 64).

32. Even so well-disposed a reader as Skira interprets Zizioulas to mean that in baptism “the person *ceases to be* a biological being” (“The Ecological Bishop,” 209*); cf. Russell (180 and 184). Farrow strikes closer to the mark with, “the complete overcoming of nature” (92, n. 16), as Zizioulas actually tends to speak of “transcending” nature, which implies that the biological hypostasis will be caught up into this new ecclesial way of being, not abandoned (how else could humans *eat* the bread of life and fulfill their vocations as *priests of creation?*).

relationships constitute us as persons and not the abolition of the relationships themselves, there exists real continuity between the unbaptized, biological hypostasis and the baptized, ecclesial hypostasis.

In fact, Zizioulas uses the same word, *hypostasis*, to describe both the biological and ecclesial ways of being. This indicates, contra Volf (82–84), that Zizioulas understands non-ecclesial persons to be just that, persons.³³ Zizioulas does not think that individuals become persons through baptism, but that through baptism dying persons receive a new *schesis* that will last into the age to come.³⁴ Baptism does not create persons *ex nihilo*, but saves them from death and gives them life by re-constituting them.³⁵ Baptism is not simply a physical washing with water or a symbol of inner or spiritual purification, but the person's death and burial—a negative judgment against his or her former idolatrous identity (“Symbolism Realism”).³⁶ Yet, it is also resurrection to a new life of free participation in the Son's communion with the Father in the Spirit. As this reconciliation with God, *the uncreated Other*, “is a necessary precondition for reconciliation with any ‘other’,” baptism also frees the baptized for communion with *created others*, because the baptized person is no longer determined, limited or threatened by biological, historical and sociological relationships (*LCD*, 3 and 33–34). For Zizioulas, then, this is the meaning of *theosis*: human *apo-stasis* and *dia-stasis*

33. That Volf fundamentally misunderstands Zizioulas's ontology is indicated by his insistent labelling of Zizioulas's ontology as an “ontology of person,” (note the singular) rather than an “ontology of communion” (i.e., *persons* in [right] relation). Douglas Knight also argues that Zizioulas understands the unbaptized as “individuals, without relation to anyone else” (“Introduction,” 8), but this neglects Zizioulas's understanding of sin as the self-referential distortion of relationships (i.e., idolatry), which is radically different than the absence of all relationships.

34. Granted, however, that 1) “[a] ‘dying being’ is the greatest absurdity that can exist for ontology” (*C&O*, 228 n. 31); and 2) personhood is always a gift, even the idolatrous personhood of sinful humanity—cf. n. 103 below and Papnikolaou: “Humans... are not *inherently* persons, as if they can claim such a dignity for themselves or as a part of their essence” (“Is John Zizioulas an Existentialist in Disguise?” n. 10, 606–07).

35. The continuity, however, is eschatological and apparent only in retrospect, not prospect. For Zizioulas's understanding of this eschatological retrospect in regard to salvation history and worship, see “Reflections Baptism,” 646; and “Symbolism and Realism in Orthodox Worship,” 8.

36. Baptism *is* death, burial and resurrection (symbolic of Christ's), and is much more than a natural symbol of purification—though this death and new birth does involve purification.

(separateness and individuality) become *ek-stasis* (communion, relatedness) and *hypo-stasis* (particularity, uniqueness), and thereby our fear of *dia-phora* (difference, otherness) becomes *ana-phora* (reference or movement towards outside creation), that is, we become “*particular living beings*.”³⁷ As this eschatological life comes from the future (*eschaton*) and not from our beginning (*arche*), we must *turn* to receive it. In fact, even with this conversion, this life will never be *de natura*, that is, the possession of creation. It must, therefore, be received in faith.

II.B. Christian Existence in Faith

The event of baptism not only constitutes the Christian person, it also reveals the shape of Christian existence between Pentecost and parousia as a communal life of repentance and forgiveness in faith. Zizioulas understands the communion of the church to be the very fabric of the Christian life—from the very first moment. Baptism requires both the baptized and the church, for just as “[n]o one can say ‘I believe’ unless as a reply to this community.... Faith is possible only within the community that puts this question to us” (*LCD*, 34). By answering the baptismal call in the affirmative, the believer accepts the *crisis* provoked by God’s “eschatological gift” which brings “all existing relationships under judgment” (“The Church as Communion,” 8), as the church asks the candidate “to give up their identity and receive a new one, not based on any set of known relationships,” and “the believer places their security in what they can have no confirmation of” (*LCD*, 35, cf. 33–34). In other words, the believer repents of looking to his or her past or nature as the source and guarantee of life and identity, turns in faith towards the *eschata*, and receives life and identity from Jesus Christ.³⁸ Thus, baptism requires faith, for as a fundamentally eschatological act, it “takes us into

37. See Zizioulas’s extended discussions of *otherness* in “Communion and Otherness” and “On Being Other,” in *C&O*, 1–12 and 13–98, respectively.

38. Rather strangely, Zizioulas’s discussion of early Christian baptism sounds some promising, typically “free church,” notes: “The first Christians were asked to do two things at their baptism. Firstly, they said goodbye to all the identity and security they received from their families.... The second thing... is that when they were baptised as Christians they ceased to have any civic identity,” but without explanation he qualifies, “though not for us” (*LCD*, 36).

a situation in which nothing is in our control,” and “[e]verything is as yet unconfirmed biologically, historically, socially or by our own experience, or by logic” (*LCD*, 36).³⁹ Indeed, “Faith,” Zizioulas holds, “is an about-turn by which we turn to face the direction from which our true life comes,” receiving an “identity... based on [Jesus Christ’s] promises about our future” (*LCD*, 34 and 36). For this reason, the church associates baptism with forgiveness:

Every baptized person by being forgiven ceases to be identified by his or her past and becomes a citizen of the city to come, i.e., of the Kingdom... forgiveness receives its concrete application in the Church through Baptism (*LCD*, 6).

Until the parousia, the Christian will continue to live in faith, existing repentantly and expectantly.

This is to say that the Christian life conforms to the pattern of transformation set forth in baptism. As Zizioulas says, “the essence of Christian existence in the Church is *metanoia* (repentance)” (*LCD*, 4). All of this depends upon our life actually being in Christ, on God not letting fate run its course—dooming us to death. Thus, at the core of this *metanoia* stands the initiative taken by God to address our idolatry-unto-death: “From the moment that man became trapped in this cycle of life and death, it was impossible for him to free himself. So the uncreated God took the initiative” (*LCD*, 103). Moreover, this initiative involved much more than the forgiveness of sins as forgiveness alone does not give life. Through God’s initiative, as it only could be, the created-uncreated relationship (union) necessary for life was established in Jesus Christ (*LCD*, 103).⁴⁰ Given that Zizioulas takes this *establishment* with the utmost ontological

39. Volf could not be more mistaken when he asserts, “Strikingly, faith plays no role in Zizioulas’s soteriology and ecclesiology,” for “he is indeed involved in screening out faith soteriologically” (95). Volf goes on to claim that “in the few places” faith does appear in Zizioulas’s work, “it leads a kind of peripheral soteriological existence... not at all as faith in God or in Christ.” The real issue, however, is that Zizioulas simply does not share Volf’s definition of faith as an “*individual* activity” that “is essentially a cognitive act.”

40. Surprisingly, Volf protests vehemently against this dimension of Zizioulas’s soteriology: “faith does not, as it were, always lag behind the relation to God that has already been formed. Faith is not a necessary accompanying phenomenon of the fundamental relation to God underlying it” (171, though what of Romans 5:6 and 1 John 4:19?). However, if Volf did not reject participation in Christ as soteriologically aberrant and non-sensical (cf. 164, 181-82 and 188), there could be

seriousness, he refuses to take the Christian experience of *simul iustus et peccator* as indicative of Christian *being* (*C&O*, 242–43). Despite our ongoing experience of fallenness, we really *are* who we are in Jesus Christ, and the Christian life means clinging to this truth in faith. This does not, however, result in some sort of self-satisfied, triumphalistic diffidence regarding our sin as Russell surmises (180). For although our central, ontologically determinative relationship is established in Christ and becomes our own in baptism as we become “sons in the Son,” receiving his filial schesis demands further transformation, that is,

the reconstitution of every relationship by which we are constituted.... All these relationships and our direction and desires undergo a re-ordering and purification as they are brought into this relationship with God. This represents a radical purification, which is what the life of the Christian is. The reordering of our relationships brings us finally into being, setting us definitively with the relationship to the persons of God that will secure our life without limit (*LCD*, 31*).

In language Zizioulas uses elsewhere, this means a conversion to *loving the other*. This love does not happen naturally, simply emanating from us. We must will this love, and as we are still in the midst of sin, willing this love

requires the experience of the *Cross*. Unless we sacrifice our own will and subject it to the will of the other, repeating in ourselves what our Lord did in Gethsemane in relation to the will of His Father, we cannot reflect properly in history the communion and otherness we see in the Triune God (*LCD*, 5, cf. especially 111–12).⁴¹

Baptism highlights that the way to God, from the very first step, conforms to the Cross: “Only when Christians are ‘weak’ can they be really ‘strong’ (2 Corinthians 12:20); capacity is identical with incapacity, with loss of one’s soul (Matthew 6:39), of one’s very life” (“The Early Christian Community,” 24). The Christian life, then, continues the mystery of Christ’s scandalous strength in weakness and victory through suffering death.

substantial agreement on Volf’s main point, “[faith is] the mode in which this relation itself takes place” (171).

41. Zizioulas offers the early martyrs as volitional examples, as they “related single-mindedly to Christ, so all other relationships are subordinated to this one” (*LCD*, 114)—contra Volf’s criticism that Zizioulas’s doctrine of faith is not volitional (168–69).

II.C. Becoming Like God: Baptism and the Doctrine of the Trinity

Zizioulas's presentation of baptism as the constitution of an ecclesial hypostasis hinges upon his doctrine of the Trinity which, in turn, hinges upon the ecclesial knowledge of Jesus Christ. As the last block quote hints, Zizioulas believes that Jesus Christ reveals God to be Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and that Christology leads to the doctrine of the Trinity. God is known, not through creation *in se*, but

in his Son in the love that exists between the Son and the Father.... The only true revelation and knowledge of God is located in the loving relationship of the Father and the Son, and God reveals himself through this relationship of love. We may come to know God in Christ (*LCD*, 24).

Note that Zizioulas emphasizes that Jesus Christ is both the content and form of revelation (*LCD*, 30). If we do not know Jesus Christ as Son, we do not know him, for his true identity is this very Father-Son relationship (*LCD*, 43). Jesus Christ, and not the “Cappadocian revolution” *per se*, is the ground of Zizioulas's doctrine of the Trinity, as his *Lectures* highlight (as well as giving his usual account of the historical development).⁴² For instance, Zizioulas argues that theology, as an articulation of knowledge of God, “is not a matter of objective, logical proposals, but of personal relationships between God, man and the world,” for “only when we are drawn into the

42. Although it remains outside the scope of this thesis to evaluate Zizioulas's reading of the Cappadocians, a few remarks are in order. Zizioulas has been heavily criticized by patristic scholars for misreading a modern understanding of “person” back into the Cappadocians, cf. André de Halleux (“‘Hypostase’ et ‘Personne’ dans la formation du dogme trinitaire (ca. 375–81)”; Lucian Turcescu (“‘Person’ Versus ‘Individual’, and Other Modern Misreadings of Gregory of Nyssa”); and Morwena Ludlow; and (*Gregory of Nyssa, Ancient and (Post)Modern*, esp. 51–67). As Brown notes, Zizioulas's critics seem to mistake his project for “a revision of a patristic Greek lexicon,” whereas “Zizioulas' argument is ontological not semantic.” Zizioulas does not claim to repristinate the Cappadocian corpus, but to recover and refine a Cappadocian *insight*. Thus, for Zizioulas's argument to stand he does not need to prove that the Cappadocians thought about personhood only and always in the way he describes, but to demonstrate that the Cappadocians did think of *hypostasis* as an ontological concept, which he does (cf. Brown [67 and 66]). See Aristotle Papanikolaou's work for defenses of Zizioulas's reading of the Cappadocians on various levels. Perhaps the best critique of Zizioulas's reading would be Barnes's: he creates historical polarities allowing the past to be viewed in “grand, architectonic narrative forms,” using a reductive historical method in which “[s]tories of increasing scope are told on the basis of diminishing... evidence” (“Augustine in Contemporary Trinitarian Theology,” 239–41 and 248–49)—originally directed against the tendency to create an East vs. West polarity in recent presentations of the development of trinitarian theology.

life of God, which is triune, and through it receive our entire existence and identity, that we have real knowledge” (*LCD*, 7).⁴³ Zizioulas holds that the experience of being drawn into Jesus Christ, and thereby participating in the triune life of God has been the source of Christian theology from the beginning. At the heart of Christian theology has always been the love received in “that particular relationship that we may refer to as being ‘in Christ’, within which we may acknowledge God as Father” (*LCD*, 31). However, the articulation of that reality has been a very rocky road indeed.

Particularly important in Zizioulas’s estimation was the development of the concept of *personhood*. The affirmation that “Jesus Christ is the revelation of God,” because he “addressed God as Father and that he is able to do so because he alone is Son,” does not yet settle the question of the *being* of the Son in relation to the Father (*LCD*, 9 and 43). According to Zizioulas, the early church eventually rejected the solution that placed the Son on the created side of the created-uncreated divide, and thereby “made it clear that God is triune quite independently of creation” (*LCD*, 47). Another crisis was provoked by *modalism*, affirming that Jesus is one *way* God is, but that God’s real being is “behind” the transitory modes of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In rejecting modalism, the church again affirmed that God was triune in himself, apart from the economy. Zizioulas thinks that the language of *persona* and *prosopon*, referring originally to a temporary role, encouraged modalism. When, Zizioulas argues, the East replaced these terms with *hypostasis*, an ontological term (equivalent to the Latin *substantia*), they affirmed that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were “three unchanging, underlying realities.” Thus, “‘person’ now referred to a distinct being, to someone who possessed true and particular being and was not simply the ‘mode’ or ‘manifestation’ of another being” (*LCD*, 50).⁴⁴ The persons show us “in what *way* God is who he is.... God is God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit—these persons indicate *how* God is.... the

43. Philip Rosato argues that Zizioulas understands the doctrine of the Trinity “as an address and summons.... as an invitation to enter into a personal relationship with [the divine Persons]” (“The Ordination of the Baptized,” 166).

44. Note, however, that Zizioulas continues to speak of the person as “a way of being,” a *Seinsweise*!

Son is neither essence nor energy, but an identity that can be described only in terms of its relationships” (*LCD*, 57, referencing Gregory’s *Third Theological Oration* 16).⁴⁵ Interpreting both *mia ousia* and *tropos hypostases* as ontological statements allowed Christians to affirm that God is one, but not alone or solitary (*LCD*, 48–49).⁴⁶ Thus, Zizioulas claims, “Personhood, understood in its terrifying ontological ultimacy to which I have tried to point... leads to God—or to non-existence” (*C&O*, 235, cf. 109–10). Furthermore, because of the incarnation and the union of natures in Jesus Christ, we are able to use “person” to refer to both divine and human persons.⁴⁷ Thus, “The Cappadocian Fathers gave to the world the most precious concept it possesses: the concept of person, as an ontological concept in the ultimate sense” (*C&O*, 166).⁴⁸ While *person* provides a conceptual framework for reconciling love and freedom, it does not in itself answer the question as to whether God loves in freedom.

This question leads us to Zizioulas’s controversial understanding of the Father as the *arche* of God.⁴⁹ Rarely, if ever, noted in discussions of Zizioulas’s thought on this

45. I am indebted to Papanikolaou (“Divine Energies or Divine Personhood”), for insights into Zizioulas’s attention to God’s *how* and his concomitant apophaticism regarding God’s *what*.

46. Contra Philo and Hellenistic philosophy, but in continuity with Israel. For more on the “Cappadocian revolution” see Zizioulas’s *BaC*, 27–65; and *C&O*, 99–112 and 155–77.

47. Cf.: “Person, if properly understood, [is] perhaps the only notion that can be applied to God without the danger of anthropomorphism” (*C&O*, 224)—though only *ex post Christo*, so to speak.

48. The difference between referents and terms/concepts is often overlooked in discussions of Zizioulas’s doctrine of the Trinity. It is crucial to understand that, for Zizioulas, the Cappadocian insight was that their *theology* (in the sense of knowledge of God resulting from right relation to God, cf. *LCD*, 7 and 28–31) required a transformation of their *concepts* and *terminology*, for a similar point, see Brown (52). Zizioulas does refer to the “Holy Trinity” as “a *primordial* ontological concept,” but note the difference between “The *being* of God is a relational *being*” and “without the *concept* of communion it would not be possible to *speak* of the being of God” (*BaC*, 17*). Thus, while not mistaken to explore Zizioulas’s doctrine of the Trinity “in terms of the *conceptual* revolution which was implicit in the acceptance of the Cappadocian *terminological* consensus,” Collins runs the risk of ignoring the soteriological basis and ecclesial context of the “revolution” (*Trinitarian Theology West and East*, 144*).

49. Zizioulas’s choice of language (“the Father as *cause*”) obscures his distinction between *αἰτία* and *πηγή* (*C&O*, 113–54; and “Doctrine Trinity,” 24–27, for example). Knight suggests “initiator” as a better translation of *αἰτία* than “cause” or “source,” because it preserves the personal implications, and indicates that “God is not God because of the Father’s *arche*—the beginning—alone, but because the Father’s beginning is received and accepted, taken up and followed by the Son, and

matter is what we might call the underlying *evangelical* motivation: Zizioulas believes that God loves the sinner freely.

Christ reveals to us a love that, because it is free, is quite unconstrained by man's love of sin. If you remove the love towards a sinner from the gospel, the entire freedom in which God loves disappears (*LCD*, 29).⁵⁰

Once this is recognized, Zizioulas's fixation with the Father as *aitia* or "cause" of the Trinity takes on an entirely different cast. Trinitarian doctrine allows Zizioulas to move from his affirmation that Jesus Christ reveals God to the affirmation that God *is* Father, Son and Holy Spirit.⁵¹ Furthermore, because God loves the sinner (particularly, not generically) in Christ, it allows him to affirm that God's love *pro me* is not alien to God, but in keeping with God's very *being*.⁵² However, *is this love free?* If God loves us freely, not as an uncontrollable emanation or thought, then the love among the triune persons must also be free.⁵³ In other words, if God's *quiddity* actually determines the divine *how*, then neither God nor the world is truly free—and love cannot exist without

the Son's reception of that beginning is itself received and accepted by the Father" ("Introduction," 9). As Brown observes, "Zizioulas thinks of *both* Greek and Latin doctrines as proceeding from 'one' to 'three,' with the 'one' being the principle ἀρχή of divinity," with the Latin tradition positing the divine οὐσία as the "one" and the Greek tradition positing the Father as the "one" (66).

50. Cf. Papanikolaou ("Divine Energies or Divine Personhood," 369); and Farrow who connect Zizioulas's emphasis on freedom to the influence of existentialism.

51. How can one say that *God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit* in a section explaining Zizioulas's argument that "God = Father" (*C&O*, 117)? Unlike some critics (e.g. Tom McCall ("Holy Love and Divine Aseity in the Theology of John Zizioulas"), I grant that Zizioulas very well might be self-consistent in affirming *both* the Father as cause *and* "The Father as a relational entity... inconceivable without the Son and the Spirit" (*C&O*, 122, cf. *LCD*, 9, 24, 25, 26 (!), 53 (!), 58, 60, and 68 (!)). Colin Gunton defends Zizioulas at this point ("Persons and Particularity," 99).

52. Zizioulas especially appreciates Bonhoeffer's understanding of God *pro me* (*C&O*, 243–44), cf. Loudovikos, who ranks Bonhoeffer alongside Lubac as the key western influences on Zizioulas ("Christian Life and Institutional Church," 126).

53. This is the noeto-logic, the onto-logic runs the other way. As Farrow grasps, Zizioulas understands "freedom as ecstasis, freedom as the transcendence of all boundaries," which is "both freedom for and freedom from oneself" (89, n. 7). For Zizioulas, freedom can neither be 1) reduced to the moral freedom described by Groppe as "autonomy, self-determination, and choice" (469, cf. 472); nor 2) abstracted from the realm of human action (contra Volf, who labels Zizioulas's freedom "super-moral" [96–97]). This freedom *for* and *from* protects Zizioulas from lapsing back into individualism of the worst sort, contra Turcescu (529); and John Wilks ("The Trinitarian Ontology of John Zizioulas," 64).

freedom (*C&O*, 9).⁵⁴ Zizioulas contends that the coincidence of freedom and love that is God's way of being demands the Eastern doctrine of the Father's *monarchia* or *aitia*. The doctrine responds to these questions: "Does God exist because he *has* to exist? Does God exist simply because he exists?" Is God's existence "the dead ousianic tautology of something existing because it exists, the logic of the 'self-existent'?" Zizioulas's answer is a resounding "No!" God freely exists because the Father wills to be Father "there [is] *causation* in God's being, that is something like an *event*—of course outside time—that brings about his being" ("Doctrine Trinity," 25).⁵⁵ This means that God is personal all the way down, indeed, *persons in communion* all the way down because "one person is no person" and to will to be Father means to will Father, Son and Holy Spirit and their *koinonia* (*C&O*, 9).⁵⁶ Thus, contrary to critics such as Wilks and Volf, Zizioulas simply has not advocated *subordinationism* or contradicted his understanding of *being-as-communion* (*BaC*, 89).⁵⁷ Thus, the doctrine of the Father as *aitia* serves to explicate how love and freedom can coincide in divine and human communion, how freedom is both freedom *from* and freedom *for*.

II.D. The End of the *imago Dei*: The Coincidence of Freedom and Love

Zizioulas's ontology of persons-in-communion has radical implications for his

54. See *LCD*, 75, for Zizioulas's discussion of how the Father's freedom opens up the possibility of human freedom, and cf. Rowan Williams ("Foreword," xi).

55. Cf. the insightful comments of Brown (57). Rather unsatisfactory in this regard are the recent articles by Cumin and McCall.

56. Cf. Collins: "the particular beings of each are never isolated individuals" (*Trinitarian Theology West and East*, 145). Critics of Zizioulas's notion of *aitia*, e.g., Thomas Weinandy ("Zizioulas: The Trinity and Ecumenism," 410), tend to assume a *temporal* causality—exactly what Zizioulas disavows and an impossibility in his ontology. Again, see Collins: "Zizioulas does not understand the Godhead in terms of the self-realization of a single subject. For even though the Father is conceived of as the logical cause of the Trinity, the understanding that all three persons are both coequal and coeternal means that *being as communion* is also eternal.... The divine freedom is... to be understood as the freedom of the Father who chooses in love to live as a Trinity.... an event of self-realization and affirmation, but it is not the realization of a single Absolute Subject, or of the individual seeking to assert freedom against the necessity of finite existence" (*Trinitarian Theology West and East*, 180). While correctly emphasizing Zizioulas's teaching that God is communion all the way down, Collins's language suggests a tritheistic bent not native to Zizioulas.

57. See Papanikolaou ("Is John Zizioulas an Existentialist in Disguise?" e.g., 603) for a critique of those who would replace the Father as cause with a "primordial communion."

doctrine of the *imago Dei*, which he interprets as a *personal way of being*. Rejecting understandings of the *imago* based on a property or attribute of human nature, Zizioulas interprets it as an *ecstatic* way of being: “*The Person is otherness in communion and communion in otherness.... an identity that emerges through relationship (schesis)*” (LCD, 9).⁵⁸ Zizioulas contends that the traditional understandings of the *imago* as rationality or creativity only demonstrate the fallen condition by defining humans in opposition (*unrelatedness*) to the rest of creation.⁵⁹ Instead, Zizioulas understands the *imago* as capacity for *ekstasis*, which allows humans to relate to both God and creation (without the capacity for generating this relationship, i.e., capacity-in-incapacity). Humans continue to exhibit the *imago* after the Fall by attempting to live ecstatically through eros, art, and history, but only as a grasping *ekstasis* that cannot sustain life because it has rejected the divine gift. Zizioulas claims, however, that this sinful grasping is preferable to humans forfeiting the freedom for self-transcendent *ekstasis*, i.e., the *imago*:

[I]t is better that Adam fell by retaining his claim to absolute freedom, than that he had remained unfallen by renouncing this claim, thus reducing himself to an animal. In this way of understanding the Fall it is not right to speak of “total depravity” of the image of God. Man in his negative attitude to God still exercises the claim to absolute freedom, albeit against his own good and that of creation (“Preserving 3,” 35).

Thus, although the *imago Dei* has been distorted or warped in humanity, it has not been lost. Humans are still persons, though their relations are distancing ones of opposition and definition, and humans are still free, though that freedom is exercised against God, existing as a mere *claim*. This reveals our finitude and inability to be present (our destiny of death), whereas God’s exercise of *ekstasis* reveals no limits, but only God’s abundant life. Baptized human persons—those ecclesial persons with Christ’s filial schesis who thereby participate in his recapitulation of creation—have accepted the gift of love that is life and live in true freedom.

58. Again, cf. Brown (65).

59. See “Ecological Asceticism” for Zizioulas’s critique of the Western understanding of the *imago*. Thus, Zizioulas thanks Darwin for reminding us of our relation to the animal kingdom, “the sine qua non condition for [humanity’s] glorious mission in creation” (“Preserving 3,” 35).

As God's way of being is not determined by his *quiddity*, the *how* of human participation in this *koinonia* is not determined by the incapacities of our *quiddity*. This is to say that the human person can be divinized, that our *apo-stasis* and *dia-stasis* (separateness and individuality) can become *hypo-stasis* (particularity, uniqueness) and *ek-stasis* (communion, relatedness), transforming our fear of *dia-phora* (difference, otherness) into active *ana-phora* (reference or movement towards outside creation) (*C&O*, 229–30 n. 33).⁶⁰ Thus, as Farrow recognizes, Zizioulas understands human personhood to be “a vocation, a *process*, a destiny. It is ecclesial in nature, liturgically accessed, and eschatologically consummated” (90*). In this *theosis*, or divinizing of the human *way of being*, human persons become truly unique, or irreplaceable, and their physical, social and temporal relations cease to *determine* their being without ceasing to be a part of their being. This coincidence of freedom and love in human personhood is one of the most misunderstood aspects of Zizioulas's anthropology.

Typical critiques orbit Zizioulas's definition of unique as irreplaceable, which challenges the contemporary emphasis on the “unique” coincidence of nature and nurture as constitutional of particular human beings. The first type of critique assumes that Zizioulas's rejection of human nature as the basis for unique personhood results from his failure to consider that, although individual characteristics (e.g. curly hair) may not be unique, the combination of many, perhaps innumerable, such characteristics results in a truly unique being.⁶¹ Although such an understanding does highlight a certain type of singularity or peculiarity, it does not suffice for the uniqueness of human persons. For instance, even if the truism “no two snowflakes are identical” is accurate, it does not make any one snowflake irreplaceable. Likewise, although there is a unicity in the kaleidoscopic combination of natural characteristics in the human, such a

60. Cf. Alan Torrance: “Zizioulas grasps... [the extent to which the term ‘person’, interpreted theologically, has *unique* potential to sustain... the necessary looseness] in his discussion of human capacity and incapacity and his consequent refusal to interpret personhood with recourse to determinable boundaries” (266).

61. See Turcescu (528–29); Fermer (180); and Ludlow (61–62).

combination does not make them irreplaceable.⁶² In fact, *defining* oneself or another in this way encourages the distance and division that leads to death. Alan Torrance notes that, in contrast, Zizioulas’s “definition is radically open-ended and defined not in terms of internal features or qualities but in terms of relationships—where relating is not in any way conceived as a ‘constriction’ or limitation of nature but precisely the opposite” (283). However, many commentators, Torrance among them, continue to balk at what they see to be the dangerous tendency to neglect “non-theological” factors and to deny the possibility of non-ecclesial being.

Does Zizioulas neglect the socio-physical dimension of being human and deny the possibility of non-ecclesial being, thereby denigrating the unbaptized, and (further) marginalizing those with disabilities?⁶³ Alan Torrance provides a comprehensive criticism in his argument that Zizioulas leaps “over the boundaries between human beings by way of what we might term an ‘ontology of ecclesiality,’” which results in ignoring the physical and social constitution of the person, depersonalizing those not in ecclesial communion, and preventing the acknowledgment of social sin through denial of societal continuity (297 and 301). In defense of Zizioulas, two things might be said. First, Zizioulas understands the filial relationship to be the determinative relationship in the ecclesial hypostasis, but not an exclusive relationship (*LCD*, 111–14, especially 113).⁶⁴ History, social and cultural context, DNA, family, friendship, etc. all have a place in ecclesial personhood. Second, in light of Jesus Christ, Zizioulas equates *truth*, *life*, and *being*. A true anthropology will address human ontology, and to be worthy of

62. Personal uniqueness understood as a combination of qualities does nothing to stave off death, indeed, in the words of Papanikolaou: “Personal uniqueness can only be guaranteed, according to Zizioulas, in relationship to a being ‘other’ than created existence, i.e., to the eternally loving God who alone can constitute all human uniqueness as irreplaceable” (“Is John Zizioulas an Existentialist in Disguise?” 603).

63. For instance, Catherine Mowry LaCugna interprets Zizioulas as denying personhood to the unborn (*God For Us: The Trinity and the Christian Life*, 310, n. 77). Both Volf and Alan Torrance question whether the handicapped are unduly excluded, though Hans Reinders builds his case for the personhood of the profoundly disabled on Zizioulas (*Receiving the Gift of Friendship: Profound Disability, Theological Anthropology and Ethics*).

64. Cf. Alan Torrance’s insightful comments regarding the ordering of these relationships (358–359).

the word “being” it must live into the eschaton. For this reason Zizioulas simply refuses to develop a “generic” understanding of human personhood in isolation from Jesus Christ and the Holy Trinity.⁶⁵ Soteriology drives his anthropology, and Fermer’s and Russell’s criticisms that he fails to allow nature and capacity or “suffering and the gravity of sin” to determine human personhood (181–82), so that “personhood is determined by a predominantly theological agenda” (178, cf. 182 and 185) are really contesting Zizioulas’s soteriology. Zizioulas actually has a doctrine of the person *constituted* and *determined* by the breaking or brokenness of relationship with God: the biological hypostasis—the person fated for death and redeemed and recapitulated by Jesus Christ. The extent to which sin determines our being is a matter of life and death, soteriology, not personhood *per se*.

What, then, of those outside the Church? Zizioulas holds that there is no salvation outside the body of Christ and no membership in Christ’s body outside of baptism. As only baptism gives the filial relationship that allows a person to receive eschatological life, only ecclesial persons are *true* persons.⁶⁶ Being in Christ, however, is not an historical experience, but an eschatological reality. Therefore, it is improper to judge “personhood” based on someone’s past, or even present, situation.⁶⁷ One can positively declare that someone has been baptized, but one cannot render a negative judgment regarding salvation on this side of the eschaton. This eschatological reserve, what Zizioulas refers to as “ethical apophaticism,” makes the ecclesial hypostasis a

65. One should always remember that, “Humanity... *per se* cannot be a candidate for personal ontology” (*C&O*, 107). Cf. Knight: “We become *particular* persons as we grow into the very particular form of humanity that comes from exactly one human being, Jesus Christ. All human being is sourced from Christ and receives its definition from him: he is the criterion of humanity, and therefore of what it is to be a particular human, present to the rest of us as a particular body” (“The Spirit and Persons in the Liturgy,” 184).

66. Cf. Papanikolaou (“Is John Zizioulas an Existentialist in Disguise?” 606–07 n. 10); and Turner (446). To protest his would lead us back to the question of death.

67. Cf. Manoussakis: “in the Church... we are not who we have been but who we *will* be” (30). Since Christ eschatologically incorporates all human persons, there is a hint of universalism in Zizioulas, but he contends that it does not mean that people are fated to be “in Christ” because eschatological ontology “stumbles at the threshold of freedom” (“Towards an Eschatological Ontology,” —a promising sketch in need of elaboration).

somewhat uninformative concept.⁶⁸ This can be a strength because there actually is a sense in which *over*-attending to the present situation (sin, physical or mental abilities, etc.) condemns some persons to sub-personal status in a way Zizioulas's eschatological and theological understanding never would. More positively, the fact that anyone at all exists apart from the eucharistic moment indicates that the relationship between creature and Creator is broken, not extinguished.

II.E. Baptism as Ordination to Life in the Body of Christ

Baptism, though necessary, does not give everlasting life. Rather, it establishes the filial relationship through which the baptized receive life and mediate this life to all creation. That is to say, the baptized are ordained to priesthood, for participation in the Eucharist and the mediation of life to creation. Before creation can participate in the Eucharist and receive the life unthreatened by death, it must be purified and sanctified (*BaC*, 254, n. 9). Indeed, “radical purification... is what the life of the Christian is” (*LCD*, 31). In this way, the ordination of baptism creates the boundary or limit of the church.⁶⁹ This boundary, however, ought to remind the church that it “is not opposed to the world; it is *in* the world and while its presence constitutes a sign of judgment and a call to repentance and to baptism for the world, it never ceases to be there for the life of the world” (“Reflections of an Orthodox,” 32). The Eucharist epitomizes this vocation of being *for* the world, what Zizioulas calls being the priests of creation (“Proprietors Priests”). As explained above, creation is not able to survive *in se*: “[t]he only way that something created can transcend death and deterioration is to remain in constant communion with the eternal God..., and the means chosen for this communion is mankind” (*LCD*, 89). Except for Jesus Christ, all humans have refused

68. Fermer criticizes this aspect (179), but Zizioulas recognizes and celebrates this limitation (*C&O*, 112).

69. More importantly than marking off those outside from those within, however, baptism unites those within the church. Zizioulas argues that even if one accepts his eucharistic model of the church, any division among the baptized “is not the same as the division between the Church and those outside the baptismal limit... outside baptism there is no Church. Within baptism, even if there is a break, a division, a schism, you can still speak of the Church” (“Orthodox Ecclesiology and the Ecumenical Movement,” 23).

this calling. Christ alone fulfilled this eucharistic vocation through the cross and resurrection, but his body continues the celebration of the eucharistic communion through which creation receives its life anew. Through the sacraments—baptism as the reconstitution of persons and the Eucharist as the ongoing reception of life—“the attitude of the fallen Adam is reversed. Man dies as to his claim to be God in creation, and instead recognizes God as its Lord” (“Proprietors Priests,” 7). Again, this sacramental life is ecclesial, a life of persons in communion:

It is only *together* that all baptised members of the Church constitute the body that reveals Christ. The people (*laos*) created by baptism, laity and clergy together, are the revelation of the Son who is the truth of the new relationship of the world with God (*LCD*, 13).

Thus, the baptismal ordination, is not an end in itself; the Eucharist is the vocation and life of the catholic Church, to which all are ordained.

III. Receiving Life in the Eucharist

The Eucharist is life. It is the event—the moment—in which the Spirit realizes Christ’s eschatological, cosmic existence in history by transforming the Church into his body. In this way the Church participates in Christ’s communion with the Father and Spirit, with the churches, and with all of creation. Becoming *one* in Christ, however, does not involve the abolition of particularity, of otherness. Rather, the Spirit only brings about communion through establishing otherness. Indeed, otherness is so necessary for communion that unless the entire local church gathers—all its members in their irreplaceable particularity—and lifts up (*anaphora*) this diversity (*diaphora*), the Eucharist does not occur. In conjunction with the *many*, the Eucharist depends upon the *one*—the bishop as the personal and structural authority as the *alter Christus* and *alter apostolus*. The bishop and the congregation, the invocation and the “Amen,” are both necessary and depend upon each other. Nothing the church does, however, can guarantee this *becoming one* in the catholic Christ. Everything depends upon the work of the Spirit through whom all creation is being united without being homogenized. This is not to say that Christ’s catholicity depends upon this historical realization, because

Christ is not first *one* and then *many*, but eschatologically catholic. The Spirit realizes the whole in history through the parts. Thus, Christ and Church can be distinguished, but not separated. Christ is not first *one* and then *many*, but the one who includes all creation in himself. This leads Zizioulas to posit each local church as the *catholic*, or whole, Church by the work of the Spirit.

III.A. The Eucharist is Life

The Eucharist is the heart and foundation of Zizioulas's theology. It is a life-event, not "one sacrament among many" ("Informal Groups in the Church," 297), but "the fullest possible acknowledgement of God on earth" (*LCD*, 32), and "the manifestation of the eschatological community in its totality" ("Early Community," 34). Seen in light of the Eschaton, the foundation of the Church from which theology speaks is the Eucharist, which comprehends the historical Christ, scripture, and tradition.

[T]he eucharist is the eschatologization of the historical word, the voice of the historical Christ, the voice of the Holy Scripture which comes to us, no longer simply as "doctrine" through history, but as life and *being* through the *eschata*. It is not the sacrament completing the word, but rather the word becoming flesh, the risen Body of the Logos (*BaC*, 22–23).

Zizioulas draws on the pre-parish celebration of the Eucharist, in which the *laos* bring the fruits of creation ("transformed" into bread and wine, not "natural" grain and grapes), which are collected by the deacons and set before the presbyters as they surround the bishop. Then, the bishop lifts up (the *anaphora*) the elements and prays, "Thine own of thine own *we* offer thee." At this moment, the historical Church gathered around the bishop on earth is identical with the eschatological Church gathered around Christ in heaven. In this way, the Church images the Kingdom in structure: the many become one, the dispersed gather in one place and the Church participates in the eternal life of the Trinity, becoming the body of Christ in which death is no more and communion is offered to the entire world ("Apostolic Continuity and Orthodox Theology," 107; cf. Knight's "Introduction," 10). After lifting the elements up, the bishop receives them back, divinized, passes them back through the

presbyters to the deacons, who distribute the food of eternal life to the *laos*, who then disperse across the earth, strengthened to pursue their vocation to mediate this life to the world as the priests of creation. The life given in the Eucharist is thus life in communion: participation in Jesus Christ's uncreated communion with the Father and the Spirit, ecclesial communion with the baptized, and priestly communion with the entire created world.

III.B. Ecclesial Communion and Otherness

In the Eucharist, the Church participates in Christ's communion with the Father through the Holy Spirit. For this reason, the Eucharist is the "expression of the very nature of the Church in its fullness," and its imaging of this participation "is certainly the key to ecclesiology" ("Orthodox Ecclesiology," 24 and 18).⁷⁰ Whereas the Israelite gathered at the temple in Jerusalem to worship God, the Church gathers around "the person of Christ, the person of Christ as experienced in the presence in the Eucharist" ("Orthodox Ecclesiology," 17).⁷¹ In gathering to celebrate the Eucharist, the Church "becomes truly the *εἰκὼν* of the Kingdom" ("Bishop Doctrine," 29), for the Eucharist is "the supreme revelation of the Church herself" (*EBC*, 14). In the eucharistic moment, the Church experiences

life as love and communion, as the image of the being of God. The eucharist... manifests the Church not simply as something instituted, that is, historically *given*, but also as something *con-stituted*, that is constantly realised as an event of free communion, prefiguring the divine life and the Kingdom to come (*BaC*, 22).⁷²

For this moment the historical community becomes the eschatological community, the

70. Zizioulas also speaks of the Eucharist as "the expression of the mystery of the Church itself" ("The Bishop in the Theological Doctrine of the Orthodox Church," 25).

71. Zizioulas calls the Eucharist the "New Jerusalem" ("Implications ecclésiologiques de deux types de pneumatologie," 145), but never develops this fascinating idea.

72. "For the Eucharist is perhaps the only reality in the Church which is *at once an institution and an event*; it is the uniquely privileged moment of the Church's existence in which the Kingdom comes epiclestically, i.e. *without emerging as an expression of the process, although it is manifested through historical forms*" ("Apostolic Continuity and Orthodox Theology," 107–08). On the Eucharist as *momentary*, see "Reflections Baptism," 651, and the section below on eschatology.

community gathered in one place and time becomes the eternal community gathered around Christ in heaven, and the many become one (“Apostolic Continuity and Orthodox Theology,” 107).⁷³ Thus, the Eucharist is the “root and centre,” the “creative force and source” of this ecclesial communion, through which the risen Lord “builds up and keeps alive” his body by uniting each member with himself (“Reflections Baptism,” 644, drawing on 1 Cor. 10:17). Baptism, chrismation and the sacramental are “anticipatory” and must be fulfilled by

the Eucharist [which] is the recapitulation of the entire economy of salvation, in which past, present and future are united, and in which communion with the Holy Trinity and with the rest of the Churches as well as with creation takes place (“Church Communion,” 14–15).⁷⁴

In the Eucharist, albeit for a moment or as a taste, life comes to the community, because the community becomes one with the living one, Jesus Christ.

In the Eucharist, the many become one without losing their particularity, their otherness. The many baptized, gathered together in the local church, are one and the many local churches, gathered together around the heavenly throne, are one in Christ. Being one in Christ is a real unity, yet it does not erase otherness. This is possible because the Eucharist “sanctifies otherness,” allowing communion of others without threatening annihilation (*C&O*, 7). Zizioulas stresses the pneumatological dimension of ecclesial communion of others in his understanding of the catholicity of the Eucharist:

wherever there is the Eucharist there is the Church in its fulness as the Body of Christ. The concept of the local church derives basically from the fact that the Eucharist is celebrated at a given place and comprises by virtue of its catholicity *all* the members of the Church dwelling in that place (*BaC*, 247).

In his presentation of catholicity, Zizioulas intends to find a third way between the universalist and localist understandings of catholicity.⁷⁵ On the one hand, difference is transcended: “in each Eucharistic celebration the entire communion of the saints [living

73. The Eucharist *is* the communion to which the person is ordered in baptism (“Reflections Baptism,” 650).

74. In addition to the precursors of baptism and chrismation, the Eucharist must be preceded by “union in love and faith” (“Orthodox Ecclesiology,” 24).

75. “And it is the eucharist itself which will guide us in this, for, by its nature, it expresses simultaneously both the ‘localization’ and the ‘universalization’ of the mystery of the Church, that is the transcending of both ‘localism’ [Protestant and Afanasiev’s ecclesiology] and ‘universalism’ [Roman Catholic ecclesiology]” (*BaC*, 25).

and departed, from the ends of the earth, a true *synodos*] participates in God's Kingdom" ("Ecclesiological Issues Inherent in the Relations Between Eastern Chalcedonian and Oriental Non-Chalcedonian Churches," 142). On the other hand,

[t]he Church of God in her historical existence cannot ignore the realities created by the differences of culture or even nature (climatic conditions etc.) and there [*sic*, therefore] she cannot be conceived *in abstracto* but rather as a local Church bearing the characteristic marks of that particular geographical area. The Church... in accepting these historical conditions, does so only in order to in fact *transcend* them in the unity that is inherent in herself, by bringing these natural and cultural particularities up to God in the unity of the one Body of His Son, of the one people of God, just as she does in each eucharistic celebration. The uniqueness of the Eucharist as an expression of the Church's unity lies precisely in the fact that it takes on the one hand all the realities of historical existence, without ignoring or rejecting them in a pietistic manner, while on the other hand it transcends them in such a way as to prevent them from being what they are in historical existence, namely elements of division ("Ecclesiological Issues," 149).⁷⁶

If all the believers of a particular place and time in all their particularity are not gathered together, the eucharistic moment does not occur.

[A] Eucharist which excludes in one way or another those of a different race or sex or age or profession is a false Eucharist... The Eucharist must include all these, for it is there that the otherness of a natural or social kind can be transcended (*C&O*, 7).

Zizioulas clearly believes that a "church" that does not properly celebrate the Eucharist, i.e. transcend divisions such as age, sex, race, profession or class, ceases to be the catholic Church, but he does not specify the limit conditions and implications of this cessation.⁷⁷ Such care for the structure of the Eucharist is necessary, however, because the Eucharist expresses the living Church's confession of faith, which includes its witness to the world.⁷⁸

III.C. The Bishop, Structure of the Eucharist

The gathering of all believers in a particular place, although necessary, does not

76. This *again* highlights that the biological does not become irrelevant (or cease to exist) within the ecclesial.

77. For example, what of areas of prevalent socio-economic and racial segregation (large swaths of the United States, for instance) where such a catholic *synodos* has rarely, if ever, been realized?

78. In the Eucharist "confession of faith becomes *homologia* not just in the sense of a theological formulation of faith but of *martyria* which involves the Church's life at its best" ("Ecclesiological Issues," 139).

guarantee that the Eucharist is true. This requires authority, both personal and structural. Zizioulas understands ecclesial authority to be “*anamnetic* authority, a representation and realisation of God’s involvement in our existence” (“The Authority of the Bible,” 165). Christ was, is, and will be God’s involvement in our existence, which is why “all authority in the Church is concentrated in the person of Jesus Christ.... the one Lord, i.e. the only one who has power over all things, being exalted on the right hand of God” (*EBC*, 59–60). Yet, Zizioulas holds that Christ is also present on earth in the Eucharist, “transforming the heavenly state into an earthly and historical reality” (*EBC*, 60). He is present through the bishop, who as *alter Christus* serves as an icon of the heavenly Christ in the midst of the church just as the eucharist images the heavenly worship in the midst of the world (*EBC*, 60).⁷⁹ Thus, the eucharistic liturgy both reveals the true structure of the Church and the true structure of the Church reveals the true practice of the liturgy. In Zizioulas’s words, “If... the Church is revealed in its plenitude in the sacrament of the Eucharist, we cannot envisage its structure and its ministries without taking into consideration the structure of the Eucharist itself” (“Primacy in the Church: An Orthodox Approach,” 6). The bishop, as *alter Christus*, is the key to both the liturgy and the structure of the ecclesial communion.

Although all of the baptized are ordained to a eucharistic ministry, superordinations are required by the fourfold structure of the Eucharist: laity, deacons, presbyters and bishop. Zizioulas contends that it was the celebration of the Eucharist, not the response to heresy, schism or persecution, that gave rise to the distinction between the clergy and the laity, particularly the ordination to bishop: “the Bishop’s position in the Eucharist alone is the primary, complete and ecclesiological justification for the authority which the Canons ascribe to him” (*EBC*, 250, cf. 63 and 248–49). Zizioulas traces the chain of authority historically and eschatologically from Christ, to Apostles, to bishops. Historically, Christ was the first celebrant of the Eucharist, then

79. Cf. Zizioulas’s discussion of icons’ non-self-referential being (*BaC*, 138); and his discussion of the Church as icon of the Kingdom and bishops as icons of Christ (*LCD*, 136–37).

the Apostles in his absence and then the bishops in their absence.⁸⁰ The Church gathered around the bishop eschatologically images the apostles gathered around Christ in heaven. In order to be apostolic and *Christ-ian*, the Church must combine these images in a “Hippolytan synthesis” in which the bishop is “alter apostolus and alter Christus”: “Apostolus’ as he maintains and guarantees the continuity of Apostolic teaching and ‘Christus’ as he portrays in the Eucharist the presence of Church around whom the eschatological community is expected to appear in the last days” (“Bishop Doctrine,” 27). The early Church’s refusal to locate universal authority in a particular space or member highlights their recognition of the eucharistic-episcopal form of authority supported by this dual role of the bishop.⁸¹ Eucharistic-episcopal authority, although located in the person of the bishop, requires the community as well.

In the exercise of his ministry he is the “one” who nevertheless cannot be conceived of without the “many”, his community. The bishop is the head, but as such he is conditioned by the “body”; he cannot exercise his authority except in communion with his faithful. Just as he cannot celebrate the Eucharist without the *synaxis of his people*, his whole ministry requires the *consensus fidelium*, the “Amen” of the community. The converse is equally true: there is no community without a head, the bishop, and nothing can be done without him (“Primacy Church,” 7).

Thus, neither the authority of the bishop nor the function of the bishop to which we now turn can be conceived in individualistic terms.

In the bishop, the many of the local community are made one in Christ. There is only one bishop because “this function is one of unity and requires singularity” (“Bishop Doctrine,” 34), a singularity Zizioulas finds attested in the writings of Ignatius who “presupposed *one* eucharistic assembly, *one* altar and *one* Bishop in each Church” (*EBC*, 87).⁸² The deacons and the presbyters consolidate the many of the laity. The

80. Zizioulas’s doctrine of the episcopacy depends upon the seemingly untenable hypothesis that, from the beginning, there was one single apostolic-episcopal president for the (single) eucharistic celebration in each place.

81. The early Church, according to Zizioulas, refused both to construct a universal temple and to ordain a universal bishop, thus “[i]nstead of a permanent center of unity, a foundation was provided by the principle of the mutual recognition of each of the local Churches” (*EBC*, 253).

82. “Just as there is one God and one Christ there can be only one bishop in the typology suggested by the Eucharist,” (“Bishop Doctrine,” 34; cf. McPartlan [205]).

deacons present the eucharistic elements, which are provided by the people, the *laos* (“Informal Groups in the Church,” 281–82). The presbyters, in turn, function “to surround the bishop on his throne as the Twelve will surround Christ in the Kingdom, to serve as a collegium” (“The Ecclesiological Presuppositions of the Holy Eucharistic,” 344). Zizioulas traces the distortion of the Eucharist into “the communion of individuals with Christ, not the image of the Church in its eschatological unity” to mistakes made in the establishment of parish churches leading to a hierarchical understanding of ordination, “the conception of a priesthood with three degrees,” wherein the episcopacy was transformed into a managerial office, and the college of presbyters was dissolved as priests presided over the Eucharist (“Informal Groups in the Church,” 282, cf. *EBC*, 197–245; and *BaC*, 247–60 for Zizioulas’s narration of this radical change). It is only when the laity, deacons and presbyters are in place that a bishop can accomplish his vocation “to unite in himself the various elements inherent in the local community’s historical existence so that those elements might be transcended and become one in the Body of Christ” (“Ecclesiological Issues,” 150). In the early Church, the bishop relates the entire local church to God and the “salvation of the members of the Church consequently passed through his hands.... Hence, also the axiom formulated by Cyprian, that the Church is in the Bishop and that ‘where the Bishop is, there is the Church’” (*EBC*, 249, quoting from *Epist.* 55 (52) 21). Thus, the bishops are the personal mediators between Christ and his body.

III.D. The Eucharist as Presence of Christ—the spiritually catholic person

Jesus Christ is the *catholic person* through the power of the Holy Spirit.⁸³ As such,

83. Zizioulas tends to speak of “corporate personality,” but given the negative legal and psychological connotations, we use his “catholic person” terminology instead (*C&O*, 105). Important for Zizioulas are the works of Wheeler Robinson (*The Hebrew Conception of Corporate Personality*); Jean de Fraine (*Adam et son lineage: Etudes sur la “personnalité corporative” dans la Bible*); and Aubrey Johnson (*The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God*). I am indebted to McPartlan for highlighting that corporate personality is the “interpretative key to Zizioulas’ vision,” though McPartlan does not know what to make of it (xxi, cf. 303). See also Michel Stavrou, who argues that through this concept Zizioulas is able to synthesize christology and pneumatology, history and the eschaton, the local and universal, and the institutional and charismatic

he eschatologically comprehends the whole of creation in himself. In Christ, however, creation is not homogenized, but particularized, rendered truly and diversely other. This does not happen naturally, i.e. at the level of nature, which would require the *ousianic* ontology Zizioulas rejects. Rather, Christ incorporates creation through his relations to it, relations allowed by his created nature but not necessitated by it.

[W]hoever is brought into relationship with God comes simultaneously into relationship with all humanity. The true form of humanity and the reality of human nature is found in relationship with Christ. Humanity in Christ is the true, and ultimately the only humanity. There is no participation in the communion of God outside the Church, because there is no Church without Christ and no Christ without his Church. Man ultimately exists only within Christ. Christ is the whole territory within which each human being can be distinctly himself or herself, and can receive and give their otherness among all other created persons. Christ is the truth of man, his gathering and redemption (*LCD*, 116).⁸⁴

The Spirit brings about this incorporation as the *way*—person—God “breaks through the limits given by nature and creates the Church,” and “enables each human being to transcend his limits and go out to meet the ‘other’, regardless of their natural differences” (*LCD*, 45).⁸⁵ Zizioulas finds his paradigm for pneumatology in the resurrection of Christ, “the transcending of all limits, and all dissolution and death” (*LCD*, 107).⁸⁶ Furthermore, just as Christ is resurrected as a particular, bodily man, Pentecost reveals that the uniting work of the Spirit does not abolish otherness (e.g., the plurality of human languages), but establishes it eschatologically. Again, being involves both *union with* and *otherness*, and the Spirit is the *way* God brings this about.

As Zizioulas does not think that Jesus Christ would be who he is without the Holy Spirit, Zizioulas absolutely refuses to divide God’s work in history into an

(“Éloge du métropolite Jean (Zizioulas) de Pergame”).

84. Cf. Papanikolaou (“Divine Energies or Divine Personhood,” 369). McPartlan argues that Zizioulas has radicalized Florovsky’s insight that Christology is not complete without ecclesiology into Christ is not complete without the Church (212–13).

85. McPartlan offers a solid explanation of the “powerful and precise Pneumatology” underwriting Zizioulas’s doctrine of Christ’s *catholicity* (264).

86. “Once dissolution and death are transcended in Christ, the Holy Spirit makes Christ that body within which all mankind begins to experience freedom from death” (*LCD*, 108).

economy of the Son and an economy of the Spirit.⁸⁷ Any separation results in distortion, “Christology and pneumatology... exist simultaneously and not as separate or successive phases of God’s relation with the world” (“The Pneumatological Dimension of the Church,” 143).⁸⁸ On one hand, we may distinguish between the Son and the Spirit because “only the Son *becomes* history” and we can say that “*becoming* history is the particularity of the Son in the economy,” whereas the particularity of the Spirit is “precisely the opposite: ...to liberate the Son and the economy from the bondage of history” (*BaC*, 130). On the other hand, we cannot posit any division between Son and Spirit or consider them in isolation because the union of natures accomplished in Christ’s person—in which the natures do not collapse into one and their particularity remains—was an act of the Spirit.⁸⁹ This has radical ecclesiological implications for Zizioulas:

In the Eucharist... the body of Christ in its objective ontology becomes conditioned epiclestically.... without Christ there is no community, but unless there is a community to invoke the Spirit, Calvary is no longer Calvary (“Pneumatological Dimension,” 148).⁹⁰

Again, we see here the outworking of Zizioulas’s emphasis on freedom and love. Jesus Christ does not bring about the church through some sheer facticity of existence, but calls forth a community that can only exist as a free response. Zizioulas, however, does not understand this freedom as arbitrariness, for just as Christ’s cross would not be

87. Zizioulas argues here against Vladimir Lossky’s position as he understands it.

88. Cf. Turner (447). Demetrios Bathrellos argues that Zizioulas operates with a christocentric ecclesiology as opposed to a pneumatocentric ecclesiology, creating a dichotomy that does not exist in Zizioulas’s thought (“Church, Eucharist, Bishop: The Early Church in the Ecclesiology of John Zizioulas,” 134).

89. For an example of this pneumato-logic, see Zizioulas’s discussion of Mary (*LCD*, 106–07).

90. Zizioulas continues: “The *epiclesis* of the Spirit gives life to the body (John 6:63) and this removes the sacramental reality of the Church from any notion of causality; thanks to the *epiclesis* the Church realizes in herself the Christ event without her causing it to happen and without her being caused by it” (“Pneumatological Dimension,” 148–49). Zizioulas here protests against mechanistic causation. It could be glossed, the church’s epiclesis invites the Spirit to bring about the Christ event but does not cause it, likewise Christ invites the church to assemble, but his people freely gather. It is unclear how Zizioulas could affirm both this rejection of causation and McPartlan’s thesis, “the eucharist *makes* the church.” Cf. Collins who argues that “to equate Zizioulas’ ecclesiology with the statement that ‘the Eucharist makes the Church’ is to misunderstand him” (“Authority and Ecumenism,” 150).

what it is without his resurrection, so too his resurrection would not be what it is without Pentecost and the creation of his church-body.

Indeed, the Church reveals the Father's will as the community *both* freely called forth by Jesus Christ *and* epicleitically asking for its very existence. The ecclesial communion and its cosmic liturgy through which all creation is brought into relationship with God is not incidental to God's purposes for his creation.

Since God knows created beings as the realizations of His will, it is not being itself but the ultimate will of God's love which unifies beings and points to the meaning of being. And precisely here is the role of the incarnation. *The incarnate Christ is so identical to the ultimate will of God's love, that the meaning of created being and the purpose of history are simply the incarnate Christ.* All things were made with Christ in mind, or rather at heart, and for this reason *irrespective of the fall of man, the incarnation would have occurred.* Christ, the *incarnate* Christ, is the truth, for He represents the ultimate, unceasing will of the ecstatic love of God, who intends to lead created being into communion with His own life, to know Him and itself within this communion-event (*BaC*, 97–98).⁹¹

Not only is the Church the realization of God's will, the Church is also part of the very identity of Jesus Christ. Thus, it would be a mistake to equate Zizioulas's protests against Jesus Christ's existence necessitating the Church's existence to imply a radical division between the two.

Between the Christ-truth and ourselves there is *no gap to fill* by the means of grace. The Holy Spirit, in making real the Christ-event in history, makes real *at the same time* Christ's personal existence as a body or community. Christ does not exist *first* as truth and *then* as communion; He is both at once. All separation between Christology and ecclesiology vanishes in the Spirit (*BaC*, 111; cf. "Early Church," 134).

Indeed, in the Eucharist, "[i]t is Christ who is praying..., and the worshipping Church stands in the person of Christ.... There is no distance between Christ and his body in the Eucharist" (*LCD*, 117 and 118).⁹² Again, however, communion does not collapse

91. "[T]he Church is a reality that springs from God himself" as "the outcome of the Father's will" (*LCD*, 132); and McPartlan (264). Given Zizioulas's emphasis on the noetic dimension of the triune communion, e.g., "the Son is the εἰκὼν of the Father precisely because it is in Him that the Father sees Himself as 'truth'," (*BaC*, 101, citing Athanasius *Contra Arianos* I:20–21), it is unclear how the Incarnation and creation of the church does not at least change the Father's self-knowledge, so that there is a transformation of divine being as well as human being.

92. Zizioulas does not mean a generic, universal Eucharist, but the particular Eucharist of a local church, in which the presence of socio-physical *otherness*, or *diaphora*, are requisite, because it is only when the *diaphora* become *anaphora* in the Eucharist that "[t]he Holy Spirit particularises the one body of Christ by making each local Church a full and 'catholic' Church.... the *totus Christus*" ("Church

otherness, Christ and Church remain *other* in their relationship.

All of Zizioulas's Christology depends upon the uniqueness of Christ, the fact that all of creation can be united in this person. Zizioulas calls Jesus *the catholic person* to describe this personal unity in which otherness is not abolished but established. This means that Jesus Christ's person is universal in the sense that all persons, indeed all creation, could be united in him (*LCD*, 108). Determining the correct tense is difficult here, because this union is *eschatological*, which for Zizioulas means more certain than *primordial*, but because it will always be a free union, the subjunctive seems appropriate. In any case, Jesus Christ's *catholicity* expresses the "*mutually constitutive*" coincidence of the many in the one, both the churches in the Church, or body, and the baptized in the eschatological Christ.⁹³ For Zizioulas, this coincidence is

the Christological mystery: Christ as the "catholic" man or as the "one" who is at the same time many.... Christ is "one" in his own hypostasis, i.e. as he relates eternally to the Father, but he is also at the same time "many" in that the same "schesis" becomes now the constitutive element—the *hypostases*—of all those whose particularity and uniqueness and therefore ultimate being are constituted through the same filial relationship which constitutes Christ's being. The Biblical notion of the "body of Christ" acquires this way its *ontological* significance (*C&O*, 241; cf. Knight's "Introduction," 10).

Being in Christ, then, is not a matter of mystical experience—as usually understood (*C&O*, 286–307). Rather, it is a matter of Christ's *hypostasis* containing all the *hypostases* of the baptized; Christ shares all of his members' relationships.⁹⁴ This means that the baptized are not alone as they relate to their family, their history, their geography, etc., for Jesus Christ is *with* them in the power of the Spirit. Yes, Jesus participates in all of their relationships, but because the baptized are not *the catholic person*, i.e., the one who participates in the relationships of *all* the baptized, each person remains unique. The particular person of Christ is neither confused with nor separated from these diverse persons in Christ.

Communion," 10).

93. Again, I am indebted to McPartlan (e.g., 179).

94. Zizioulas refers to this as Jesus Christ's *polyhypostasis* (*C&O*, 30–31 (n. 51) and 74–76).

IV. Eucharistic Persons: Persons Becoming

As God wills life not only for the baptized, but for all creation, the baptized are called to mediate the life they receive in the Eucharist to the rest of creation. In fact, the Eucharist is as much as celebration of creation as it is a memorial. The baptized are the priests of creation as they both mediate creation to the Creator and the Creator to creation. This mediation occurs through a double dynamic: first, through the offering that precedes the *anaphora* the baptized dedicate creation to the Creator in gratitude, and second, through their being sent back into the world after receiving their life in the Eucharist. While the eucharistic *synaxis* is the fundamental and central act of the Christian life, the Eucharist calls for a eucharistic ethos, a way of living in response to the gift of life by conforming to the self-offering of Christ on the Cross in opposition to sin and death and viewing people as they could be in Christ, not as they were or are now. The latter aspect of the eucharistic ethos, like everything in the Christian life, depends upon an eschatological ontology. This means that it is not the origin that determines someone's being, but their future. In the Eucharist, however, the *eschata* break into the midst of history from the end through the power of the Spirit. In this moment, those gathered *remember the future*, experiencing their true being as life in communion. It is not the action of those gathered or their continuity with the past that brings this about, but the gracious activity of the Spirit. For this reason, prayer for the Spirit is the fundamental act of the Church. In between these glimpses or tastes of the *eschata*, the baptized exist as *eucharistic persons*, no longer determined by their idolatry, but not yet the persons they will be—yearning for the Parousia.

IV.A. The Eucharistic Vocation

Without the Eucharist, creation will die, but the Creator wills life for his creation. Zizioulas maintains that, while the redemption of creation was crucially important, the Eucharist was just as much connected in the early Church to the created-uncreated dialectic, even to the point of being viewed as a celebration of the world coming into existence (*C&O*, 256). The emergence of the understanding of the

Eucharist as a memorial of Christ's sacrifice and the nourishment of the soul nearly reversed the original understanding of the Eucharist as "a blessing over the material world, the fruit of nature, and a reference of it with gratitude and dedication to the Creator" ("Preserving Creation 1," 7). This change encouraged an individualistic understanding of the Eucharist, and thereby the Church, jeopardizing the very notion of communion. True eucharistic communion involves God's self-communication to us and our participation in the divine communion, ecclesial communion, and the mediation of this life to all creation (*C&O*, 7). Instead of separating us from the created world, the Eucharist was intended to allow us to fulfill our vocation to be the priests of creation.

As the priests of creation, humans mediate God's eternal life to his creation. In the Eucharist, the life of love and freedom belonging to God becomes the life of his creation (*C&O*, 261–62). As God's life should not be conceived as an ethic or psychological state, neither should the Eucharist be thought of in merely ethical or psychological terms, but as "a cosmic event involving the whole of creation" in which

[b]read and wine are not just symbolic elements linking the Church to the Last Supper but are representative of the material world and of creation. Equally, human beings, by participating in the Eucharist, participate in a redeemed material world. Thus the material world has its place in the Eucharistic experience and in the Kingdom of God. The Orthodox Christian, by constantly experiencing the Eucharist, affirms that the material world must survive and be redeemed from whatever prevents it from developing into a world which will unite finally with God ("Orthodoxy Ecological").

The eucharistic way of being, however, does involve what Zizioulas calls the eucharistic ethos or attitude. This consists in a) considering nothing that one has as one's own, returning all to someone else, without individualism, superiority or lust; b) an attitude of thanks; c) fighting with one's entire existence against death itself; and d) offering oneself in an act of freedom paralleling the way in which the world is given its existence (*C&O*, 256).⁹⁵ In doing this, we do nothing less than participate in Christ's

95. Many factors figure into Zizioulas's reluctance to elaborate a theological ethics. As Knight emphasizes, "What is required [for the world's survival] is a distinct community..., and it is this community... that is given to the world in the Church" ("Introduction," 7)—Knight also emphasizes the church's "culture," but this appears in Zizioulas's work even less frequently than ethics. McPartlan argues that while

recapitulation of creation.

Christ's offering up of himself, even unto death on the Cross, is the basis and power of our offering up of creation in the Eucharist proper and in eucharistic action in general.⁹⁶ As priests of creation we cease grasping creation to ourselves in order to squeeze from it whatever temporary sustenance we may. Instead, we bring creation into relation with God by presenting it to God as his rightful possession. Thus, creation is treated with reverence, freed from its limitations as created and finite, and made capable of bearing life. Through this free exercise of the *imago Dei*, creation is sacralized, and "[w]hen we receive these elements back, after having referred them to God, ...we can take them back and consume them no longer as death but as life" ("Preserving 3," 39). Through our communion with God, we lose our fear of the *other* and can now exercise our personal creativity to affirm the *otherness* of creation as "very good" in all aspects of life just as it is in the Eucharist when the natural elements acquire personal qualities.⁹⁷ In sum,

the Eucharist... gives eternal life. The Eucharist is life eternal, primarily because it offers this set of relationships [which are identical with the Father-Son relationship in the Holy Spirit], which involves an eternal identity. Belonging to the community of the Eucharist is, therefore, tantamount to acquiring eternal

Zizioulas would acknowledge the reality of Christian maturation, what is called for *theologically* is not attention to Christ as an individual and the extent to which Christians have interiorized him, but Christ as corporate with and the orders through which Christians are Christ, with only secondary attention to their growth into these "charismatic identities" (297). John Chryssavgis explains that, "While not explicit on the surface..., Zizioulas's early formation as a theologian bears the marks of the pervasive influence of the Zoë movement in Greece: distorting the 'mind of the Fathers' and espousing a puritanical emphasis on the cultivation of personal morality" ("Review, *Communion & Otherness: Further Studies on Personhood and the Church*," 512). According to Demetrios Constantellos, such movements focused on Christ's life as a rigorous ethical standard, "personal" and "spiritual" experience, and claimed to be "a true Christian community" ("The Zoe Movement in Greece," 12 and 22). Moreover, Vasilios Makrides says these para-church groups "seemed to replace the church in many ways," created a culture of "self-righteousness and elitism," and were caught up at points in political messianism ("The Brotherhoods of Theologians in Contemporary Greece," 183 and 175). Christos Yannaras denounces these movements' pietism as an "ecclesiology heresy" (*The Freedom of Morality*, 126); though some like Chryssavgis find in them a challenge to distinguish properly between pietism and proper Orthodox piety ("Piety—Pietism: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective").

96. For the bulk of what follows, see "Preserving Creation."

97. "[I]n a para-eucharistic way all forms of true culture and Art are ways of treating nature as otherness in communion, and these are the only healthy antidotes to the present ecological illness" (*C&O*, 10).

life. Spirituality in this eucharistic context acquires an ontological and not simply a moral or psychological context. It is not simply a matter of improving human nature and making it act and behave in a better way through moral achievement and virtue; it is not just a psychological experience of the fruits of the Spirit...; it is, above all, identical with overcoming death through the acquisition of a new identity based on new relationships (“Early Community,” 29).

IV.B. Eschatological Ontology: Shadows of Things to Come

All of Zizioulas’s theology, especially his vision of the ecclesial communion, depends upon his *eschatological* ontology. Even when not explicit, this interpretation of protology as a shadow cast by the truly existing *eschata* buttresses his arguments. Zizioulas derives this teleological ontology from his reading of Maximus, who says: “I call the end the cause of beings toward which everything is naturally born” (*PG*, 90, 253B). The protological view of ontology emphasizes the beginning—the origin; the eschatological focuses on what is to come—the last or *telos*. Instead of viewing history as moving *away* from its source or roots, Zizioulas conceives of it as moving *toward* its source or roots. Drawing on Hebrews 11:1, Zizioulas identifies the hypostasis as “an ontology which has its roots in the future, in eschatology” (*BaC*, 59, n. 58). He thereby neither relegates the historical to meaninglessness nor treats it as the source of life or truth.⁹⁸ As Turner notes, it is to claim that:

The truth of history and creation are found in Christ because in him is found salvation, freedom from destruction and decay for creation. But the truth of history is not simply the historical Jesus but rather the eschatological Christ found in the historical Jesus (“Ecclesial Communion,” 452).⁹⁹

As Zizioulas supports the view that the incarnation would have occurred whether or not humans fell, it is clear that he holds history to have always been intended as the theater of salvation, the canvas on which the loving will of God is realized by the Spirit (cf. Turner [452]). Yet, even though Christ is the end toward which all created being moves, eschatological ontology does not determine that it end in him. In Zizioulas’s

98. In Zizioulas’s words, “History is an ontological matter” (*C&O*, 223); which Turner explains, “the truth of history is not a concept it is truly a historical reality. It is life and communion as the body of Christ” (455).

99. This quote also highlights the tendency in Zizioulas to posit a disjunction however slight, between the historical and eschatological Jesus—failing to sufficiently attend to the *identity* of the one who was, and is, and is to come.

words, “Eschatological ontology stumbles at the threshold of freedom. It can never turn being into a compulsory or necessary reality” (“Eschatological Ontology”).¹⁰⁰ Thus, Christian remembrance, or *anamnesis* (cf. Luke 22:19; and 1 Corinthians 11:25-25), must move humbly both backwards to God’s mighty acts in the past and forwards to the *parousia*.

Christ’s drawing together of the historical and the eschatological culminates in the eucharistic moment, during which the historical and the eschatological coincide.¹⁰¹ In a sense, the whole of the Christian life is an ascetic yearning for the eschatological banquet, interspersed with tastes. During the time away from the eucharistic table, the Christian anticipates the Eucharist, itself

the moment in the Church’s life where the anticipation of the *eschata* takes place. The *anamnesis* of Christ is realized not as a mere re-enactment of a past event but as an *anamnesis of the future*, as an eschatological event. In the Eucharist the Church becomes a reflection of the eschatological community of Christ, the Messiah, an image of the Trinitarian life of God (*BaC*, 254).¹⁰²

At the moment of *remembrance*, it is proper to say that the baptized experiences his or her ecclesial hypostasis, but during the experience of *yearning* apart from the ecclesial synaxis, Zizioulas suggests a third ontological category: the *eucharistic* hypostasis. He does this “not to destroy the distinction... made between biological and ecclesial hypostases, but to express the relationship of these two to each other” (*BaC*, 59).¹⁰³

100. Cf. McPartlan: “Zizioulas... maintains nothing less than that the Alpha comes from the Omega. It is within the boldness of this view that he must clarify that history still has the space, as it were, really to *happen*” (300).

101. Zizioulas defines the Eucharist as the “synthesis of the historical with the eschatological... a ‘tradition’ (παράδοσις) and a ‘remembrance’ (ἀνάμνησις)... the eschatological moment of the Church *par excellence*... *at one and the same moment*, the Church unites in the Eucharist the two dimensions, past and future, simultaneously as one indivisible reality” (“Apostolic Continuity and Orthodox Theology,” 90). Yet, Turner seems to accurately reflect Zizioulas’s pneumatological concerns that “The eschatological reality comes into history but does not become history” (451). Given Zizioulas’s emphasis on the eucharistic *moment*, it is unclear how Manoussakis can argue that “the Parousia... flows *continuously* from the ἔσχατα and permeates *every moment* in history” (29*).

102. “The ancient liturgies (e.g. those of John Chrysostom, Basil, etc.) preserve exactly the same interpretation of ‘*anamnesis*’ when they speak of ‘remembering’ in the Eucharist not only the past events of salvation history but also *the second coming*. This *remembering of the future* is an essential aspect of the Eucharist” (*BaC*, 254, n. 10). See also Knight (“Introduction,” 8; and “Spirit Persons,” 189).

103. Zizioulas refers to this “paradoxical hypostasis which has its roots in the future and its branches in the present” as “a *sacramental or eucharistic hypostasis*”

The eucharistic hypostasis differs from the ecclesial in that, although pneumatologically constituted, it does not exist in spatio-temporal communion with the church, i.e. in union with Christ. The difference between the eucharistic and the tragic, biological hypostasis is that “in spite of living the tragic aspect of the biological hypostasis intensely and absolutely... it does not draw its being from what it is now but is rooted ontologically in the future, the pledge and earnest [i.e., token] of which is the resurrection of Christ” (*BaC*, 64). In this way, Zizioulas accounts for the *already* and *not yet* of Christian life between baptism and the final resurrection, the experience of tragedy and the taste of the Eschaton, without implying that our being (or God’s) is in process or doubt.

Zizioulas struggles to escape the triumphalism that has dogged Eastern Orthodoxy, while also avoiding the ills that have plagued western eschatologies.¹⁰⁴ This, however, has not prevented Farrow from labelling his theology as triumphalistic (97); or Fermer from labelling his ecclesiology as over-realized (180). Such accusations are not surprising, given the razor’s edge he attempts to navigate. He propounds a view, for instance, of the Eucharist as

perhaps the only reality in the Church which is *at once an institution and an event*; it is the uniquely privileged moment of the Church’s existence in which the Kingdom comes epiclestically, i.e. *without emerging as an expression of the process, although it is manifested through historical forms* (“Apostolic Continuity and Orthodox Theology,” 107–08).

Likewise, Zizioulas charts a course between those who absolutely identify Church and Kingdom and those who posit a radical disjunction between Church and Kingdom through his interpretation of the Kingdom’s relationship to Church history and tradition as a dialectic of the Church both receiving her being and crying out to God for her being, that is, *epiclesis*. This “means ecclesologically that the Church *asks to receive from God what she has already received historically in Christ as if she had not received it at all*, i.e., as if history did not count in itself” (“Apostolic Continuity and Orthodox Theology,” 88;

(*BaC*, 59, n. 58).

104. Zizioulas views the missio-historical eschatology of the West as responsible for creating moral and psychological conceptions of the Christian life (“Eschatologie et Société”; and “Bishop Doctrine,” 26).

cf. Manoussakis [32]). In such a dialectic, history *in se* would not guarantee security. This *epiclesis* would penitentially proclaim that “the Church needs the Pentecostal scene to be set again and again” (“Apostolic Continuity and Orthodox Theology,” 88).¹⁰⁵ Thus, Zizioulas both affirms that

Sin as fear and rejection of the other is a reality experienced also within the Church. The Church is made of sinners, and she shares fully the ontological and cosmic dimension of sin which is death, the break of communion and final *diastasis* (separation and decomposition) of beings. And yet, [insists] that the Church is in her essence holy and sinless (*C&O*, 3–4).

Zizioulas has thus brought together all of the necessary ingredients for a theology that bears witness to both the abundant life of the ecclesial hypostases, related to the Father in Christ through the Holy Spirit as his children and feasting at the Lord’s table, and the ascetic life of the eucharistic hypostasis, yearning and hungering for the divine *koinonia* amidst the tragedy of sin, separation, suffering and death.

V. Conclusion: Our Being is in Becoming Ecclesial Persons

John Zizioulas teaches that the *telos* of human transformation is the fulfillment of humanity’s created purpose: to participate in the divine life of communion between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and to mediate this life to the rest of creation. Jesus Christ, the divine Son and eschatological Adam, fulfills this vocation by offering himself to the Father in gratitude, receiving the divine life as the gift it is, and mediating it as the priest of creation. All other humans have defaulted on this vocation, separating themselves from the Creator by idolatrously attempting to wrest life for themselves from creation. Tragically, this results in death because creation is destined to return *ad nihilum* when separated from the Creator who brought it forth *ex nihilo*. God’s ultimate will for creation, however, is the risen Jesus Christ, the eschatological Adam. He is salvation, living as God lives, unthreatened by death. Salvation, then, requires a radical transformation, which Zizioulas understands as becoming like God, the *divinization* of

105. This *epiclesis* “includes her continuity with the Apostles in all its forms. Just as in the Eucharist the words of institution cannot be a guarantee in themselves without the Spirit, although what the Spirit does is nothing but prove true the words of Christ, ‘This is my body,’ i.e. affirm history [and] her apostolicity, too” (“Apostolic Continuity and Orthodox Theology,” 88).

human being. As Chalcedon indicates, however, salvation does not divinize the human *nature*, that is, its *quiddity*. Rather, Zizioulas presents salvation as the transformation of the human *hypostasis*—or *way of being*—into the way God exists as persons in communion. Jesus Christ is salvation because *he is Son*: in this person humanity exists as God exists. Moreover, all of humanity may participate in this unique relationship because the Spirit is realizing Christ's eschatological existence as the *cosmic* Christ, the head of his whole body, that is, the *catholic person*. Thus, salvation involves being incorporated into Christ by receiving his relationship to the Father in the Spirit. Although it is the eschatological truth of creation, this transformation from death to life through incorporation into Christ is not the fate of creation. Rather, *becoming Christ* is an event that occurs in love and freedom and, therefore, does not happen apart from faith.

This transformed and transforming way of existing in love and freedom begins in baptism and culminates in the celebration of the Eucharist. Baptism is the death of the idolatrous person and the birth of the new, ecclesial person for whom Jesus Christ's relation to the Father is determinative. Receiving this filial *schesis* (relationship) does not make eternal life the possession of the baptized, but allows the baptized to join in their local church's *becoming* in the celebration of the Eucharist. In the Eucharist, the baptized gather together to offer the fruit of creation to God in gratitude through the lifted hands of the bishop, the *icon* of Christ. Yet, even as the gathered church thanks God for the life he has given, they also cry out for the gift to be given again. God again answers this *epiclesis* through the gift of the Holy Spirit, who realizes Christ's eschatological existence in history. Through the Spirit's work, the members of Christ's body receive their life as they partake of a taste of the *eschaton* in the bread and wine transformed into Christ's body and blood. The baptized are then sent out into the world to fulfill their eucharistic vocation, mediating this life to all creation and gathering the fruit of creation for the next eucharistic gathering.

In between these glimpses of their eschatological being, Christians must live by faith, for their experience does not confirm that they live a life unthreatened by sin and

death. In fact, until the eschaton, living as personal coincidences of love and freedom requires the experience of the Cross, whereby Christians sacrifice their will to the Father and are purified by reordering all of their relationships to their filial relationship. During this in-between time of transformation, Christians exist epicleitically, praying for the gift of life as if it had not already been given. Zizioulas refers to this as the *eucharistic hypostasis*, the way Christians live in anticipation of their eschatological being, *remembering their future* as members of the eschatological Adam, the cosmic Christ.

As with Barth and Ratzinger, Jesus Christ stands at the heart of Zizioulas's soteriology, for he is the "one mystery... in which the entire mystery of our salvation is contained" ("Reflections Baptism," 644). Moreover, Zizioulas allows Christ to govern his understanding of sin and death and life in communion, which indicates both how radical this transformation is and the continuity of the particular person through it. Indeed, his equation of *being* and *truth* with Jesus Christ's *life* (patterned after his reading of the Fathers), indicates common ground with Barth regarding the importance of *revelation* for salvation (*life*). However, Zizioulas, who is most emphatic about the necessity of particularity (otherness) for communion, offers a rather generic Christ. Placing Zizioulas's christology alongside Barth's and Ratzinger's christologies—with their continual reference to actual events and concrete words from Jesus Christ's life—highlights just how anemic Zizioulas's account of the particularity of Jesus Christ is. Christ is central to his theology, but at times it seems this center lacks specification.

At least partly to blame for this is the rigid distinction Zizioulas makes between the *historical* Jesus and the *eschatological* Christ (*BaC*, 185, for example). Thus, while Christ's *createdness* (life in space and time) is clearly important to Zizioulas, the particularities of this life fade away in the radiance of the eschatologically cosmic Christ, only to be replaced by the stylized type of the bishop presiding over the eucharist as *alter Christus*. The specific words and deeds of Jesus Christ are eclipsed and his Jewishness becomes a shadowy, symbolic feature. Yet, just as Zizioulas emphasizes that Jesus Christ was not first one and then many, Jesus Christ was not first historical and

then eschatological. Rather, he was the *eschatological Adam* from the beginning—as glimpsed at his baptism and transfiguration and definitively proclaimed in his resurrection. Without attention to the historical particularities of this eschatological human, his *filial schesis* becomes a nebulous concept. Not that attending to the particularity of his historical relationships would deliver some *other* information about his person. Indeed, it would allow a *better* description of the Son because Jesus Christ's *filial schesis* is revealed through the way it *determines* his relationships with physical, historical, and personal creation. In fact, more sustained attention to Jesus of Nazareth and the biblical understanding of *covenant* would demonstrate that the incomparable depth and richness of Jesus' *filial schesis* does not crowd out other relationships, but sustains, enriches, and deepens them. This is to say that Zizioulas's christology would be improved by *more*, not less, attention to the *filial schesis*.

CHAPTER 5

HUMAN TRANSFORMATION: OUR BEING IS IN BECOMING

The objective of the concluding chapter of this ecumenical study of human transformation is three-fold: 1) summarize the agreement and disagreement between Barth, Ratzinger and Zizioulas regarding human transformation; 2) examine the contributions of the present work to Barth studies, Ratzinger studies, and Zizioulas studies, respectively; and 3) explore some of the implications of this consensus regarding the prayer of the children of God as the ultimate goal of human transformation, particularly as it relates to contemporary discussions of participation and divinization.

I. The Convergences and Divergences Between Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas Regarding Human Transformation

This study has created an ecumenical dialogue concerning the *basis* and *goal* of human transformation as well as *how* this transformation occurs. The Reformed, Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches were brought into dialogue on this topic, not through a formal process with an eye to what *might* be said, but through listening to what *has* been said by loyal, though critical, theologians from these churches.¹ What we have found is a remarkable convergence between Karl Barth, Joseph Ratzinger, and John Zizioulas regarding the prayer of the children of God as the *goal* of human transformation. If the agreement was simply that prayer is a necessary component of the Christian life—that prayer is merely one action among many undertaken by transformed humans—then this convergence would remain in the realm of the banal. However, Barth, Ratzinger and Zizioulas do not view prayer as one act

1. Though each of these three theologians has served as a representative of his respective tradition in formal ecumenical dialogues.

among many, one part of the transformed life, but as the very act in which Christians are transformed and have their transformed being as Christians. Moreover, as these three theologians understand the *Christian* life to bear witness to what is truly *human*, this consensus regarding what it means to be human is surely noteworthy.

I.A. The *Prayer* of the Children of God as the *Goal* of Human Transformation

This consensus among Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas regarding the goal of human transformation hinges upon their shared understanding that Jesus Christ *is* transformed humanity. He is the ultimate goal of human transformation. Only by participating in him, specifically in the filial relationship with the Father in the power of the Spirit that is the center of his being, do we become truly human. Moreover, all three specify this participation as a prayer-event in which the human act corresponds to the divine gift, both as a thankful response to the gift that has been given and as a plea that the gift be given again. This points to the absolute *graciousness* of the Christian's "sonship," which never becomes a human *possession*, and thereby indicates that *salvation*, being the children of God—even as an *eschatological* reality—is not a *state* but a *dynamic* relationship. Nevertheless, Barth's, Ratzinger's, and Zizioulas's descriptions of prayer as the *telos* of human transformation are not without ambiguity with regard to eschatology.

Barth explicitly argues that the covenant partnership at which transformation aims is the double dynamic (*vocatio-invocatio*) of prayer. Therefore, "where there is prayer, humanity's relationship to God is correct and it is in order" (*CD* IV/4, 210). The Christian life is this prayer: "a human life whose purpose, will, and work focuses always on the one action of invocation of God, and which... is to be understood in its totality as a life in invocation of God" (*ChrL*, 50). Yet, will this Christian life, this *way of being*, perdure into the age to come? If Barth understood soteriology strictly in terms of revelation, then the full and final revelation at the final *parousia* of Jesus Christ would mean the conclusion of the transformed life. As Barth, however, understands salvation in terms of fullness of covenant partnership, fullness of revelation by no means entails

the cessation of prayer.² Indeed, if the risen Jesus Christ, exalted to the right hand of the Father, is really the *witness to* and *guarantor of* the “completed fellowship [*vollkommenen... Gemeinschaft*]” (*ChrL*, 11 [15]), then his *ongoing* invocation is exactly the content of his witness and guarantee—even as it is the form as well. In this way Jesus Christ not only makes the veil between God and humanity transparent, but also the veil between this age and the age to come. Gerhard Sauter, then, correctly describes Barth’s eschatology as excluding the possibility *both* that “basically everything has already occurred” *and* that “something has in fact been completed, possibly even that which is decisive, yet it requires supplementation, completion, or at least continuation through that which we have to accomplish” (“Why is Karl Barth’s *Church Dogmatics* not a Theology of Hope?” 425).³ In this rather apophatic way, Sauter attempts to locate the ontological space that Barth actually locates precisely in the free prayer of the children of God in chapter 2 above: the eschatological being of humanity is *in becoming*.

Ratzinger holds *divinization*, understood as participation in the *dialogue* that God *is*, to be the goal of human transformation. Ratzinger specifies this participation as *prayer*, “which is what really makes the Christian a Christian” (*PFF*, 294). Even more specifically, Ratzinger understands Jesus’ address, “Our Father,” to be the defining characteristic of Christian prayer. Thus, to be a Christian means “participating in Jesus’ prayer, entering into his form of life, that is, into his form of prayer.... saying with him ‘Father’ and becoming thus a child and a son or daughter of God” (*GJC*, 28). The

2. Barth holds that the *ecclesia*, as the community that exists *for* those outside it, will come to an end at the final *parousia* of Jesus Christ, as will the specifically *Christian* existence, in the sense of the human distinguished from other humans by their knowledge of and participation in the fulfilled covenant. Yet, this must be understood in light of Barth’s underlying conviction that “What is *Christian* is secretly but fundamentally identical with what is *universally human*” (*C&A*, 77). Thus, Barth simply holds that in the *eschaton* there will be no need to further specify humans and humanity as “Christians” and “Church.”

3. Sauter, however, neglects Barth’s material eschatology (Jesus Christ, the *totus Christus*, as the *eschaton*) and views this description only as a formal dialectical principle in Barth’s later theology: “the ‘already’ is valid for God’s promise, the ‘not yet’ is valid for our understanding. We must say both, and yet we can never say this simultaneously. Nor can we say the one first and the other second simply in order to continue. No, theological speech will always continue to move from the one to the other” (425–26).

Eucharist is the epitome of this participatory prayer, indeed, it “is the shared prayer of the Church, in which the Lord prays together with us and gives us himself” (*FoF*, 152). Again, as Jesus’ relationship to the Father is a *dynamic* relationship, our sharing in it will be *dynamic* as well. Paradoxically, this dynamic participation is possible because “with Christ revelation is *concluded*” and “God’s dialogue with man... has *achieved* its goal.” This *perfection*, however, has nothing to do with *stasis*, for the purpose of the divine dialogue “was not, and is not, to say *something*,” but the *communio* of love, the mutual self-sharing of the dialogue partners themselves. Thus, Ratzinger describes Jesus Christ as the *eschatological Adam*: the *telos* of human transformation—“[h]umanity cannot go beyond him”—but also “the real beginning.” Jesus Christ’s prayer is the *eschaton*, but its “finality is of such a kind that it does not exclude the future but inaugurates it” (*IC*, 263–64). Ratzinger works hard to clarify that “eternal life” is to be found in the eucharistic prayer, which is both humble asking and joyous thanksgiving, and not a one-time gift of “the intrinsic power of what is in itself indestructible” (*IC*, 350). This makes his efforts to defend the *givenness* of the *one* Church all the more puzzling—and problematic. Yet, there is at least a strong current of Ratzinger’s theology in which the *telos* of human transformation is a dynamic *beginning* or *coming* to one’s being, rather than a frozen state.

That prayer is the goal of human transformation is more implied than explicit in the theology of John Zizioulas. Beginning with the created-uncreated dialectic, Zizioulas argues that creation simply cannot survive *in se*, but that it nevertheless sinfully attempts to do so, resulting in death. However, as the Creator wills life for creation, God acts to recapitulate creation in Jesus Christ by bringing it into the life-giving communion that is its *telos*. Jesus Christ mediates this life to his body, the church, which Zizioulas understands as those who share Christ’s filial *schesis* through baptism. The Eucharist is the event in which Christ shares his life with the church, who then mediate this life-in-communion to the rest of creation. The Eucharist, then, is both the medium and the goal of human transformation—and the Eucharist *is* prayer. In the

Eucharist, “[i]t is Christ who is praying..., and the worshipping Church stands in the person of Christ.... There is no distance between Christ and his body in the Eucharist” (*LCD*, 117 and 118). Zizioulas’s identification of Christ as the pray-er in the Eucharist, makes Zizioulas’s description of the eucharistic prayer even more striking, for in this prayer “the Church *asks to receive from God what she has already received historically in Christ as if she had not received it at all*, i.e., as if history did not count in itself” (“Apostolic Continuity,” 88). This indicates that even Jesus Christ does not *possess* his being, but receives it ever again. In any case, it is certain that Zizioulas holds that “the Church needs the Pentecostal scene to be set again and again” (“Apostolic Continuity,” 88). Thus, the being of Christians is in *epiclesis*, the ongoing cry for that which will never be a human possession: the life of communion in the power of the Holy Spirit.

All three theologians understand prayer to be the ultimate goal of human transformation, but as such, prayer is not the *end* but the *beginning* of transformed human action. Prayer does not mark the ending of the embodied, creaturely existence of humanity or remove Christians from creation, but opens the way to a proper relationship to the rest of creation. Barth does emphasize the continued creatureliness of transformed humanity, uttering its “Yes” with the same human fleshly organs and created capacities with which it previously uttered its rebellious “No.” However, Barth does not account for the transformed human’s ongoing relationship with the rest of creation. This exclusive emphasis on the individual’s creatureliness not only gives short shrift to the cosmic dimensions of sins, but also (and more importantly) provides scant resources for discerning God’s call to action vis-à-vis humanity’s fellow-creation. Comparing Barth to Ratzinger and Zizioulas on this point highlights this weakness as both Ratzinger and Zizioulas emphasize that transformed humanity is sent back into *creation* (and not simply the “world” opposed to God) at the conclusion of the eucharistic celebration. In this way, Ratzinger and Zizioulas vouch for transformed humanity’s cosmic vocation. Zizioulas offers a particularly compelling account of the cosmic dimensions of human transformation, clarifying how human transformation

brings with it a call to share this life-in-communion with all creation—or more precisely, the rest of creation.

I.B. Human Transformation’s Trinitarian *Basis*: God’s Being is in Becoming

Jesus Christ is not only the *goal* of human transformation but also its *basis* in the theology of Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas. More specifically, the personal act of God *pro nobis* in Jesus Christ is the basis of human transformation. In this way, all three accounts are christocentric, not in the sense that one doctrinal *locus* dominates their theology, but in the sense that the unique *person*, Jesus Christ, is the focus of thought. All three theologians also posit the ground for this economic action *extra nos* in God’s *decision* to be *pro nobis*, relating this decision in various ways to the dynamically ordered triune life of God. Finally, all three look to the work of the Spirit as the basis of the communication of this life to particular humans—with various roles assigned to the church.

Although “christocentric” correctly describes Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas, they are far from identical. As mentioned above, Zizioulas’s christological account of the divine-human relationship recapitulated in Jesus Christ lacks the particularity of Ratzinger’s and Barth’s accounts. At moments, Zizioulas appears to verge on making Jesus Christ’s filial *schesis* a principle distinguishable from the concrete history of Israel and Jesus of Nazareth in *covenant* with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (for instance *C&O*, 237, n. 42). While Zizioulas ultimately does not reduce Christ to his filial *schesis*—exactly Zizioulas’s critique of Augustine’s account of personhood—he does suffer by comparison to Ratzinger’s and Barth’s richly detailed accounts of Jesus Christ’s particularity.

Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas emphasize that humanity is transformed in Jesus Christ. It is *humanity*, not *God*, that is changed through the *assumptio humanitatis*. God does not need conciliation to be a covenant partner, but humanity must be transformed to be a covenant partner. Indeed, humanity *is transformed* in Jesus Christ. Zizioulas offers an account of humanity transformed into *eucharistia*, Ratzinger offers an

account of humanity transformed into a *dialogue* of prayer, and Barth offers an account of human *asking* that corresponds to the divine Word that both elicits and answers these petitions. One implication of this common understanding of Jesus Christ as the objective transformation of humanity is the place that this opens for a positive account of *imitatio Christi*. While humans cannot make themselves the children of God through imitating the Son, such imitation is the call that comes with the divine gift of the filial *schesis*. If one *is transformed* by God, then one is not only called but also freed to *be transformed*. Indeed, the adopted children of God have no other freedom than to imitate the only-begotten Son. Zizioulas and Ratzinger do not always follow the logic implicit in this basis as unflinchingly as Barth, but it is nonetheless at the heart of their theology: humanity *is* reconciled, recapitulated, in Jesus Christ.

As indicated by the preceding exegesis, all three theologians locate the *ultimate* basis of God's transformation of humanity in Jesus Christ in God's triune being *extra nos*, with special attention devoted to describing God's *freedom* in relation to humanity. Ratzinger argues that the "relationship between God and man... can come about only by a free decision of God, whose sovereignty remains unassailable" ("New Covenant," 636).⁴ Barth specifies just how radical this decision is: "From all eternity God elected and determined that He Himself would become human for us humans" (CD IV/1, 45R [47]). Or, "[t]o put it in the simplest way, what unites God and us humans is that He does not *will* to be God without us," and therefore "*freely determined*" himself for this "most primitive relationship between God and humanity" (CD IV/1, 7R* and 10R [5 and 8]). Like Barth and Ratzinger, Zizioulas emphasizes that God's act *pro nobis* is freely willed and not simply *de natura*. Zizioulas, however, connects this willing to God's triune being-in-act much more explicitly than Barth and Ratzinger, locating the basis of the divine movement *towards* humanity in the decision of the Father (described as *ὁ θελῶν*): "Every movement in God, *ad extra* as well as *ad intra*,

4. References in Ratzinger's early work (for instance *MCB*) indicate that his doctrine of election is indebted to Barth's doctrine of election. Less clear is whether Ratzinger encountered Barth through the *Church Dogmatics* or through Hans Urs von Balthasar (*The Theology of Karl Barth*).

begins with the Father and ends with him,” so that even “the Trinity is a ‘movement’ initiated by a person [the Father]” (*C&O*, 121, 138, and 131). Yet, Zizioulas makes it quite clear that God is not *in process* from one person to three persons, for “when we utter the word ‘Father’ we indicate automatically a relationship.... making communion primordial” (*C&O*, 126)—ordering, even described in causal terms, does not necessarily mean temporal-ontological ordering. While less explicit than Zizioulas, both Barth and Ratzinger understand the dynamic economic *taxis* as revelatory of an inter-trinitarian *taxis* that is understood in terms of a *dynamic* in the life of God, which in turn serves as the basis of the divine transformation of humanity wrought in Jesus Christ.

Several features of the trinitarian basis of human transformation call for further exploration. First, it is noteworthy that Zizioulas and Ratzinger both echo Barth’s much derided *Seinsweise* in their accounts of God’s triunity and human transformation (which, as we will explore later, allows them to explain this transformation as divinization), treating a “person” as a mode or way of being. This ecumenical convergence warrants a re-evaluation of what appeared to many to be the easy dismissal of Barth at this point.⁵ Yet, Barth’s concern for God’s single subjectivity (a main reason for his use of *Seinsweise*) does not seem even to be on the radar for Ratzinger and Zizioulas—which raises questions of how *dialogue* could be an appropriate description of a single Subject.⁶ Second, issues regarding the *becoming of God* abound. Most importantly, it must be stressed that these three theologians absolutely do not understand God’s *becoming* as a *transformation* akin to the human transformation *from* covenant-breaker *to* covenant-keeper. This marks a key problem with the language of “becoming” as used in this study. On the one hand, it describes the transformation whereby humans cease being covenant breakers and *become* covenant keepers—a change from one thing into another.

5. Barth’s non-hierarchical ecclesiology indicates that a *taxis* in the trinity does not necessitate a corresponding *taxis* within humanity, as many critics feared (Barth’s account of male and female notwithstanding).

6. This concern to protect against tritheism by emphasizing the single divine Subject is near to the heart of Bruce McCormack’s constructive work (a point usually unnoticed and unaddressed by critics). His account of the eternal election of Jesus Christ aims to explain how there could be an eternal dialogue between two subjects without raising the specter of multiple divine subjectivity.

On the other hand, it describes the place where transformed humanity exists—the *becoming* at the center of the vocation-invocation relationship between God and humanity wherein we do not change from one thing into another, but have our true being. It is the latter becoming, the *eschatological* becoming of *redeemed* (in Barth's sense) humanity, that is analogous to the divine *becoming*. In these instances, the language of "becoming" attempts to bear witness to the fact that "perfect being" (both created and uncreated) is a *happening*, not a matter of *stasis*, but of *dynamic relations*.

I.C. Christ, Spirit, & Church: *How* are humans transformed?

The differences between Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas are most obvious in relation to the *How?* question. All three theologians argue that we are transformed *sacramentally*. Moreover, all three identify Jesus Christ as *the* sacrament. Yet, a real rift runs between a) Barth and b) Ratzinger and Zizioulas regarding the place of the church in the sacramental mediation of human transformation.

Barth argues that only Jesus Christ mediates human transformation. Thus, when Barth says that Jesus Christ is *the* sacrament, he means that there are *no other* sacraments alongside him, that he alone is the mediator of the restored covenant relationship: "He is the active subject [of reconciliation]" (CD IV/1, 125). Humans may (and Christians do) participate in his exalted humanity, but they do not thereby participate in his divinity or become divine-human mediators of salvation. In fact, Christians and the church no more participate in the divine work of reconciliation and redemption than they participate in the divine work of creation. There is only one place of divine-human action, and it is in the person of Jesus Christ, the unique God-human mediator. With regard to human transformation this means, "[t]he beginning of the Christian life takes place in a *direct* self-attestation and self-impartation of the living Jesus Christ... He, He alone, acts as the author... of faith, just as He, He alone, is its finisher" (CD IV/4, 32). Christians may bear witness to God's mighty Word of reconciliation, but their words and acts do not reconcile.

Barth's doctrine of baptism, then, works to describe and explain the ongoing mediation of reconciliation by the God-human, Jesus Christ, in Spirit baptism, and the strictly human response to this work of reconciliation in water baptism. The risen and ascended Jesus Christ alone mediates the "divine change" that makes actual in particular persons what was accomplished objectively for all humanity in Jesus Christ. We are transformed by Jesus Christ. The church does not mediate this divine change, but stands alongside the baptismal candidate in submission to the head of humanity, Jesus Christ. Note, however, that the church does so in the full assurance of faith, not requesting water baptism again and again, but trusting that God has heard and answered the baptismal cry for the baptism of the Spirit that both makes a definitive end of the sinner and a definitive beginning of the child of God. The church may be confident in the *totus Christus*, "Jesus Christ as the Head of His body, Jesus Christ in both His heavenly and also His earthly historical form of existence," that is "Jesus Christ and His own—those who are co-elected by Him as the Son of God and in Him as the Son of Man" (CD IV/2, 59). Yet, note the *by-in* distinction, which indicates that

[t]he relationship between these two forms of His existence [heavenly and earthly historical] is not so much comparable as indirectly identical to the relationship between Himself as the eternal Son of God and His being as human... the community of Jesus Christ can be that which the human nature of its Lord and Head is. It cannot be more than this (CD IV/2, 59 and 60).⁷

Thus, by emphasizing that Jesus Christ is *the* sacrament, Barth defends against understandings of the church as a divine-human reality. This means that while humans may *be transformed* (and that the church is the proper place of this transformed being), only the direct act of God *transforms* one into a child of God.

Ratzinger and Zizioulas, like Barth, describe human transformation as the result of the ongoing work of Jesus Christ. However, whereas Barth limited the church's participation in Jesus Christ to his exalted humanity, thereby making Jesus Christ the *sole* divine-human sacrament and mediator of salvation, Ratzinger and Zizioulas offer less qualification regarding the way in which the church is Christ. Therefore, their

7. Such passages seem to fit *neither* McCormack's understanding of the eternal election of Jesus Christ *nor* his critics' proposals.

emphasis on Jesus Christ as *the* sacrament actually includes within it a sacramental account of the church as a divine-human reality. This means that *divinization*, the church's "becoming Christ," includes participating not only in the Son's "way of being," but also in the Son's activity. Thus, whereas Barth understands the church to stand alongside the baptismal candidate in a position of humble repentance and petition, Ratzinger and Zizioulas understand the church to be mediating the act of Jesus Christ—not merely recognizing that the sinner was put to death with Christ and now can only be buried (so Barth), but actually putting the sinner to death. Likewise, Ratzinger and Zizioulas understand the church to actively mediate the divine life through the celebration of the Eucharist.

This teaching regarding the sacramental nature of the church involves Ratzinger and Zizioulas in a catch-22. On the one hand, if the church *is* a divine-human reality, then its human activity is the act of God. The only way, then, to escape the equation of "what is" with "what ought to be" is either to impugn God or to hedge its sacramental status in some way (a sacramental occasionalism of sorts). Zizioulas and Ratzinger, of course, take the latter course. Zizioulas hedges the church's sacramental status eschatologically, arguing that the church only participates fully in Christ during the Eucharist—a momentary in-breaking of the fullness of eschatological communion. Ratzinger hedges the church's sacramental status by differentiating between the *one* church and the churches. The *one* church is always more than the churches, which prevents a total identification of the churches with the *one* church. While in these ways Zizioulas and Ratzinger both open up the space for critical ecclesiologies—and do not hesitate to deploy it (especially against the Protestant churches!)—it is clear that both assume that God acts in the church's acts whenever it is crucial, for instance at baptism.

This leads to the other side of the catch-22: the need to guarantee the church's sacramentality. Even as Ratzinger and Zizioulas attempt to open up the space between the act of God and ecclesial action (necessary for a critical ecclesiology), both also seek historical guarantees for the church's existence. Zizioulas argues for an ideal, Ignatian-

Hippolytan form of the Eucharist, while Ratzinger historicizes the Spirit's work in *ordo* to guarantee the church's sacramentality. That Barth simply cuts this Gordian knot is one of the more interesting aspects of his ecclesiology.

Two disagreements call for further exploration. First, most important, and a question to which we will have cause to return is whether this prayer is a human activity or a divine-human activity. In other words, do transformed humans participate only in Jesus Christ's exalted humanity or in the divine-human *unio*. Barth's *Versöhnungslehre*, by rigorously distinguishing between the divine and human and resolutely holding to the uniqueness of the hypostatic union, stands as a massive argument for the former position. Not only does Barth provide the positive grounds for his doctrine, he also highlights the danger of the latter position: the "nostrification" of God (*ChrL*, §77 "Zeal for the Honor of God," 111–204, especially 130–131). Ratzinger's position highlights the gravitational pull of this *nostrification*. For while Ratzinger argues that "Salvation is not a 'work' of man" because "the real agent here can only be God" ("Commentary-GS," V: 162), his identification (hedged about as it is) of the act of the church as the act of God means that God cannot stand over against the church in judgment, indeed "to be present and effective in history, the Word of God *needs* this agent" (*PFF*, 142*—cf. 115, above). Zizioulas, more than Ratzinger, appears to see and guard against this outcome of a divine-human ecclesiology. Yet, his sketch of a non-causal account of the relationship between Christ and the church is not only in need of further elaboration, but also appears to neglect the Reconciler-reconciled dialectic ("Pneumatological Dimension," 148–49). Although he denies that the church participates in the divine-human *unio*, Barth's ecclesiology is anything but "low," for surely it is no small thing to be the earthly form of the human existence of Jesus Christ, that is, the exalted human covenant partners of God?

Second, if the filial relationship received in baptism is the *telos* of human transformation, then what can be the meaning of setting this baptismal ordination alongside, or even beneath, other ordinations? The magnificence of this adoption in

baptism, not some sort of Leveler principle, prompts Barth's protests that baptism "renders superfluous and indeed forbids" further ordinations. For, "[Christians] cannot be consecrated, ordained, or dedicated a second, third, or fourth time without devaluation of their baptism" (CD IV/4, 201). Strangely enough, the utter uniqueness of the ordination of baptism is even more explicitly central in the teachings of Ratzinger and Zizioulas—both radically committed to ontological accounts of the superordinations they deem necessary for the celebration of the Eucharist. For Ratzinger and Zizioulas both emphasize that becoming a Christian means coming to share in Jesus Christ's filial *schesis* through baptism. In particular, Ratzinger's focus on the centrality of this relationship—even to the point that the person *is* this relationship—and Zizioulas's teaching that this *one* relationship *determines* all other relationships mean that there are not degrees of sonship, one is either a "son in the Son," or not, regardless of the imperfect realization of this relationship. Thus, further ordinations cannot make one more filial, bestow a more central relationship, or even place another relationship alongside the filial relationship. If this is true, it is unclear how there could be similar, much less further, ordinations. In no way does this rule out ecclesial order, but it does appear to rule out Ratzinger's and Zizioulas's accounts of the eucharistic president as *being an alter Christus*. Thus, while recognitions of vocations to certain ecclesial functions or specific relationships subsidiary to the *filial* relationship are certainly possible, it would seem that this relational-ontological understanding of baptism as *adoption* "renders superfluous and indeed forbids" ontological understandings of *ordo*.

II. Implications of this Thesis for the Study of Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas

In the course of this study we have engaged a broad range of the secondary literature devoted to the theology of Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas. While this thesis drew appreciatively on the work of many scholars in pursuit of an accurate reading of these three theologians, many minor points of disagreement and some criticisms of the mainstream of scholarship were offered. What follows is a brief discussion of some of

the implications of the disagreements and criticisms for subsequent studies of Barth, Ratzinger and Zizioulas.

II.A. Barth Studies

To begin with, this thesis offered a new interpretation of the nature of the “radical” revision involved in Barth’s presentation of his ethics of reconciliation as *Anrufung* rather than *Treue*. Whereas Jüngel (followed by most scholars) presents this revision as a radical departure from what came before it (cf. *ChrL*, x-xi; *TE*, 164; and 13, n. 3 above), we have treated it as Barth’s attempt to conform this material more closely to the *radix* of his theology: “the divine work and word of grace” described in *CD IV/1-3*—i.e., the restored covenant (cf. §57)—“to which the free human active answer corresponds” (*CD IV/4*, ixR [ix]). Not only does this approach allow a more coherent interpretation of what would have been §74-75, but Barth also indicates the character of this revision through his brief exposition of its continuity with Protestant thought (*ChrL*, 43–44) and it is in clear continuity with his earlier treatments of prayer in *CD III* (e.g., III/3, 264-271 [299-307]; and III/4, §53.3, “Prayer” 87-115 [*Das Gebet*, 95-127]). In light of this continuity, it is quite possible and profitable to read Barth’s doctrine of prayer in his ethics of reconciliation as his final naming of the most basic Christian act, the “beginning again at the beginning” that he had been describing and undertaking for so long.⁸ However, one continuity does not a monolithic theology make, and exegesis of Barth’s thought must be cognizant of the real and sometimes significant changes in his theology, especially within his *magnum opus* (cf. 3, n. 5 above). Yet, what makes these changes interesting is that they are part of Barth’s ongoing effort to conform his theology to its *radix*.

Barth’s decision for *Anrufung* rather than *Treue*, then, is interesting not because it marks a radically new path in Barth’s latest theology, but because it marks a judgment about what is more faithful to the path he set for himself in the *Church Dogmatics*. Thus,

8. This is Barth’s description of his revision of *Der Römerbrief* and *Die Christliche Dogmatik* in *CD I/1*, xi—cf. *CD I/2*, 868; *CD III/3*, 263-265; *CD IV/2*, 608; *ChrL* (§74), 33; and *CD IV/4*, 39, among others.

while Barth finally posits that “[t]he first and basic act of theological work is prayer” and that “theological work does not merely begin with prayer and is not merely accompanied by it; in its totality it is peculiar and characteristic of theology that it can be performed only in the act of prayer” (*ET* [1962], 160), there are obvious continuities with Barth’s earlier judgment regarding “prayer as the attitude without which there can be no dogmatic work,” even as he declares that dogmatics is “possible only as an act of faith” (*CD* I/1 [1932], 23r [23]). While it is significant that Barth ultimately chose to describe the Christian life in terms of prayer, this does not mean that he ceased being concerned with the Christian life as covenant fidelity, but that prayer is basic to—and, indeed, the fulfillment of—the human being-in-act that corresponds to the reconciling act of God.

Inasmuch as Barth’s final description of the Christian life as prayer illuminates his earlier discussions of Christian life and work, there is good reason to read the *Church Dogmatics* back to front as Richardson advocates (insofar as such a reading allows the *difference in continuity* to illuminate and does not assume homogeneity). And, in fact, Barth’s doctrine of prayer does illumine his earlier discussions, not least of the Christian tasks of dogmatics, preaching and exegesis. Such a back-to-front reading highlights the connection between the ethics of reconciliation and the reconciling act of God as the becoming in which humans have their being that corresponds to the God whose being is in becoming (cf. Jüngel [*God’s Being Is in Becoming*]). In the same way, conceiving of teaching, preaching and exegesis as acts of prayer would illuminate the sometimes obscure correspondence between Barth’s understanding of these activities and his understanding of the being-in-becoming of doctrine, proclamation, and the Bible, respectively. For instance, McCormack’s otherwise excellent treatment of Barth’s doctrine of Scripture in “The Being of Holy Scripture is in Becoming” would be improved by an exploration of the nature of the act of biblical exegesis as prayer. Just as Barth’s emphasis on the “becoming” of Holy Scripture grounds its authority in the objective act of God (and not its subjective appropriation by humans), so too would

conceiving of exegesis as *invocatio* highlight both the reality of the human act and its free dependence upon the *vocatio* that precedes it and upon which it awaits. Similarly, Richard Wood (*Barth's Theology of Interpretation*) highlights the importance of prayer in Barth's earlier discussions of biblical interpretation where it is something undertaken alongside exegesis, but does not explore exegesis itself as epicletic prayer as Barth's later understanding of the Christian life would demand.

Failure to acknowledge that Barth understands the Christian life to be prayer *tout court* is one of the weaknesses of studies of Barth's *Versöhnungslehre*. This failure is exemplified in Paul Jones' division of Barth's understanding of the Christian life into three discrete actions: baptism, prayer, and eucharist (*The Humanity of Christ*, 266), rather than three prayer-acts.⁹ Prayer is not simply one *aspect* of Barth's doctrine of the Christian life, but the event that encompasses the whole, the one human action that properly corresponds to the divine act of reconciliation. Not only does this failure distort presentations of Barth's ethics of reconciliation, it also obscures the extent to which his doctrine of reconciliation requires him to venture into the doctrine of redemption and the concomitant pneumatology and eschatology (cf. 50-56 above). Because Barth's explanation of prayer requires him to cross over into discussions of redemption, pneumatology, and eschatology, his characterization of the Christian life as prayer clarifies his argument that while reconciliation is the center of dogmatics it is not everything. We cannot reconcile ourselves to God; only God can reconcile sinful humanity—and he has done this in Jesus Christ. Therefore our reconciliation to God can only be made known to us—hence Barth's emphasis on *revelation*—yet, God *redeems* (frees) the reconciled to *be reconciled*—to have their reconciled being in *act*. This human act of prayer is the co-operation of God and humans, leading Barth to describe it as *synergism* (cf. 40, n. 80 and 83; 65, n. 151; and 67-69 above).

9. Jones derives his organizational chart of *CD IV* from Jünger (*Barth*, 48–49). Even Webster does not consistently interpret Barth's ethics of reconciliation in terms of prayer—though he acknowledges prayer's centrality in it (*Reconciliation*, e.g., 50, 77, and 114).

Although he did not live to complete this evangelical doctrine of synergism, Barth judged it desirable to publish the revised paragraph on baptism as representative of his vision for the unfinished ethics of reconciliation. Here again, in interpreting what would have been §74-75 in accord with Barth's judgment that the fragments accurately represent his positive teaching on the Christian life—and not merely negative polemic—this study deviates from the mainstream of Barth scholarship. Given the ecumenical gauntlet thrown down by Barth in the baptism fragment, it is easy to see the motivation for treating this material not as Barth's final word on the teaching of the church but as a polemical tract as does Yocum—and Webster, to a lesser extent. Yet, such a reading directly contradicts *both* Barth's explicit statements to the contrary *and* the logic and material content of these paragraphs. As demonstrated in the second chapter of this thesis, a reading of Barth's teaching that water baptism be reserved for those who responsibly request it as a manifestation of his *positive* teaching in his *Versöhnungslehre* and as *central* to his ethics of reconciliation accords with both Barth's explicit statements concerning its centrality, positive nature, logic and material content of these paragraphs (cf. 61, n. 133 and n. 139 above). Water baptism is the *invocatio* that corresponds to the divine *vocatio* of Spirit baptism whereby the virtual reconciliation of God and all humanity becomes actual for this particular human. As the beginning of the actualized covenant relationship between the reconciling God and this particular human, baptism is one event (contra Hunsinger, cf. 47 above), the first event of the actualized covenant-keeping that is the Christian life. Even sympathetic critics of Barth's doctrine of baptism such as Hunsinger and Webster tend to isolate it from its context in his ethics of reconciliation and the broader doctrine of reconciliation by treating 1) his biblical exegesis as if it is unrelated to the exegesis supporting *CD IV/1-3*; 2) his understanding of Jesus Christ as the sole sacrament (divine-human reality) as unique to *CD IV/4* rather than the end result of a sacramental restriction well underway in *CD IV/1-3* (cf. 46, n. 90 above); and 3) his understanding of divine and human action in baptism as if it is unrelated to the christological foundation laid in *CD*

IV/1-3. It is hoped that future treatments of Barth's doctrine and ethics of reconciliation will address the positive teaching in CD IV/4 more responsibly.

Furthermore, this study has furthered the work of Webster in discerning the ontology assumed by Barth's ethics of reconciliation by highlighting Barth's covenantal understanding of God and humanity's being-in-relation. Contrary to many criticisms of Barth's soteriology, the Christian life is primarily a matter of ontology and not epistemology, founded not upon knowledge but upon being—covenantal being. This covenant-relation is not a *static* essence, but *dynamic* covenant-keeping; the being-in-relation entails being-in-act (cf. 25; 45-46; 49, n. 98; 51; and 54 above). The being, knowing, and acting (corresponding, *entsprechend*) involved in the Christian life are *ordered* but cannot be divorced. Christians really are different from non-Christians, they do not merely know something that non-Christians do not know or do something that non-Christians do not do. This distinction between universal, virtual reconciliation and particular, actual reconciliation, though perhaps not providing satisfactory answers for those who accuse Barth of universalism, helps to explain why Barth did not think that his affirmation that Jesus died and was raised for all humanity logically necessitated universalism. Again, this study argued that Barth's doctrine and ethics of reconciliation hinges upon his doctrine of redemption, the act of God whereby humans are freed to be what they are (to be actually what they already were virtually). Again, contrary to many critics of Barth, this reading of the material in CD IV with an eye to the eschatological redemption of humanity in the Spirit indicates the cruciality of pneumatology and ecclesiology. For the Spirit does not merely deliver knowledge of reconciliation, but is the power through whom reconciliation becomes *actual* as humans become pray-ers (covenant-keepers), and the *ecclesia* is not an appendix to reconciliation, but the very place where Christ's prayer continues on earth, and as such, "necessary for salvation" (HG, 63). The late Barth is hardly anti-ecclesial, even if his ecclesiology cannot be easily harmonized with the Roman Catholic and Orthodox ecclesiologies that currently are ascendant in academic theology.

Finally, I offer a few observations regarding the election-Trinity controversy in Barth studies which, while not a focal point of the Barth chapter, was a necessary topic of discussion (e.g., 34 above) in light of the emphasis on the trinitarian basis of human transformation and how the divine conversion precedes and founds human conversion. Given Barth's continual "beginning again at the beginning" in an effort to better conform his theology to the Word, my sympathy rests with McCormack's willingness to follow Barth's thought through to the end rather than Hunsinger's treatment of Barth's theology as a maze from which one ought to choose an early exit. McCormack's reading of Barth, however, ultimately makes Barth's noetic caution against looking behind this divine determination into an ontological rule for prioritizing election over triunity. Along the way, he not only freely proposes interpretations that run counter to Barth's own self-interpretation, but also too easily dismisses passages he contradicting his thesis that election precedes (logically, not temporally) triunity as "inconsistencies"—for instance when Barth writes that "In the inner life of God, as the eternal essence of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the divine essence does not, of course, need any actualisation" (*CD IV/2*, 113, cf. 101), or that Jesus Christ is "certainly not eternal as God is" (*CD IV/2*, 33 [34], cf. 101). Given the fact that this dispute arises in no small part because of Barth's actualistic ontology, it is hoped that theologians outside of the realm of "Barth studies" will join in the conversation, for as we have seen with Ratzinger and Zizioulas, by no means does Barth have a monopoly on either dissatisfaction with the suitability of substance metaphysics for the articulation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ or the attempt to articulate a metaphysic that accounts for the dynamic realities of the divine-human covenant in history and the "becoming flesh" of the Son of God.

II.B. Ratzinger Studies

Unlike Barth, and to a lesser extent Zizioulas, there is not a significant body of secondary literature on Ratzinger's theology. Journalistic biographies abound, as do critical treatments of his actions as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the

Faith, but relatively few articles and monographs have been dedicated to the critical reading of his own theological writings. Ratzinger tends to be deployed rather than studied, either as a heroic defender of the Catholic faith against the decadence of post-Vatican II culture and theology or as a demonic opponent of the salutary openness to the world that marked the post-Vatican II era. Unfortunately, such character sketches are not patient of critical exegesis. This lack is lamentable because Ratzinger's theology contains rich resources for constructive Christian doctrine that have barely been tapped—an observation that diminishes neither Ratzinger's importance as a key figure in ecclesiastical politics nor the necessity of evaluating his *official* influence for good and for ill on the Roman Catholic Church.

Judging from the findings in this thesis, future studies of Ratzinger's theology would do well to attend to the christological concentration that animates his work—with special attention to the way *relation* informs a) his articulation of a “spiritual Christology” and b) his understanding of history and covenant. Ratzinger's emphasis on relationship with Christ (“intimate friendship with Jesus, on which everything else depends...” [*JnN*, xi]) both opens up pathways for dialogue with evangelical theology and provides a resource for those skeptical of the sundering of spirituality and theology that is a matter of course in most of the academy today. Ratzinger operates with spirituality and doctrine in an unsundered relationship because he understands the reconciled covenant relationship between God and humanity to consist in prayer, which leads him (along with Barth) to an understanding of the whole Christian life—including theology—as a work of prayer. Any account of Ratzinger's theology will need to address and assess its spiritual nature.

Ratzinger's two-volume work, *Jesus of Nazareth*, has brought the centrality of Jesus Christ in his theology to the fore. While this thesis found Ratzinger's christological concentration to be consistent throughout his work, *Jesus of Nazareth* puts paid to Volf's interpretation of Ratzinger's christology in *After Our Likeness* as incidental to his theology and the manifestation of a monist Platonism unconcerned with the

historical and particular Jesus. It is hoped that this marked emphasis on the historical, particular person of Jesus Christ will have a salutary influence upon the Radical Orthodox, who appear to have adopted Ratzinger as a patron saint, but Rowland's treatments of Ratzinger do not appear to grasp just how radically christological his theology actually is (cf. 92, n. 48 above). Ratzinger's *Jesus of Nazareth* also makes Kaes and Heim's thesis that Ratzinger's theology shifted from an early concern for history to a later concern for metaphysics even more problematic (cf. 86, n. 32 above). Rather, Ratzinger gradually developed what he describes as a "theological metaphysic"—a metaphysic of the historical covenant relationship between God and humanity, wherein God demonstrates "the self-commitment" that is "the very *being* of God" ("Covenant," 649*). Ratzinger did not move away from history to metaphysics, but endeavored to develop an account of the being of God and humanity in historical covenant, a being of "*reine Aktwirklichkeit*" ([*Dogma und Verkündigung*, 211*], cf. "Person," 444). It will be interesting to see what influence Ratzinger's constructive work will have on Roman Catholic theology because his theology seems too speculative for the traditionalists but also too traditional for those interested in reconstructing Roman Catholic theology.

II.C. Zizioulas Studies

Zizioulas is often read as "one of those mischievous philosophers of existence" disguised as a theologian, a despiser of creation, an obscurantist, or having anemic or non-existent understandings of doctrines that were not the subject of the essays collected in *Being as Communion* (a criticism that is the fate of many "irregular" theologians).¹⁰ By using Zizioulas's lucid *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics* as an interpretive framework (rather than the more difficult and topical *Being as Communion*) and drawing on all of his published work, this thesis has offered a reading of his theology that mitigates the latter three accusations. The first accusation is the most difficult to refute,

10. The quote comes from John Webster's discussion of *Fides et Ratio* ("A Reply to Tom Weinandy," 237), and is not directed explicitly at Zizioulas. Barth theology like his *Church Dogmatics* project as "regular" and occasional or topical pieces as "irregular" theology (cf. *CD* I/1, 316-320).

because Zizioulas undoubtedly draws on existentialism. In particular, his emphasis that what happened in Jesus Christ requires Christians to identify *life* and *being* result in an existentialist tone throughout his work. Yet, there is a massive difference between explaining the Gospel in existentialist terms and proclaiming an existentialist gospel, between affirming the existential dimension of the Gospel and affirming the gospel of existentialism. In researching this thesis, I ventured the former as an interpretive hypothesis and found it to be much more plausible across the breadth of Zizioulas's work. In light of this judgment, Zizioulas's theology was presented as just that, *theologia* and not the *mixophilosophicotheologia*—especially existentialism disguised as theology—Barth warned his students against (*ET*, xiii).

It is possible to interpret Zizioulas as a despiser of creation only if one works with a very limited sample of his written work (for instance, only *Being as Communion*) and an ignorance of his ministry as Metropolitan of Pergamon. Surely no one familiar with the Symposia on Religion, Science, and the Environment organized by Zizioulas (cf. <http://www.rsesymposia.org/>) and his articles on the *why* and *how* of Christian care for creation would not accuse him of despising creation or holding it to be evil? Related to this criticism is the interpretation of Zizioulas's theology as denying personhood to those outside the church. While Zizioulas himself could be more clear on this issue, chapter 4 above explained that the logic of his argument affirms the personhood of all humans—even if it does not provide a clear treatment of the problems posed by the absurdity of a dying person, one who has rejected relationship with God and continues to live only through God's gracious continuation of that relationship.

Finally, I hope that the treatment of the content and logic of Zizioulas's teaching regarding the Father as *aitia* will put an end to criticisms of Zizioulas as holding that the Father exists apart (logically or temporally) from the Son and the Holy Spirit. Perhaps some of this criticism stems from an ignorance of the Eastern Orthodox tradition in which Zizioulas stands. If that were the only reason for this criticism, it could have been answered much more succinctly by way of brief historical

note. However, as this criticism is also advanced by theologians who have been around the ecumenical block, it received a much more detailed response.¹¹ Moreover, the response to this criticism provided an excellent opportunity to address key points of contact between Zizioulas and Ratzinger and Barth: the centrality of the love of God, the decision that founds God’s economic action, and the taxis in the Trinity—affirmed by all three theologians, but with very different implications for their understanding of the ordering of specifically ecclesiastical (and more generally human) relationships.

III. Prayer as Participation

Before concluding this thesis, we will turn our attention briefly to how Barth, Ratzinger, and Zizioulas understand the relationship between human transformation and participation in God. This topic calls for special attention not only because of its importance in the work of these three theologians, but also because it has received a good deal of ink recently, in large part due to the frequent linkage between participation and *theosis*, or deification.¹² This mention of deification might appear to end our trilogy, because Barth explicitly rejects deification as an appropriate term for human transformation—unlike Ratzinger and Zizioulas. Yet, theological dialogue is not a matter of merely words, but of the realities they express, or in the words of Bernard of Clairvaux often quoted by Barth, “Non sermoni res, sed rei sermo subjectus est” (*De Trin.* 4—e.g., *ET*, 90; and *CD* I/1, 354 and 367). For instance, while Barth denies the propriety of the language of “deification” used by Ratzinger and Zizioulas to describe human participation in the life that God lives (unthreatened by death), Barth affirms the reality of this participation (cf. the quote at n. 21 on 21 above). Conversely, Roger

11. Surprising though it may be, none other than Thomas Weinandy made the following comments: “by stating that the one God is the Father or that the Father is the one God the impression is given that there is first the one God existing as Father and then subsequently, after the Father freely causes the Son and the Spirit to exist, the Trinity.... At times the impression is given that the one God does solely exist as Father prior to the existence of the Son and the Holy Spirit since to speak of the Father freely choosing and so causing the Son and Holy Spirit to exist seems to imply a period of ‘paternal’ deliberation” (410).

12. Cf. Christensen and Wittlung’s “Introduction” to *Partakers of the Divine Nature: The History and Development of Deification in the Christian Traditions*, where they treat both *theosis* and *participation* as part of one conceptual family (11, etc).

Olson’s claim that “deification” can only mean participation in the divine energies—and necessarily presupposes the Palamite distinction between the divine essence and energies—means that neither Barth, Ratzinger, nor Zizioulas actually teach “deification,” even if the latter two apply the term to their soteriologies (“Deification in Contemporary Theology,” *passim*, e.g., 186).¹³ Nevertheless, even within this diversity of terminology and referents, it is possible to chart a group of central questions as a background against which our discussion of participation in Barth, Ratzinger and Zizioulas may proceed:

- In what does the Christian participate, and should this be described as *theosis*?
- Is participation ethical or ontological?
- Does participation depend upon or actualize a capacity (e.g., rationality)?
- Is participation sacramental-ecclesial or mystical-individual?¹⁴

III.A. Barth: Participation in the History of the Covenant

Barth puts forward a thoroughly covenantal understanding of participation. Everything revolves around “the covenant that God made with and brought to its goal for humanity, by not only establishing this covenant between himself and humanity,

13. Norman Russell’s discussion of the Greek vocabulary for deification illustrates this difficulty well, showing how the same words have often been used to describe different things and how different things have often been described with the same words—though also noting the family resemblances in Christian usage vis-à-vis pagan usage and the Jewish avoidance of this language-complex, in “Appendix 2: The Greek Vocabulary of Deification” (*The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition*, 333-344). Cf. Vladimir Kharlamov’s argument that “the concept of deification... exists in patristic theology in multiple modes that simultaneously can be present in the writing of the same author”; and that “Christian writers often preferred to employ the language of participation and communion with God rather than the language of deification. It is not uncommon to see in the same patristic author indiscriminate use of participation, communion, and deification vocabulary that is used interchangeably to relay similar ideas” (“*Theosis* in Patristic Thought,” 161-162).

14. The theme of participation (and *theosis*) has received much attention recently, both in systematic and historical theology. The questions above draw on Norman Russell (*The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition*); Michael J. Christensen and Jeffery A. Wittung, eds. (*Partakers of the Divine Nature: The History and Development of Deification in the Christian Traditions*); Stephen Finlan and Vladimir Kharlamov, eds. (*Theosis: Deification in Christian Theology*); Paul Collins (*Partaking in Divine Nature: Deification and Communion*); Adam Neder (*Participation in Christ: An Entry into Karl Barth’s Church Dogmatics*); Roger Olson (“Deification in Contemporary Theology”); and Vladimir Kharlamov (“*Theosis* in Patristic Thought”).

but also by calling and setting humanity in motion toward our own free and active participation in it” (*ChrL*, 74, cf. 20; *CD IV/2*, 558; and *CD III*, *passim*, e.g., III/4, 575). At the center of the covenant stands Jesus Christ, in whom the eternal covenant is a “completed fellowship [*vollkommenen... Gemeinschaft*],” that is, “not only unilaterally upheld but mutually established,” in such a way that “the existence of special creatures called Christians may and can and should become possible and actual” (*ChrL*, 11R [15] and 76 [121]). Thus, the completion of the covenant brings about not cessation, but participation in Christ’s covenant keeping. Jesus Christ, then, is the divine institutor and executor of the covenant, the human partner who faithfully keeps the covenant, and the divine-human who guarantees and bears witness to the covenant and thereby calls forth (the divine *vocatio*, or in Barth’s earlier language, *command*) covenant participation that corresponds to this call (faithful obedience, or in Barth’s later language, *invocatio*). Barth’s emphasis on covenant rather than deification also serves to make the whole of Scripture more obviously relevant to the discussion, whereas discussions of deification often center upon a few key texts.

Through participating in this covenant humans are able to participate in the *divine life*. Barth emphasizes that this is an ontological participation in God’s “perfect being... what created being does not have in itself,” which Barth equates with “salvation,” or “being which has a part in the being of God [*ein Sein in der Teilnahme am Sein Gottes*], from which and to which it is... a being which is hidden in God, and in that sense (distinct from God and secondary) eternal being” (*CD IV/1*, 8r [7]; cf. *CD IV/2*, 34; *CD IV/3*, 412; and *CD III/4*, 25). This “participation in the being of God” gives the human “not a divinized being but a being which is hidden in God,” and in this way both preserves the covenant as a dialogue of *invocatio-vocatio* and allows this dynamic covenant relationship to transcend (*Aufhebung*) creaturely finitude. The reconciled human remain human “for this prior end and with this prior purpose, that there may be a being distinct from [God] ordained for salvation... and that there may be an object of His redemptive grace, a partner to receive it” (*CD IV/1*, 9-10), yet as

“the new and royal man... participates in the being and life and lordship and act of God” (*CD IV/1*, 9-10 and *CD IV/2*, 3 [§64 *Leitsatz*]; cf. 269; *CD IV/1*, 435 and 437). This is a real ontological transformation, for even as only God reconciles, humans are set free to be reconciled. The *operatio* whereby humanity is established as God’s covenant partner is God’s alone, but the *co-operatio* wherein humans put their reconciled being into act is really human—and in Barth’s account real being is being-in-act.

Humanity does not have the inherent capacity for this historical participation with and in God. Barth does not hold that some feature of humanity such as rationality, openness to the divine, or relationality that capacitates humanity for this participation. No. Barth argues that our participation in God is a function of the will of God: “what unites God and humanity is that He does not will to be God without us, that He creates us rather to share with us and therefore with our being and life and act His own incomparable being and life and act” (*CD IV/1*, 7R, [5-6]). God’s “participation in our being, life and activity” is the primary outworking of this decision, but it includes within it our participation in his being, life and activity, and therefore Barth describes this primary participation as “the coming of salvation itself, the presence of the eschaton in all its fullness” (*CD IV/1*, 13r [12-13]). As the being, life and act of both God and humanity are historical, Barth tends to think of this double-dynamic of participation as “a common history” (*CD IV/1*, 7r [5-6]). Participation, then, is not a generic worldly phenomenon, but the dynamic *unio*, *communio*, and *communicatio* of this shared history, and it is for this reason that Barth “retranslates” Christology into “pure concepts of movement [*lauter Bewegungsbegriffen*]” (*CD IV/2*, 106r [118]). Important for our discussion of participation, Barth carries this “retranslation” into his teaching regarding the Christian life.

Barth locates the Christian life in the ongoing happening of this *common history* between God and humanity in Jesus Christ. This does not mean that this history is lacking—*Sie ist geschehen*—but that “in so far as it has happened as this history, the act of God, it has not ceased to be history and therefore to happen.” Thus, the Christian

confession “‘Jesus Christ lives’ means that this history happens to-day in the same way as it did yesterday—indeed, as the same history” and “when we say that Jesus Christ is in every age, we say that His history happens in every age. He is this *operatio*, this event” (CD IV/2, 107Rr [119]). Jesus Christ is the event of justification, sanctification and calling, which neither happened just once nor became a general phenomenon. Barth clarifies how this common history continues to happen by including in his Christology his treatments of the Holy Spirit’s work of gathering the Christian community in faith (§62-63), the Holy Spirit’s work of building-up the Christian community in love (§67-68), and the Holy Spirit’s sending of the Christian community in hope (§72-73)—arguing that this same Jesus, now risen and ascended, is the *totus Christus*, the head and body, Christ and church. These paragraphs show how “[t]he history [*Geschichte*] of this covenant,” that is “the integrating history [*Geschichte*] of Jesus Christ,” becomes through the work of the Holy Spirit “the [history] embracing every human life-history [*Lebensgeschichte*]” (ChrL, 74Rr [117-118]).

Barth did not finish his explanation of the outworking of this common history in the Christian life of prayer, but he did begin to show that just as Jesus Christ was born of the Holy Spirit, prayed without ceasing and gave himself totally in fulfillment of the covenant, so too Christians are born of the Holy Spirit in baptism, pray without ceasing as they ask, “Lord, teach us to pray,” and live from and toward the Lord’s Supper. Barth left a clear presentation of his understanding of this common history shared by the Christian in baptism (§75), a sketch of the common history shared by the Christian in praying the Lord’s Prayer (§76), and an indication of the common history shared in the Lord’s Supper—though I am far from confident in my ability to extrapolate much of it (Barth’s own expectations of “intelligent readers” notwithstanding [CD IV/4, ix]). With the baptism fragment, however, we see that the baptised “are passive participants in His death, not in virtue of their own baptism, but in virtue of the fact that Jesus lets himself be baptised with them and like them.” Yet, the one who is baptised “enters into... glory, not as the Christian ‘can’ participate in

Jesus' baptism, but as [the baptised's] participation in it actually becomes an event" in the power of the Holy Spirit. In this way, Barth's emphasis on the human act in his account of participation is always rooted in the divine act, and because of his ontology—being-in-act—is by no means a merely moral account of participation. Rather, through "the change which comes on man himself in the freedom of the gracious God, ...he himself is free to become what he was not and could not be before and consequently to do what he did not and could not do before" and "[e]nabled to participate not just passively but actively in God's grace as one who may and will and can be set to work too" (*CD IV/4*, 5-6*, [6]).

III.B. Ratzinger: Participation in the Being and Act of God

Like Barth, the divine-human covenant stands at the center of Ratzinger's understanding of participation. And, like Barth, Ratzinger takes it as axiomatic that this divine-human relationship arises only "from the unconditional nature of God's action," and that through this unilateral act of God the covenant assumes a "true" and "definitive two-sidedness" ("Covenant," 649 and 650). Yet, Ratzinger describes the human becoming brought about by the divine becoming flesh as "divinization" ("Covenant," 649). This willingness to describe participation in the covenant as divinization is somewhat surprising given Ratzinger's frequent criticism of humanity's idolatrous attempt at self-divinization: a way of existing "in which man tries to divinize himself, to become 'like a god' in his autonomy, independence and self-sufficiency" that "turns into a Sheol-existence, a being in nothingness, a shadow-life on the fringe of real living" (*EDEL*, 156).¹⁵ Yet, Ratzinger's understanding of humans "becoming God" involves the two-fold participation described by Barth: participation in Jesus Christ's life of prayer (the incarnate Son's dynamic historical relationship with the Father) whereby the Christian participates in the eternal life of God.

15. Such an attempt is sinful idolatry because it "refuses... 'being-with'"—the very way the true God exists from all eternity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (*EDEL*, 207).

Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the divine-human covenant wherein God becomes human and the human becomes God.¹⁶ In Jesus Christ, by the act of God, the Son's filial "[obedience] takes on flesh" and humanity becomes "Son" as "Jesus' human consciousness and will, his human soul, is taken up into that exchange, and in this way human 'praying' is able to become a participation in this filial communion with the Father" (*GJC*, 60; and *JoN*, 7). This fulfills the covenant, for Jesus does not become "a third thing" between God and humanity, but God and humanity in covenant-dialogue, so that in this sense "Christ is not mediator but immediacy" (*PCT*, 190). Again, everything on the human side of the covenant hinges upon the divine participation in humanity. Ratzinger's starkest formulation puts it this way, "God intervenes where there is a human vacuum; he starts at the point at which, from the human point of view, nothing can be done" (*DaP*, 79), for "no one can make himself a son. [A son] must be made" (*PCT*, 32 [32]). Yet, God does intervene and open up the possibility of becoming "sons" and existing in covenant with God (cf. *BPO*, 35, 41, and 92). At this point, Ratzinger's emphasis on the divine-human covenant is undermined by his appropriation of the language of "divinization," for Ratzinger describes the human who participates in the filial life of the divine Son as "God." For the moment, however, what is important is to understand how humans "become God": "participating in Jesus' prayer, entering into his form of life, that is, into his form of prayer.... saying with him 'Father' and becoming thus a child and a son or daughter of God" (*GJC*, 28). We become the children of God

by participating in the very gestures of the Son..., by letting the dialogue we are carrying on with the Father penetrate into the flesh of our daily lives... by agreeing each day to receive ourselves from him; by offering ourselves again each day to him; by giving each day to him our body as an occasion for the Word. We become God by walking after him in a motion that both comes down and goes up (*GJC*, 60-61).

In this account, the being of these "divine sons" can neither be reduced to nor divorced

16. Of course, Barth adamantly commends the less ambiguous, "comes to God" rather than "becomes God," but Barth also affirms that those who "come to God" participate in (or live) the life of God.

from ethical imitation of Christ for the covenant relation established by the act of God in Christ gives humanity a new being—and this being is a being-in-act.

Ratzinger describes this new being, being that participates in God's own being, as eternal life. In Christ, humans participate in “the existential sphere [*Existenzbereich*] of that name [Father, Son and Holy Spirit]” and “the indestructible aliveness of God [*die unzerstoerbar Lebendikeit Gottes*]” (*PCT*, 31 and 32 [32]). This hinges upon the Easter mystery of the bodily resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, which ensures that this communion is not limited to one time and place. Jesus Christ lived and died in the Spirit, but it is only through the work of the Spirit in the miracle of Easter that “[t]his communion between God and man... realized in the Person of Jesus Christ, itself becomes communicable in the Easter mystery” of his death and resurrection (*Behold*, 93). For in this mystery God has assumed humanity, brought humanity into participation “in the presence of God, which embraces all ages” (“Preface to the New Edition,” *ItC*, 29). Heaven, then, is not a place, but a way of “locating” divinized human being as “participation in this new mode of Christ's existence” (*EDEL*, 236). The relationship of dialogue, *communio*, between the Father and the Son in the Spirit continues beyond death, and through the sacraments Christians participate in this “heavenly” prayer, this heavenly liturgy.

As the sacraments are ecclesial to the core, this raises yet another location of participation in Ratzinger's thought: participation in the Church. This “liturgical participation” is “at its most profound, a participatio Dei, a participation in God and hence in life and freedom (*FoF*, 69-70).¹⁷ Baptism begins the Christian's participation in this life, not through providing a new nature or capacities, but by initiating “a participation in Jesus' ascension as well as his resurrection” so that the one baptized, “as such and on that account, is already included in the ascension and lives his hidden (his most individual) life there, in the elevated Lord” (*DZ*, 80). Baptism begins participation in this mysterious Easter life, but does not make it a possession of the

17. This “freedom is participation, not just in some social structure, but in Being itself” (“Conscience,” 86, cf. *CEP*, 198).

baptized. Christians, then, must continually receive this life together in the Eucharist—“our participation in the Easter mystery”—which is why Ratzinger holds the Eucharist to be “necessary for salvation.” Moreover, as the Eucharist “is constitutive of the Church, the Body of Christ,” Ratzinger holds that “[t]he necessity of the Eucharist is identical with the necessity of the Church and vice versa” (*BPO*, 93). Jesus Christ, in his divine mode of being, shares himself with his body in the Eucharist, thereby giving Christians a share in this mode of being (*MROC*, 62). In receiving the eucharistic communion, Christians receive “a new manner of bodiliness and of being-human pervaded by God’s own being, ...and an anticipation of the new life in God and with God” (*JoN*, 270). Ratzinger offers an account of participation in God that attempts to transcend the usual dichotomies of ethical vs. ontological and sacramental-ecclesial vs. individual, but several ambiguities make it difficult to determine whether Ratzinger adequately distinguishes the divine and human and preserves the personal identity of those who participate in God.

In the first instance, while Ratzinger makes it clear that humans participate in a divine “mode of being,” the exact mode is ambiguous. Do Christians participate in the filial mode of the Son, and thereby share in Jesus’ relationship with god” (*PCT*, 32), as implied in most of Ratzinger’s work, or are Christians in prayer “entering into the mode of being of the Holy Spirit” (“Holy Spirit,” 327); or perhaps something more generic, such as “heaven’s mode of existence” (*SL*, 21)? Such ambiguity makes it difficult to apply Ratzinger’s relational ontology and understanding of personhood. If “sons” exist in the mode of the Spirit, then how are they “sons” any longer, for it is participation in the mode of the Son that makes them “sons.” Second, there is an ambiguity in Ratzinger’s understanding of the baptized’s union with Christ that undercuts Ratzinger’s emphasis on God’s eternal life being given to particular persons. For what happens to the particular person if, “in the last analysis, mankind is ‘one man’” (*ItC*, 312) and that “man... in the end is Jesus Christ” (*FaF*, 88). This is not to deny a real oneness between Christ and believers (cf. Gal. 3:28), but to call into

question Ratzinger's construal of this unity. Given Ratzinger's emphasis on being-in-act, it is especially problematic when Ratzinger writes that in this union, "ultimately, the difference between the *actio Christi* and our own action is done away with" (*SL*, 174). Without further clarification, it appears that Ratzinger really understands participation as a "melting" or "merging" (cf. 117, n. 102 above), which is difficult to reconcile (to say the least), with "the preservation of personal identity" (Kharlamov, 160) that ought to mark Christian accounts of participation in God.

This ambiguity regarding the particularity of human persons who participate in God exacerbates the ambiguity regarding the divine-human distinction this participation. This occurs because Ratzinger presents the church's sacramental activity as a union of divine and human operation in which the distinction disappears: participation in the sacraments is "participation in... that which the Lord himself and only he can do," to the extent that, "[t]here is only one action, which is at the same time his and ours" (*SL*, 174).¹⁸ On the one hand, Ratzinger's frequent emphasis on the radical precedence of the divine action, that God does what humans cannot do, mitigates this concern, for these frequent statement underline the distinction between God and humanity. Yet, without further specification, "participation in... that which the Lord himself and only he can do" to the extent that "[t]here is only one action" implies that an erasure of the distinction between God and humanity right at the point where it has been strongest in Ratzinger's writings.

These ambiguities allow us to see the reason for Barth's refusal of the term "divinization," some benefits of his emphasis on the distinction between God (cf. *CD* IV/1) and humanity (cf. *CD* IV/2)—even as they are united in the God-human, Jesus Christ (cf. *CD* IV/3)—and how his understanding of co-operation differs from

18. This ambiguity is especially acute in *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, where Ratzinger describes Christian participation in "[t]he real 'action' in the liturgy... the action of God himself" in which "God himself acts and does what is essential" (172–73). Ratzinger's statement that "there is, on the one side, the one God; on the other, Christ, together with whom we, too, are one" (*PCT*, 270) does not remedy the situation, for in order for it to be a solution it would require that we place Christ exclusively on our side of the divine-human distinction—exactly what Ratzinger's Christology of the "unmediated mediator" renders impossible.

Ratzinger's (cf. *CD IV/4*). Barth is able to say that Christians participate in the divine life, the divine Lordship, and even the Son's mode of being in prayer, but that they participate in this as humans. Ratzinger says very similar things about Christian participation in God, but with his emphasis on "becoming God," it is difficult to understand how humanity remains a distinct covenant partner vis-à-vis God. Furthermore, whereas Barth describes human co-operation with God as an *operatio* that follows from and corresponds to the divine *operatio*, Ratzinger often speaks of humans as co-operators in the very work of God—further clouding the already somewhat murky distinction between God and humanity. For these reasons, Barth's account of our participation in God is to be preferred—notwithstanding the strengths of Ratzinger's account of human transformation mentioned above that is at points more promising than Barth's.

III.C. Zizioulas: Participation in the Divine Communion

Very similar to Ratzinger in many ways, Zizioulas holds that Christians participate in the divine communion by coming to share in Jesus Christ's filial relationship to the Father in the Spirit. Like Ratzinger, Zizioulas argues this participation means "becoming God" in the sense of "[l]iving... according to the image of God... in the way God exists, i.e., as an image of God's personhood" (*C&O*, 165-66). Christians participate "not in the nature or substance of God, but in His personal existence" and the goal of this participation—the "fulfillment of man's full communion with God" or "salvation"—"is that the personal life which is realised in God should also be realized on the level of human existence" (*BaC*, 50; and *C&O*, 237). As discussed above, this "elevation of human nature to the glory and life of God by 'participation'" in the communion that God *is* comes about because "the Father loves and wills that creation come into communion with God" (*C&O*, 229, n. 57; and *LCD*, 135-136—cf. *BaC*, 211; and *C&O*, 43). Zizioulas, however, carefully hedges his claim that humans "become God" through this participation and thereby avoids some of the ambiguity of Ratzinger's account.

At a rhetorical level, Zizioulas maintains the divine-human distinction simply through emphasizing that, even in “becoming God,” the human remains human, albeit a human that lives the life that God lives. At the conceptual level, Zizioulas relies upon a distinction between participation and communion. Only God exists as communion, humans exist as they participate in the divine communion. Simply gathering some human persons into relation does not mean that they then exist as communion. Rather, humans can only exist as communion through participation in God—a soteriological point often overlooked by Volf and others who draw on Zizioulas to ground their understanding of the church as an image of the Trinity. Such proposals do not ask the “crucial question”: “in what way does ‘participation’ differ from ‘communion?’” (*BaC*, 93). The answer hinges on the created-uncreated dialectic treated earlier: God exists *a se* while humans exist contingently, and therefore the divine persons and human persons cannot be treated as two existing entities that must somehow be related. Humans exist through participation in God’s communion while God exists simply as communion. Another way of describe this situation is that humans, unlike God, do not exist eternally by nature (for the whole dense discussion, cf. *BaC*, 93-96). Being is communion, but not just any communion, the communion between Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Zizioulas’ account of deification not only makes clear the (eternal) difference between God and humanity, but also attends to the ongoing particularity of the deified human person. For this is the very meaning of *theosis*: human *apo-stasis* and *dia-stasis* (separateness and individuality) become *ek-stasis* (communion, relatedness) and *hypo-stasis* (particularity, uniqueness), and thereby our fear of *dia-phora* (difference, otherness) becomes *ana-phora* (reference or movement towards outside creation), that is, we become “particular living beings” (*C&O*, 229-230, n. 33). Persons can be united (no distance) without merging or melting into one another (no difference). This distinction, largely absent from Ratzinger’s account, allows Zizioulas to claim that Christ and the Church are one, “All separation between Christology and ecclesiology vanishes in the

Spirit,” and even, “There is no distance between Christ and his body in the Eucharist” (*BaC*, 111—cf. “Early Church,” 134; and *LCD*, 117 and 118), without erasing the difference between Christ and Church or divine and human.

One of the strengths of all three accounts of participation in God is the emphasis on adoption and the Christian life as the life of “sons in the Son.” It appears that this emphasis on “becoming sons” was a key factor in Zizioulas’s choice to think through salvation in terms of persons rather than energies. Zizioulas does not deny the importance of the divine energies (e.g., divine glory, light, etc.) but argues that in the economy of salvation “God gives us not simply his energies, but mainly his Son and his Spirit (Jn. 3:16, 34; Rom. 5:5; 1 Thess. 4:8; 1 Jn. 3:24; 4:9; etc.), with whom and in whom we know the Father (Jn. 14:7; 17:3) through filiation (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6; etc.)” (*CeO*, 138-139, n. 80; cf. *LCD*, 70).¹⁹ As seen above, this also takes the focus off of the divine nature—allowing Zizioulas to claim the mantle of the apophatic tradition with regard to the divine essence. Christians need not look behind that dynamic relationship of Father and Son in the Spirit to know God truly. Rather, “[t]he Christian approach to God as Father originates exclusively from this relationship of the Son to the Father, and the right that the Son bestows on us to address God as Father with him” (*LCD*, 26, cf. 70, again). Zizioulas also takes an apophatic approach to human nature, which is elevated but not radically altered, for its key characteristic is its dependence upon God: “without God, there is no creature called man” (*LCD*, 115). Without being the essence or a capacity of humankind, participation is basic to human being for it is the very way in which humankind lives—and lives the life of God.

Again, like Ratzinger, Zizioulas holds human participation in God to be sacramental and ecclesial moreso than mystical and individual. So, like Ratzinger, Zizioulas holds that “[t]here is no participation in the communion of God outside the Church, because there is no Church without Christ and no Christ without his Church. Man ultimately exists only within Christ.” Yet, again, Zizioulas emphasizes the

19. Zizioulas claims to be a true disciple of Palamas here, for Palamas “always understands the divine energies as given to us in a hypostatic, i.e., personal, form.”

particular human person is established through being united with Christ, not abolished: “Christ is the whole territory within which each human being can be distinctly himself or herself, and can receive and give their otherness among all other created persons (*LCD*, 116). Zizioulas, however, brings a new element into play: the participation of deified humanity in creation. The human person does not come to the Eucharist as an isolated individual, but as a bearer of creation (in the body and in the offering). And Eucharist does not divide and separate the human person from creation, but enables them to bring the divine life to the rest of creation and share it with them. Indeed, “because he has a body, man participates in the materiality of creation and so he is able to bring about this relationship of the created with the uncreated”—thereby fulfilling God’s purposes for the world, which was created :so it would participate in his own glorious life” (*LCD*, 94 and 105).²⁰

IV. Conclusion

This examination of human transformation in the thought of Karl Barth, Joseph Ratzinger, and John Zizioulas has not found perfect unanimity. These three theologians, however, share an understanding of the prayer of the children of God as the goal of human transformation and God’s act in Jesus Christ—founded upon the divine decision to be God *for us*—as the basis of human transformation. While serious differences are evident with regard to how this transformation occurs, and while these differences can be traced back to disagreements regarding the basis and goal of human transformation, the agreement that prayer is both *how* humans are transformed into the children of God and the ultimate *goal* of that transformation should not be discounted.

20. In this way “[a]ll created reality is brought into direct relationship with God from whom and through whom it takes its life and will always return thanksgiving and praise to him. The human creature will freely participate in the life of the persons of God and so all creation will be saved in and through man in Christ” (*LCD*, 119). Even though Ratzinger says, “the goal of worship and the goal of creation as a whole are one and the same—divinization, a world of freedom and love” (*SL*, 28), he also tends to think of a sacrament or a prayer in general as something that “draws man out of his own material and transitory world and sweeps him up into the being of God” (“Covenant,” 642)—rather different than Zizioulas’s emphasis on the Eucharist sending humans back into the material, transitory world.

Far from a peripheral matter, this concord stands at the very heart of the faith, defining both the form and content of an answer to the question of what it means to be truly human, which is inseparable from the question of God's purposes for creation and the ways he accomplishes those purposes—the very question of the identity of God. Prayer, then, is not a “spiritual” matter only vaguely related to Christian doctrine, but the active-being-in-relation that is the *basis* and *goal* of our transformation into the children of God, as well as *how* this transformation occurs. On the one hand, Jesus Christ objectively transformed humanity through his prayer to the Father in the Spirit and this transformation becomes subjective (a common history, an actual relationship) in the Christian's participation in Jesus Christ's prayer in the Spirit. On the other hand, the risen and ascended Jesus Christ continues to have his being in prayer, which indicates that prayer is the dynamic *eschaton* of humanity. Thus, prayer is both the *end* and the *beginning* for humanity. The “last thing” for humanity will not be a point at which we arrive, but an event of asking and receiving that is our very life. In this two-fold sense, then, our being is and ever will be *in becoming*. We are becoming as we are transformed into sons in the Son—leaving behind the sinful body of death and coming into the inheritance of the children of God. This transformation, however, opens up a new way of being in which we exist as God exists. In the words of Jüngel, “If God's being is in becoming, then for us, too, more is possible” (*God's Being is in Becoming*, 139). Prayer is the place of this possibility, this *becoming*, where human being is *located* in the double dynamic of asking and thanksgiving that corresponds to the divine Word of salvation. In such prayer, God not only *transforms* humanity, but also sets humans free to *be transformed*.

APPENDIX A
JOHN ZIZIOULAS
A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

There are several excellent sources of biographical information on Karl Barth and Joseph Ratzinger, but nothing comparable exists for John Zizioulas.¹ Therefore, while nothing more than a sketch, the following information may prove useful to readers of this thesis. Zizioulas was born 10 January 1931 in the mountain village of Kataphygion, Macedonia (Greece). Soon after the Greek Civil War, he commenced university studies, beginning at the University of Thessaloniki (1950-1952) and finishing at the University of Athens (1952-1954). Before beginning graduate studies at Harvard University in 1955, he spent time at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute near Geneva. Except for two years serving in the Greek military, Zizioulas spent the next ten years in the United States. While at Harvard, his research was directed by George Williams, but also on faculty were Paul Tillich and, most importantly, Georges Florovsky (at Harvard from 1956-1964), whom Zizioulas calls “the great Orthodox theologian of last century,” and describes as “my teacher” who “exercised a profound influence on my thought” (*C&O*, xiv). Zizioulas also spent time at the Dumbarton Oaks Institute for Byzantine Studies (Washington, D.C.), Institute of the Holy Cross (Brookline, Massachusetts), where he taught from 1963-1964, and St. Vladimir’s Seminary (Crestwood, New York), where he encountered Alexander Schmemmann and John Meyendorff, who introduced him to the work of Nicholas Afanasiev.

1. While a proper biography has yet to be written on Barth, the work of Busch (*Karl Barth: His Life from Letters and Autobiographical Texts*) is a must-read, but see also Webster’s brief biographical synopsis (*Barth*, 1–19). Since Ratzinger’s election to the papacy, biographies have proliferated, see especially Rupert Shortt (*Benedict XVI: Commander of the Faith*) and John Allen’s brief survey (“Who is Joseph Ratzinger?”). Michel Stavrou provides some biographical details for Zizioulas (“Éloge du métropolitain Jean (Zizioulas) de Pergame”), but what follows has been cobbled together mostly from prefaces and off-hand remarks in Zizioulas’s own writings.

Zizioulas returned to the University of Athens in 1965 to pursue his Ph.D. in Church History under G erasime Konidaris. In February of 1966, Zizioulas successfully defended his Ph.D. thesis, later published as *Eucharist, Bishop, Church: The Unity of the Church in the Divine Eucharist and the Bishop During the First Three Centuries*. Zizioulas then served in the Secretariat of Faith and Order in the World Council of Churches from 1967-1970, before becoming Lecturer in Patristics at the University of Edinburgh from 1970-1973 (where T.F. Torrance was Professor of Christian Dogmatics).² After that, Zizioulas was appointed Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of Glasgow, where he served until he was elected Metropolitan of Pergamon on 26 June 1986. He also lectured at the University of Thessaloniki from 1984, and served as Visiting Professor at the University of Rome (1984), University of Geneva (1985), and King’s College, London (1984 until the sudden death of his esteemed colleague, Colin Gunton, in 2003).³ Zizioulas’s academic stature has been recognized by honorary doctorates from the Faculty of Theology at the Catholic Institute of Paris (1990), the University of Belgrade (1991), and the St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute, Paris (2008), as well as by his election to the Academy of Athens (1993)—and to its Presidency (for 2002). His academic work, however, has always been a facet of his service to the Orthodox Church and intended to further both ecumenical dialogue and engagement with the world, that is to say, complimentary to his service to the Ecumenical Patriarchate Central Committee (from 1975), his participation in—including chairing—the official Orthodox-Anglican and Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogues, and his work with the *Religion, Science, and the Environment* symposia.⁴

2. For some of Zizioulas’s reflections on his time in the Secretariat and his subsequent work with the Commission on Faith and Order, see (“Faith and Order: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow”).

3. Zizioulas’s *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics*, were initially nothing more than translations of notes from Zizioulas’s theology lectures in Thessaloniki—many thanks are due Douglas Knight for his editorial work.

4. See the lectures he delivered at these symposia (“Towards an Environmental Ethic”; and “Humanity and Nature: Learning from the Indigenous”), available online at <http://www.rsesymposia.org>.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allen, John. "Who is Joseph Ratzinger?" In *The Rise of Benedict XVI: The Inside Story of How the Pope Was Elected and Where He Will Take the Catholic Church*. In *The Rise of Benedict XVI*, 143-64. New York: Image Books, 2005.
- Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1997.
- Balthasar, Hans Urs von. *The Theology of Karl Barth*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992.
- Barnes, Michel René. "Augustine in Contemporary Trinitarian Theology." *Theological Studies* 56 (1995): 237-50.
- Barth, Karl. *Ad Limina Apostolorum*. Translated by Keith R. Crim. Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1969.
- . *Call for God: New Sermons from Basel Prison*. Translated by A.T. Mackay. London: SCM, 1967.
- . *Christ and Adam: Man and Humanity in Romans 5*. Translated by T. A. Smail. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004 reprint.
- . *The Christian Life Church Dogmatics Volume IV, Part 4—Lecture Fragments*. Edited by Hans-Anton Drewes and Eberhard Jüngel. Translated by G.W. Bromiley. London: T & T Clark, 1981.
- . *Church Dogmatics*. 4 vols. in 13 parts. Translation edited by T.F. Torrance and G.W. Bromiley. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1956–1996.
- . *Deliverance to the Captives*. Translated by Marguerite Wieser. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961.
- . *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction*. Translated by Grover Foley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.
- . "Extra Nos - Pro Nobis - In Nobis." Translated by George Hunsinger. *The Thomist* 50 (1986): 498-511.
- . *Final Testimonies*. Edited by Eberhard Busch. Translated by G.W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977.
- . *How I Changed My Mind*. Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1969.
- . *The Humanity of God*. In *The Humanity of God*. Translated by John Newton Thomas and Thomas Weiser. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1968.
- . *Letters 1961-1968*. Edited by Jürgen Fangmeier and Hinrich Stoevesandt. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981.
- . *Prayer*. 50th Anniversary ed. Translated by W.L. Jenkins. Louisville: WJK, 2002.

- . *Table Talk*. Translated by John Godsey. Richmond: John Knox, 1963.
- . *The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism*, 1948.
- . *The Word of God and the Word of Man*. Translated by Douglas Horton. London: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.
- Bathrellos, Demetrios. "Church, Eucharist, Bishop: The Early Church in the Ecclesiology of John Zizioulas." In *The Theology of John Zizioulas*, edited by Douglas H. Knight, 133-45. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007.
- Blomberg, Craig. "Review." *The Denver Journal* 10 (7 August 2007). Available at: <http://www.denverseminary.edu/article/jesus-of-nazareth-from-the-baptism-in-the-jordan-to-the-transfiguration/>.
- Boulton, Matthew. "'We Pray By His Mouth': Karl Barth, Erving Goffman, and a Theology of Invocation." *Modern Theology* 17, no. 1 (1967-83 2001).
- Brouwer, R.H.R. "The Conversation Between Karl Barth and Amandus Polanus on the Question of the Reality of Human Speaking of the Simplicity and the Multiplicity in God." In *The Reality of Faith in Theology: Studies on Karl Barth—Princeton-Kampen Consultation 2005*, edited by Bruce McCormack and Gerrit Neven, 51-110. New York: Peter Lang, 2007.
- Brown, Alan. "On the Criticism of *Being as Communion* in Anglophone Orthodox Theology." In *The Theology of John Zizioulas*, edited by Douglas H. Knight, 35-78. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007.
- Busch, Eberhard. "Introduction." In *Karl Barth in Re-View*, edited by Martin Rumscheidt, x-xxviii. Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1981.
- . *Karl Barth & the Pietists: The Young Karl Barth's Critique of Pietism and Its Response*. Translated by Daniel W. Bloesch. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004.
- . *Karl Barth: His Life from Letters and Autobiographical Texts*. 2nd revised. Translated by John Bowden. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976.
- Canty, Aaron. "Bonaventurian Resonances in Benedict XVI's Theology of Revelation." *Nova et Vetera* 5, no. 2 (2007): 249-66.
- Christensen, Michael and Jeffery Wittlung, eds. *Partakers of the Divine Nature: The History and Development of Deification in the Christian Traditions*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Chryssavgis, John. "Piety—Pietism: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective." *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 32, no. 2 (1987): 143-51.
- . "Review, *Communion & Otherness: Further Studies on Personhood and the Church*." *Theology Today* 64, no. 4 (January 2008): 510-12.
- Collins, Paul M. "Authority and Ecumenism." In *The Theology of John Zizioulas*, edited by Douglas H. Knight, 147-58. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007.

- . *Partaking in the Divine Nature: Deification and Communion*. London: T & T Clark, 2010.
- . *Trinitarian Theology West and East: Karl Barth, the Cappadocian Fathers and John Zizioulas*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Constantelos, Demetrios J. "The Zoe Movement in Greece." *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 3 (1959): 11-25.
- Cortez, Marc. "What Does It Mean to Call Karl Barth a 'Christocentric' Theologian?" *Scottish Journal of Theology* 127, no. 143 (2007): 127-43.
- Cox, Harvey Gallagher. *The Silencing of Leonardo Boff: The Vatican and the Future of World Christianity*. Oak Park, Ill.: Meyer-Stone Books, 1988.
- Cumin, Paul. "Looking for Personal Space in the Theology of John Zizioulas." *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 8, no. 4 (October 2006): 356-70.
- Daly, Robert. *Sacrifice Unveiled: The True Meaning of Christian Sacrifice*. New York: Continuum, 2009.
- Del Colle, Ralph. "'Person' and 'Being' in John Zizioulas' Trinitarian Theology: Conversations with Thomas Torrance and Thomas Aquinas." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 54, no. 1 (2001): 70-86.
- DeVries, Dawn. "Does Faith Save? Calvin, Schleiermacher and Barth on the Nature of Faith." In *The Reality of Faith in Theology: Studies on Karl Barth—Princeton-Kampen Consultation 2005*, edited by Bruce McCormack and Gerrit Neven, 163-90. New York: Peter Lang, 2007.
- Dickenson, Charles. "Church Dogmatics IV/4." In *Karl Barth in Re-View*, edited by Martin Rumscheidt, 43-54. Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1981.
- Eitel, Adam. "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ: Karl Barth and the Historicization of God's Being." *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 10, no. 1 (January 2008): 36-53.
- Farrow, Douglas. "Person and Nature: A Critique of the Necessity-Freedom Dialectic in John Zizioulas." In *The Person of Christ*, 87-104. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2005.
- Fermer, Richard M. "The Limits of Trinitarian Theology as a Methodological Paradigm: 'Between the Trinity and Hell There Lies no Other Choice' (Vladimir Lossky)." *Neue Zeitschrift Für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 41, no. 2 (1999): 158-86.
- Fraine, J. de. *Adam et son linage: Etudes sur la "personnalité corporative" dans la Bible*. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1959.
- Franke, John R. *Barth for Armchair Theologians*. Louisville: WJK, 2005.

- Groppe, Elizabeth T. "Creation *Ex Nihilo* and *Ex Amore*: Ontological Freedom in the Theologies of John Zizioulas and Catherine Mowry Lacugna." *Modern Theology* 21, no. 3 (2005): 463-96.
- Gunton, Colin. "Persons and Particularity." In *The Theology of John Zizioulas*, edited by Douglas H. Knight, 97-107. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007.
- Hahn, Scott. *Covenant and Communion: The Biblical Theology of Pope Benedict XVI*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2009.
- . "The Authority of Mystery: The Biblical Theology of Benedict XVI." *Letter & Spirit* 2 (2006): 97-140.
- Halleux, André de. "'Hypostase' et 'Personne' dans la formation du dogme trinitaire (ca. 375-81)." *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 79 (1984): 313-69.
- . "Personalisme ou essentialisme trinitaire chez les Pères capadociens? Une mauvaise controverse." *Revue Théologique de Louvain* 17 (1986): 129-55; 265-92.
- Hankey, Wayne. "Theoria Versus Poesis: Neoplatonism and Trinitarian Difference in Aquinas, John Milbank, Jean-Luc Marion and John Zizioulas." *Modern Theology* 15 (October 1999): 387-415.
- Harran, Marilyn J. *Luther on Conversion: The Early Years*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983.
- Hays, Richard B. "Benedict and the Biblical Jesus." *First Things*, no. 175 (August/September 2007): 49-53.
- Healy, Nicholas M. "Karl Barth's Ecclesiology Reconsidered." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 57, no. 3 (2004): 287-99.
- Heim, Maximilian Heinrich. *Joseph Ratzinger: Life in the Church and Living Theology (Fundamentals of Ecclesiology with Reference to Lumen Gentium)*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2007.
- Heim, S. Mark. *Saved from Sacrifice: A Theology of the Cross*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.
- Hemming, Laurence Paul. *Benedict XVI "Fellow Worker for the Truth": An Introduction to His Life and Thought*. London: Burns & Oates, 2005.
- Hendry, George. "Review." *Theology Today* 39, no. 1 (1982): 74-75.
- Hunsinger, George. "Baptism and the Soteriology of Forgiveness." *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 2, no. 3 (2000): 247-69.
- . *Disruptive Grace: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.
- . "Election and the Trinity: Twenty-Five Theses on the Theology of Karl Barth." *Modern Theology* 24, no. 2 (Apr 2008): 179-98.

- . “Gerrit Neven on Karl Barth: A Brief Reflection.” In *The Reality of Faith in Theology: Studies on Karl Barth—Princeton-Kampen Consultation 2005*, edited by Bruce McCormack and Gerrit Neven, 243-46. New York: Peter Lang, 2007.
- . *How to Read Karl Barth: The Shape of His Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Jehle, Frank. *Ever Against the Stream: The Politics of Karl Barth 1906-1968*. Translated by Richard and Martha Burnett. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.
- Jenson, Robert. “You Wonder Where the Spirit Went.” *Pro Ecclesia* II, no. 3 (1993): 296-304.
- Johnson, A.R. *The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1961.
- Jones, Paul D. *The Humanity of Christ: Christology in Karl Barth’s Church Dogmatics*. London: T & T Clark, 2008.
- Jüngel, Eberhard. *God’s Being Is in Becoming: The Trinitarian Being of God in the Theology of Karl Barth*. Translated by John Webster. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.
- . *Karl Barth: A Theological Legacy*. Translated by Garrett E. Paul. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986.
- . *Theological Essays*. Translated by J.B. Webster. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989.
- Kasper, Walter. “Theorie und Praxis innerhalb einer theologia crucis. Antwort auf J. Ratzingers, Glaube, Geschichte und Philosophie.” *Hochland* 62 (1970): 152-57.
- Kharlamov, Vladimir and Finlan, Stephen, eds. *Theōsis: Deification in Christian Theology*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2006.
- Kharlamov, Vladimir. “Theosis in Patristic Thought.” *Theology Today* (65): 158-168.
- Kerr, Fergus. “The Cardinal and Post-Conciliar Britain.” *New Blackfriars* 66, no. 780 (June 1985): 299-308.
- . “Ratzinger’s Hick.” *New Blackfriars* 78, no. 914 (March 1997): 154-55.
- . “Ratzinger’s Thomism.” *New Blackfriars* 89, no. 1022 (July 2008): 367-68.
- . *Twentieth Century Catholic Theology*. London: Blackwell’s, 2006.
- Knight, Douglas H., ed. “Introduction.” In *The Theology of John Zizioulas*, 1-14. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007.
- , ed. “The Spirit and Persons in the Liturgy.” In *The Theology of John Zizioulas*, 183-96. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007.
- Komonchak, Joseph A. “The Church in Crisis: Pope Benedict’s Theological Vision.” *Commonweal*, 3 June 2005, 10-14.

- LaCugna, Catherine Mowry. *God For Us: The Trinity and the Christian Life*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991.
- Lash, Nicholas. "Are We Born and Do We Die?" *New Blackfriars* 90, no. 1028 (2009): 403-12.
- Lewis, Alan E. "The Burial of God: Rupture and Resumption as the Story of Salvation." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 40 (1987): 335-62.
- Loudovikos, Nicholas. "Christian Life and Institutional Church." In *The Theology of John Zizioulas*, edited by Douglas H. Knight, 125-32. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007.
- Lubac, Henri de. *Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1988.
- . *The Christian Faith: An Essay on the Structure of the Apostle's Creed*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1986.
- . *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*. Translated by Edith M. Riley. New York: Sheed & Ward, 1950.
- Ludlow, Morwenna. *Gregory of Nyssa, Ancient and (Post)Modern*. Oxford: OUP, 2007.
- McCall, Tom. "Holy Love and Divine Aseity in the Theology of John Zizioulas." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 61, no. 2 (2008): 191-205.
- McCormack, Bruce. "The Being of Holy Scripture is in Becoming: Karl Barth in Conversation with American Evangelical Criticism." In *Evangelicals & Scripture: Tradition, Authority and Hermeneutics*, edited by Vincent E. Bacote, Laura C. Miguélez, and Dennis Okholm, 55-75. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP, 2004.
- . "Karl Barth's Christology as a Resource for a Reformed Version of Kenoticism." *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 8, no. 3 (July 2006): 243-51.
- . *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development 1909-1936*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.
- . "The Ontological Presuppositions of Barth's Doctrine of the Atonement." In *The Glory of the Atonement: Biblical, Historical and Practical Perspectives*, edited by Frank A. James, III and Charles E Hill, 346-66. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004.
- . *Orthodox and Modern: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.
- McDowell, John C. "'Openness Ot the World': Karl Barth's Evangelical Theology of Christ as the Prayer-Er." *Modern Theology* 25, no. 2 (April 2009): 254-83.
- McGuckin, Terence. "The Eschatology of the Cross." *New Blackfriars* 75, no. 884 (July 1994): 364-67.

- McPartlan, Paul. *The Eucharist Makes the Church: Henri de Lubac and John Zizioulas in Dialogue*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993.
- Makrides, Vasilios N. "The Brotherhoods of Theologians in Contemporary Greece." *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 33 (1988): 167-87.
- Mangina, Joseph. *Karl Barth on the Christian Life: The Practical Knowledge of God*. New York: Peter Lang, 2001.
- Mangina, Joseph L. *Karl Barth: Theologian of Christian Witness*. Great Theologians. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004.
- Manoussakis, John Panteleimon. "The Anarchic Principle of Christian Eschatology in the Eucharistic Tradition of the Eastern Church." *Harvard Theological Review* 100, no. 1 (2007): 29-46.
- Meredith, Antony. "Review of Paul Collin's *Trinitarian Theology, West and East: Karl Barth, Cappadocian Fathers, and John Zizioulas*." *Journal of Theological Studies* 54, no. 1 (April 2003): 439-40.
- Migliore, Daniel L. "Freedom to Pray: Karl Barth's Theology of Prayer." In *Prayer*, 95-113. Louisville: WJK, 2002.
- Molnar, Paul D. *Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity: In Dialogue with Karl Barth and Contemporary Theology*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2002.
- Murphy, Francesca Aran. "De Lubac, Ratzinger and von Balthasar : A Communal Adventure in Ecclesiology." In *Ecumenism Today*, edited by Francesca Aran Murphy and Christopher Asprey, 45-80. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008.
- . "Joseph Ratzinger and Protestant Theology: The Four Last Things." *Nova et Vetera* 5, no. 2 (2007): 325-58.
- Murphy, Joseph. *Christ, Our Joy: The Theological Vision of Pope Benedict XVI*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2008.
- Neder, Adam. *Participation in Christ: An Entry into Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics*. Columbia Series in Reformed Theology. Louisville, KY: WJK, 2009.
- Nichols, Aidan. "Benedict XVI on the Holy Images." *Nova et Vetera* 5, no. 2 (2007): 359-74.
- . "Joseph Ratzinger's Theology of Political Ethics." *New Blackfriars* 68 (1987): 380-92.
- . *The Thought of Benedict XVI: An Introduction to the Theology of Joseph Ratzinger*. London: Burns & Oates, 2005.
- Oakes, Edward. "The Internal Logic of Holy Saturday in the Theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar." *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9, no. 2 (Ap 2007): 184-99.

- Oden, Thomas C. *The Word of Life*. Vol. II of *Systematic Theology*. Peabody, Mass.: Prince Press, 1998.
- Olson, Roger. "Deification in Contemporary Theology." *Theology Today* (64): 186-200.
- Papanikolaou, Aristotle. "Divine Energies or Divine Personhood: Vladimir Lossky and John Zizioulas on Conceiving the Transcendent and Immanent God." *Modern Theology* 19, no. 3 (July 2003): 357-85.
- . "Is John Zizioulas an Existentialist in Disguise? Response to Lucian Turcescu." *Modern Theology* 20, no. 4 (October 2004): 601-07.
- Pinnock, Clark H. *Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.
- Pitstick, Alyssa Lyra. *Light in Darkness: Hans Urs von Balthasar and the Catholic Doctrine of Christ's Descent Into Hell*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.
- Ratzinger, Joseph. *Behold the Pierced One: An Approach to a Spiritual Christology*. Translated by Graham Harrison. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987.
- . "Beyond Death." *ICR Communio* 1, no. 3 (1972): 155-65.
- . "Biblical Foundations of Priesthood." *ICR Communio* 17 (Winter 1990): 617-27.
- . *Called to Communion: Understanding the Church Today*. Translated by Adrian Walker. Ignatius Press, 1996.
- . "Catholicism After the Council." *The Furrow* (1967).
- . *Church, Ecumenism, and Politics: New Essays in Ecclesiology*. Slough, England: St Paul, 1988.
- . "The Church's Teaching Authority—Faith—Morals." In *Principles of Christian Morality*, translated by Graham Harrison, 45-73. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1986.
- . "Commentary on *Dei Verbum*." In *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. III, edited by Herbert Vorgrimler. London: Burns & Oates, 1969.
- . "Commentary on *Gaudium et Spes*." In *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. V, edited by Herbert Vorgrimler. London: Burns & Oates, 1969.
- . "Concerning the Notion of Person in Theology." *ICR Communio*, no. 17 (Fall 1990): 439-54.
- . "'Current Doctrinal Relevance of the Catechism of the Catholic Church: Ten Years Since Its Publication (11 October 1992)'" Rome, 2002. Available at: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20021009_ratzinger-catechetical-congress_en.html.
- . *Daughter Zion: Meditations on the Church's Marian Belief*. Translated by John M. McDermott, S.J. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1983.

- . *Dogma and Preaching*. Translated by Matthew J. O'Connell. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1985.
- . *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life*. Translated and edited by Aidan Nichols. Translated by Michael Waldstein. Dogmatic Theology. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1988.
- . *Faith and Future*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1971.
- . *The Feast of Faith: Approaches to a Theology of the Liturgy*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1986.
- . "Free Expression and Obedience in the Church." In *The Church: Readings in Theology*, edited by Hugo Rahner, 194-217. P.J. Kennedy, 1963.
- . "Freedom and Liberation: The Anthropological Vision of the Instruction 'Libertatis Conscientia'." Translated by Stephen Wentworth Arndt. *ICR Communio* 14, no. 1 (1987): 55-72.
- . "Funeral Homily for Gottlieb Söhngen, 19 November 1971." *30 Days*, January/February 2006. Available at: <http://www.30giorni.it/us/articolo.asp?id=10131>.
- . *God Is Near Us: The Eucharist, The Heart of Life*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2003.
- . *The God of Jesus Christ: Meditations on God in the Trinity*. Translated by Robert J. Cunningham. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1979.
- . *Gospel, Catechesis, Catechism: Sidelights on the Catechism of the Catholic Church*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1997.
- . "The Holy Spirit as Communio: Concerning the Relationship of Pneumatology and Spirituality in Augustine." Translated by Peter Casarella. *ICR Communio*, no. 25 (Summer 1998): 324-39.
- . "Identification with the Church." In *Living with the Church*, 9-28. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978.
- . *"In the Beginning..." A Catholic Understanding of Creation and Fall*. Translated by Boniface Ramsey, O.P. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.
- . "Interpretation, Contemplation, Action: Considerations on the Task of a Catholic Academy." *ICR Communio* 13, no. 2 (1986): 139-55.
- . *Introduction to Christianity*. New edition with ecclesiastical approval. Translated by J.R. Foster. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2004.
- . "Jesus Christ Today." *ICR Communio* 17, no. 1 (1990): 68-87.
- . *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*. Translated by Adrian J. Walker. New York: Doubleday, 2007.

- . “Liturgy and Sacred Music.” *ICR Communio* 13, no. 4 (1986): 377-91.
- . *Many Religions—One Covenant: Israel, the Church, and the World*. Translated by Graham Harrison. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999.
- . *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993.
- . “The Meaning of Sunday.” *ICR Communio*, no. 21 (Spring 1994): 5-26.
- . *The Nature and Mission of Theology: Essays to Orient Theology in Today’s Debates*. Translated by Adrian Walker. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1995.
- . “The New Covenant: A Theology of Covenant in the New Testament.” Translated by Maria Shrady. *ICR Communio*, no. 22 (Winter 1995): 631-51.
- . *A New Song for the Lord: Faith in Christ and Liturgy Today*. Translated by Martha M. Matesich. New York: Crossroad, 1996.
- . “On Hope.” *ICR Communio* 12 (Spring 1985): 71-84.
- . *On the Way to Jesus Christ*. Translated by Michael J. Miller. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2005.
- . *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith: The Church as Communion*. Edited by Stephan Otto Horn and Vinzenz Pfnür. Translated by Henry Taylor. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2005.
- . “Presentation on the Centenary of Cardinal Newman’s Death.” Rome, 1990. Available at: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19900428_ratzinger-newman_en.html.
- . *Principles of Catholic Theology: Building Stones for a Fundamental Theology*. Translated by Mary Frances McCarthy. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1987.
- . “Revelation and Tradition.” In *Revelation and Tradition*, translated by W. J. O’Hara. *Quaestiones Disputatae*, 26-66. New York: Herder and Herder, 1966.
- . *Salt of the Earth: The Church at the End of the Millennium—An Interview with Peter Seewald*. Translated by Adrian Walker. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1997.
- . “The Sign of Cana.” *ICR Communio* 33, no. 4 (Winter 2006): 682-86.
- . “Sources and Transmission of the Faith.” *ICR Communio* 10 (Spring 1983): 17-34.
- . *The Spirit of the Liturgy*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2000.
- . “The Theological Locus of Ecclesial Movements.” Translated by Adrian Walker. *ICR Communio*, no. 25 (Fall 1998): 480-504.

- . *The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure*. Translated by Zachary Hayes. Chicago: Franciscan Herald, 1971.
- . *Truth and Tolerance: Christian Belief and World Religions*. Translated by Henry Taylor. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2004.
- . *Volk und Haus Gottes in Augustins Lehre von der Kirche*. München: K. Zink, 1954.
- Ratzinger, Joseph, and Vittorio Messori. *The Ratzinger Report: An Exclusive Interview on the State of the Church*. Translated by Salvator Attanasio and Graham Harrison. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1985.
- Ratzinger, Joseph and Seewald, Peter. *God and the World: A Conversation with Peter Seewald*. Translated by Henry Taylor. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2002.
- Reinders, Hans S. *Receiving the Gift of Friendship: Profound Disability, Theological Anthropology and Ethics*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Richardson, Kurt Anders. *Reading Karl Barth: New Directions for North American Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.
- Riessen, Renée van. "Jewish Thought and Protestant Theology: Barth and Levinas Revisited." In *The Reality of Faith in Theology: Studies on Karl Barth—Princeton-Kampen Consultation 2005*, edited by Bruce McCormack and Gerrit Neven, 221-32. New York: Peter Lang, 2007.
- Robinson, Wheeler. *The Hebrew Conception of Corporate Personality*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1936.
- Rosato, Philip, S.J. "The Ordination of the Baptized: The Laity as an Order of the Church." In *The Theology of John Zizioulas*, edited by Douglas H. Knight, 159-70. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007.
- Rowland, Tracey. *Ratzinger's Faith: The Theology of Pope Benedict XVI*. Oxford: OUP, 2008.
- Ruddy, Christopher. "No Restorationist: Ratzinger's Theological Journey." *Commonweal*, 3 June 2005, 15-18.
- Russell, Edward. "Reconsidering Relational Anthropology: A Critical Assessment of John Zizioulas's Theological Anthropology." *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 5, no. 2 (July 2003): 168-86.
- Russell, Norman. *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition*. Oxford: OUP, 2004.
- Sanders, John. *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1998.
- Sauter, Gerhard. "Why is Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics* not a Theology of Hope? Some Observations on Barth's Understanding of Eschatology." *Scottish Journal of Theology* (1999).

- Schroeder, C. Paul. "Suffering Towards Personhood: John Zizioulas and Fyodor Dostoevsky in Conversation on Freedom and the Human Person." *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 45, no. 3 (2001): 243-64.
- Shortt, Rupert. *Benedict XVI: Commander of the Faith*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2005.
- Skira, Jaroslav Z. "The Ecological Bishop: John Zizioulas' Theology of Creation." *Toronto Journal of Theology* 19, no. 2 (2003): 199-213.
- Stavrou, Michel. "Éloge du métropolite Jean (Zizioulas) de Pergame." On the occasion of the award of the Doctorate of Theology *honoris causa*. St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute, Paris, 2008. Available at: <http://jpane.free.fr/files/Laudatio%20Zizioulas.pdf>.
- Torrance, Alan J. *Persons in Communion: An Essay on Trinitarian Description and Human Participation (with Special Reference to Volume One of Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics)*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996.
- Torrance, Thomas F. *Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1990.
- Turcescu, Lucian. "Person' Versus 'Individual', and Other Modern Misreadings of Gregory of Nyssa." *Modern Theology* 18, no. 4 (October 2002): 527-39.
- Turner, Robert D. "Foundations for John Zizioulas' Approach to Ecclesial Communion." *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 78, no. 4 (December 2002): 438-67.
- Tück, Jan-Heiner. "The Cross as the Locus of Truth: Joseph Ratzinger's Meditations on the Way of the Cross." *ICR Communio* 33, no. 2 (2006): 175-77.
- Valente, Gianni. "Tradition and Freedom: The Lectures of the Young Joseph." *30 Days*, March 2006.
- Valente, Gianni and Azzaro, Pierluca. "Interview with Alfred Läpple." *30 Days*, January/February 2006.
- van Driel, Edwin C. "Karl Barth on the Eternal Existence of Jesus Christ." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 60 (2007): 45-61.
- Visser't Hooft, W.A. "Karl Barth and the Ecumenical Movement." *The Ecumenical Review* 32 (1980): 129ff.
- Volf, Miroslav. *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Wainwright, Geoffrey. "The Sting of Death: The Unavoidable Question and the Response of Faith." In *The Pontificate of Benedict XVI*, edited by William Rusch, 47-78. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.
- Weaver, Denny. *The Nonviolent Atonement*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

- Webster, John. *Barth*. 2. New York: Continuum, 2004.
- . *Barth's Ethics of Reconciliation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- . *Barth's Moral Theology: Human Action in Barth's Thought*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- . "Fides et Ratio: A Response to Tom Weinandy." *New Blackfriars* (81): 236-237.
- . *Response*. In *For the Sake of the World: Karl Barth and the Future of Ecclesial Theology*. Edited by George Hunsinger. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.
- . "Translator's Preface." In *God's Being Is in Becoming: The Trinitarian Being of God in the Theology of Karl Barth*, by Eberhard Jüngel, ix-xxiii. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.
- Weinandy, Thomas. "Zizioulas: The Trinity and Ecumenism." *New Blackfriars* 83, no. 979 (September 2002): 407-15.
- Welker, Michael. "Karl Barth: From Fighter Against the 'Roman Heresy' to Leading Thinker for the Ecumenical Movement." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 57, no. 4 (2004): 434-50.
- Wilks, John G. F. "The Trinitarian Ontology of John Zizioulas." *Vox Evangelica*, no. 25 (1995): 63-88.
- Williams, Garry J. "Karl Barth and the Doctrine of the Atonement." In *Engaging with Barth: Contemporary Evangelical Critiques*, edited by David Gibson and Daniel Strange, 232-72. New York: Continuum, 2008.
- Williams, Rowan. "Foreword." In *Communion & Otherness*, edited by Paul McPartlan. London: T & T Clark, 2006.
- . "Review: *Being as Communion*." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 42, no. 1 (1989): 101-05.
- Wood, Donald. *Barth's Theology of Interpretation*. Barth Studies. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007.
- Yannaras, Christos. *The Freedom of Morality*. Translated by Elizabeth Briere. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984.
- Yocum, John. *Ecclesial Mediation in Karl Barth*. Barth Studies. Hampshire, England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2004.
- . "What's Interesting About Karl Barth? Barth as Polemical and Descriptive Theologian." *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 4, no. 1 (2002): 29-44.
- Zizioulas, John D. "Apostolic Continuity and Orthodox Theology: Towards a Synthesis of Two Perspectives." *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (1975): 75-108.

- . “The Authority of the Bible.” *The Ecumenical Review* 21 (1969): 160-66.
- . *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*. Contemporary Greek Theologians. Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary, 1985.
- . “The Bishop in the Theological Doctrine of the Orthodox Church.” *Kanon* 7 (1985): 23-35.
- . “The Church as Communion.” *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (1994): 3-16.
- . *Communion & Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*. Edited by Paul McPartlan. London: T & T Clark, 2006.
- . “The Doctrine of God the Trinity Today: Suggestions for an Ecumenical Study.” In *The Forgotten Trinity: A Selection of Papers Presented to the BCC Study Commission on Trinitarian Doctrine Today*, edited by Alasdair I. C. Heron, 19-32. London: British Council of Churches, 1991.
- . “The Early Christian Community.” In *Christian Spirituality*, 23-43. New York: Crossroad, 1985.
- . “Ecclesiological Issues Inherent in the Relations Between Eastern Chalcedonian and Oriental Non-Chalcedonian Churches.” In *Does Chalcedon Divide or Unite*, 138-56. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1981.
- . “The Ecclesiological Presuppositions of the Holy Eucharistic.” *Nicolaus* 10 (1982): 333-49.
- . “Ecological Asceticism: A Cultural Revolution.” *Our Planet* 7, no. 6 (April 1996).
- . “Eschatologie et Société.” *Irénikon* 73, no. 3-4 (2000): 278-97.
- . *Eucharist, Bishop, Church: The Unity of the Church in the Divine Eucharist and the Bishop During the First Three Centuries*. 2nd. Translated by Elizabeth Theokritoff. Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2001.
- . “Faith and Order: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow.” Faith and Order Consultation with Younger Theologians. Turku, Finland, 1995.
- . “Humanity and Nature: Learning from the Indigenous.” *Amazon Symposium, Religion, Science and the Environment*, 2006.
- . “Implications ecclésiologiques de deux types de pneumatologie.” In *Communio Sanctorum*, 141-54. Geneva: Editions Labor et Fides, 1982.
- . “Informal Groups in the Church: An Orthodox Viewpoint.” In *Informal Groups in the Church: Papers of the Second Cerdic Colloquium, Strasbourg, May 13-15*, 275-98. Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1975.
- . *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics*. Edited by Douglas Knight. London: T & T Clark, 2008.

- . “The Orthodox Church and the Third Millennium.” *Sourozh*, no. 81 (August 2000): 20-31.
- . “Orthodox Ecclesiology and the Ecumenical Movement.” *Sourozh*, no. 21 (August 1985): 16-27.
- . “Orthodoxy and Ecological Problems: A Theological Approach.”
- . “The Pneumatological Dimension of the Church.” *ICR Communio* 1, no. 2 (1974): 142-58.
- . “Preserving God’s Creation, Pt. 1.” *Sourozh*, no. 39 (March 1990): 1-11.
- . “Preserving God’s Creation, Pt. 2.” *Sourozh*, no. 40 (May 1990): 31-40.
- . “Preserving God’s Creation, Pt. 3.” *Sourozh*, no. 41 (August 1990): 28-39.
- . “Primacy in the Church: An Orthodox Approach.” *Sourozh*, no. 84 (May 2001): 3-13.
- . “Proprietors or Priests of Creation.”
- . “Reflections of an Orthodox [on the WCC’s ‘Common Witness and Proselytism’].” *Ecumenical Review*, no. 23 (January 1971): 30-34.
- . “Some Reflections on Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.” *Sobornost* 5 (1969): 644-62.
- . “Symbolism and Realism in Orthodox Worship.” *Sourozh*, no. 79 (February 2000): 2-17.
- . “Towards an Environmental Ethic.” Opening Plenary. *The Adriatic Sea: A Sea at Risk, a Unity of Purpose*, Religion, Science and the Environment, 2002.
- . “Towards an Eschatological Ontology.” King’s College, London, 1999.