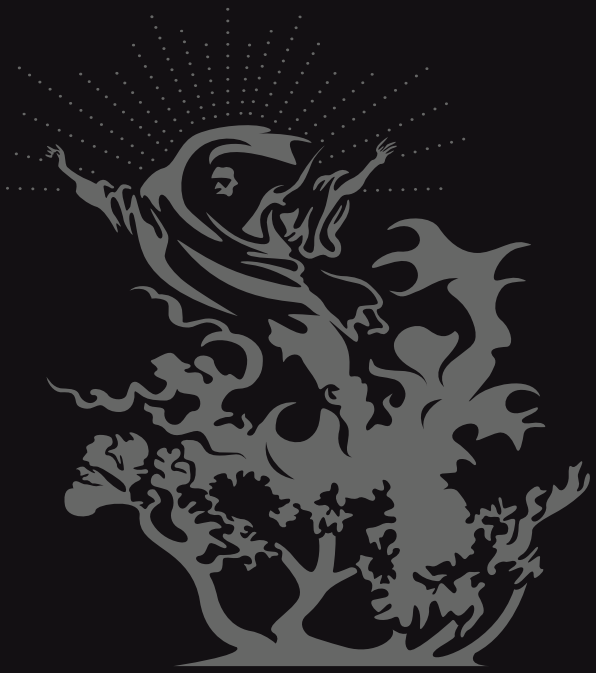

JOURNAL *of* CLASSICAL THEOLOGY

ISSUE JoCT 2
(2023) | 1–113

JOURNAL *of* CLASSICAL THEOLOGY

The *Journal of Classical Theology* is published annually.

A listing of the Editorial Team can be found @ Joct.online on the "Editorial Information" page.

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Subscribers

Journal of Classical Theology is an Open Access journal. Print editions are available for purchase on Amazon.

 | ISSN 2995-0430 (Print) | 2995-0449 (Digital)

Cover design by Benjamin Aho
Editorial consultant, Rachel Feinstein

Editor's Introduction

The modern theological scene continues to promote a doctrine of God more in line with an ontology of becoming, reflective of the socially oriented philosophy of our time. Many observing this drift from the classical doctrines of God and Christ, launched a retrieval mission, recovering the rich theology of the Great Tradition. This ressourcement project has continued to grow, as various traditions of the catholic faith look back to the conciliar theology of our forebears to address the theological issues of our day.

Journal of Classical Theology joins this mission, offering a platform to facilitate rigorous theological discussion pertaining to the retrieval *of* and advancements *in* classical theology. The church needs a *classical* dogmatic theology, grounded in the roots of the Great Tradition; it must look back if it is to move forward.

. . . To him be the glory forever. Amen.

Journal of Classical Theology

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The Scholastic Award 2023

The Center for Classical Theology

The Center for Classical Theology[1] exists to contemplate God and all things in relation to God by listening with humility to his Word with the wisdom of the Great Tradition. The purpose of CCT is to create a renewed vision for systematic theology today in the spirit of faith seeking understanding. CCT hosts an annual lectureship by a systematic theologian, each of which is published in the New Studies in Classical Theology series (Crossway).

CCT summons the next generation of theologians to exemplify a biblical reasoning, rational contemplation, and reformed catholicity that directs systematic theology to its spiritual end and most blessed hope: beholding the beauty of the Lord. To that end, CCT offers The Scholastic Award. In the spirit of the Protestant Scholastics, candidates for the Scholastic Award retrieve the format of the *Summa Theologiae* by Thomas Aquinas and submit a disputed theological question. That question is followed by a reply designed "to lead listeners into the truth they strive to understand" (Aquinas). An excellent reply will exhibit precision to advance theological clarity, fidelity, and beauty.

This year's recipient of the Scholastic Award is Dr. Matt Pitts, pastor of Minden Baptist Church in Mt Enterprise, TX.

-Matthew Barrett, Director of the Center for Classical Theology

-Timothy Gatewood, Associate Director of the Center for Classical Theology

Journal of Classical Theology

THE CENTER FOR CLASSICAL THEOLOGY

[1] https://credomag.com/center-for-classical-theology/

Article: Whether the beatific vision will be experienced bodily by the saints?

By Matt Pitts[1]

Objection 1: It seems that the beatific vision will not be experienced bodily by the saints because Scripture says, "You cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live," (Exod 33:20).[2]

Objection 2: Further, the beatific vision will be experienced incorporeally by the saints immediately after death. For the Scripture says, "My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better," (Phil 1:23b) and "We would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord" (2 Cor 5:8).

Objection 3: Further, Aquinas says, "It is impossible for God to be seen by the sense of sight, or by any other sense, or faculty of the sensitive power."[3]

On the contrary, Scripture says, "And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another," (Job 19:26–27).

I answer that, The beatific vision will be experienced by the saints after the resurrection and will thus be a bodily experience. Matthew Henry affirms this understanding of Job's words when he says, "Job speaks of seeing [God] with eyes of flesh . . . the same body that died shall rise again, a glorified body."[4] In this way Henry connects Job's words to both the beatific vision and the resurrection of the body. When the Apostle John says, "We know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is," (1 John 3:2) he indicates we will see Christ upon his appearance which signifies his return.[5] And we know that at his return the dead shall be raised imperishable as Paul teaches (1 Cor 15:22–23, 52). Likewise, the Apostle John says, "They will see his face, and his name will be

[1] Dr. Matt Pitts is pastor of Minden Baptist Church in Mt Enterprise, TX.

[2] All Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version.

[3] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a. 12, 3.

[4] *Matthew Henry's Commentary*, ed. Leslie Church (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1961), 544.

[5] Note that Christ's appearance and his coming (return) are used in parallel and thus synonymously earlier in the same letter: "And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming," (1 John 2:28). It is also worth noting that in this article I am assuming rather than attempting to prove that Christ is God in the flesh and therefore to see Christ in this passage is to see God.

on their foreheads," (Rev 22:4) after the resurrection has occurred (Rev 20:4–5, 11–13).

Augustine says, "I say that the saints will see God *in* the body; but whether they will see *through* the eyes of the body, in the same way as we now see the sun, moon, stars, sea and earth and all things on the earth – that is no easy question."[6] Yet he goes on to say, "It is possible, it is indeed most probable, that we shall then see the physical bodies of the new heaven and new earth in such a fashion as to observe God in utter clarity and distinctness, seeing him present everywhere. . . . In the future life, wherever we turn the spiritual eyes of our bodies we shall discern, *by means of our bodies*, the incorporeal God."[7]

Reply to Objection 1: Scripture's statement that "man shall not see me and live" does not draw a distinction between man seeing God in an incorporeal state as opposed to a corporeal state. Rather, it rules out man seeing God in his current sinful state. The remedy that makes the beatific vision in the flesh possible then is salvation from this sinful state and specifically that part of salvation we call glorification. Glorification includes the redemption of the body about which the Apostle Paul says, "And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies," (Rom 8:23). In this glorified state the saints are able to behold their God and Savior in the flesh.

Reply to Objection 2: Scripture does speak of the promise of God's presence immediately after death for the saints (for example, in Luke 23:43 Jesus says, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise,") and yet this does not deny the truth that the saints will also see God after the resurrection as shown above.[8] Aquinas argues that the absence of the body does not make beatitude impossible since "it is evident [from 2 Cor 5:6] that the souls of the saints, separated from their bodies, walk by sight, seeing the essence of God, wherein is true happiness [beatitude]."[9] So the saints do enjoy the beatific vision immediately after death

[6] Augustine, *City of God*, XXII.29. Emphasis in original. This section was drawn to my attention by the final footnote of Bavinck's *Reformed Dogmatics* vol. 4.

[7] Augustine, *City of God*, XXII.29. Emphasis added.

[8] John T. McNeil says, "In attacking the doctrine of 'the sleep of souls,' [Calvin] refers to the heresy of Pope John XXII (1316–1334) that the souls of departed saints are not permitted to see the Beatific Vision until the resurrection." Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 2, ed. John T. McNeil, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1960), 996n12.

[9] Aquinas, I-II, 4, 5. Emphasis removed. This passage and the following passage were brought to my attention by Hans Boersma, *Seeing God: The Beatific Vision in Christian Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 421n92.

and yet Aquinas adds that "after the body has been resumed [in the resurrection], happiness increases not in intensity, but in extent."[10]

Reply to Objection 3: Aquinas does not deny that the beatific vision will be experienced bodily but rather affirms this when he says, "Man in the flesh after the resurrection will see God."[11] He clarifies this when he says, "The glorified eyes will see God, as now our eyes see the life of another. But life is not seen with the corporeal eye, as a thing in itself visible, but as the indirect object of the sense; which indeed is not known by sense, but at once, together with sense, by some other cognitive power. But that the divine presence is known by the intellect immediately on the sight of, and through, corporeal things, happens from two causes—viz. from the perspicuity of the intellect, and from the refulgence of the divine glory infused into the body after its renovation."[12] This means that the beatific vision will be experienced in the body though this sight is ultimately received by the intellect and only indirectly through the glorified eye.

[10] Aquinas, I-II, 4, 5. Emphasis removed. I am grateful to Matthew Barrett for help clarifying this section.

[11] Aquinas, 1a. 12, 3.

[12] Aquinas, 1a. 12, 3.

Johannes Andreas Quenstedt's *Analogia Entis*

By John Ehrett[1]

Abstract: *This study analyzes the theory of analogical predication in theological language espoused by Lutheran scholastic theologian Johannes Andreas Quenstedt, with special concern for Quenstedt's treatment of the analogia entis.Over the years, several competing views of Quenstedt's theological metaphysics have emerged. Battista Mondin has argued that Quenstedt's approach acknowledges no natural "ontological" knowledge of God; William Placher, taking precisely the opposite tack, charges Quenstedt with helping introduce a corruptive univocity of being into Western theology; and Robert Preus argues that Quenstedt's account of analogical predication should not be read as carrying ontological weight at all. Against these views, this study extends previous arguments by Karl Barth and Jörg Baur to show that Quenstedt advances a conception of the* analogia entis *that is in substantial continuity with the mainstream of Christian metaphysics in his time, and one that carries notable implications for Lutheran theology in the present day.*

Keywords: *analogia entis*, Lutheranism, Quenstedt, Scholasticism

Introduction

In recent years, confessional Protestant theology has witnessed a resurgence of interest in classical metaphysics, and an increasing willingness to reconsider certain modern assumptions about the fundamental God-world relation.[2] In a striking turn, much of this retrieval has been spearheaded by Presbyterians and Baptists, traditionally "non-sacramental" denominations that Catholic critics of modernity have often accused of undermining the traditional Christian world-picture.[3]

[1]John Ehrett is an S.T.M. candidate at the Institute of Lutheran Theology and a Commonwealth Fellow at the Davenant Institute. He holds additional degrees from Yale University and Patrick Henry College.

[2]Some representative examples include James E. Dolezal, *God Without Parts: Divine Simplicity and the Metaphysics of God's Absoluteness* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011); Craig A. Carter, *Contemplating God with the Great Tradition: Recovering Trinitarian Classical Theism* (Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 2021); Matthew Barrett, *None Greater: The Undomesticated Attributes of God* (Ada, MI: Baker Books, 2019); Carl R. Trueman and R. Scott Clark eds., *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2007).

[3]Cf. Brad S. Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 41 (denouncing the "Protestant reformers" characterized by a "variegated rejection of sacramentality as it was understood in the Roman church,

The absence of many Lutherans from this conversation is notable, though perhaps unsurprising. Historically, the Lutheran tradition has tended to focus more on the question of God's disposition towards human beings than on God's relation to created beings in the formally metaphysical sense. For some Lutherans, any efforts to consider God according to natural revelation amount to trafficking in a "theology of glory" that illicitly seeks knowledge of God apart from His revelation in Christ, which in turn underpins a "theology of the cross."[4]

However, the Lutheran tradition has not traditionally excluded theological metaphysics altogether. While Martin Luther himself was not a systematic metaphysician in the style of Thomas Aquinas,[5] and the Lutheran confessional writings touch on questions of metaphysical foundations only obliquely,[6] the scholastic tradition that later developed within Lutheranism soon found itself deeply engaged with questions of "first philosophy"—even laying out versions of the *analogia entis*, or analogy of being, that sought to give a reasoned account of the relationship between God's infinite existence and the finite existence of created beings.[7]

One of the foremost Lutheran exponents of the *analogia entis* was Johannes Andreas Quenstedt (1617–88), a leading figure in the "silver age" of Lutheran Orthodoxy and the author of the massive *Theologia Didactico-Polemica sive Systema Theologicum*.[8] Despite its scope and depth, Quenstedt's work is little read today,

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not only with respect to the church's seven sacraments, but also as a comprehensive, biblical view of reality in which the transcendent God manifests himself in and through the natural, material world").

[4] See Christopher D. Jackson, "Luther's Theologian of the Cross and Theologian of Glory Distinction Reconsidered," *Pro Ecclesia* 29, no. 3 (2020): 341–44. Jordan Cooper has recently made a similar argument that this apparent disengagement with metaphysical theology is rooted in twentieth-century developments within Lutheranism, sometimes associated with Gerhard Forde, that largely eschew the "traditional categories of substance and essence" and other metaphysical issues. Jordan Cooper, *Prolegomena: A Defense of the Scholastic Method* (Ithaca, NY: Just and Sinner Publications, 2020), 5–9, 11.

[5] See Sammeli Juntunen, "Luther and Metaphysics: What Is the Structure of Being According to Luther?," in *Union With Christ: The New Finnish Interpretation of Luther*, eds. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 129–31.

[6] See, e.g., *The Augsburg Confession*, trans. William H.T. Dau and G. Friedrich Bente (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007), article I (affirming divine simplicity); *The Formula of Concord: Solid Declaration*, trans. William H.T. Dau and G. Friedrich Bente (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007), article I, paras. 54–7 (considering whether original sin is a substance or an accident).

[7] For an exploration of one such formulation of the *analogia entis*, in the work of Johann Gerhard, see Jack Kilcrease, "Johann Gerhard's Reception of Thomas Aquinas's *Analogia Entis*," in *Aquinas Among the Protestants*, ed. Manfred Svensson and David VanDrunen (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2018), 119–23.

[8] Robert D. Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, Vol. 1 (St. Louis, MO: Concordia

likely due to the fact that most of the *Theologia Didactico-Polemica* remains untranslated. That is not to say he has been overlooked, however. Indeed, an unresolved debate presently exists regarding Quenstedt's lengthy account of how theological terms are properly predicated of both God and creatures.

In recent decades, three competing—and mutually inconsistent—interpretations of Quenstedt, all of which contest his relationship to the broader tradition of Christian theological metaphysics, have emerged. In a 1963 study of the doctrine of analogy, Catholic theologian Battista Mondin argues that Luther and John Calvin articulated theologies that functionally destroyed the possibility of a natural human knowledge of God.[9] As a result, Mondin claims, Quenstedt's *analogia entis* is positively ersatz: his account of analogy only superficially reflects a longstanding "Catholic" tradition, merely repeating rhetorical forms devoid of genuine metaphysical substance.[10] For Mondin, Quenstedt's Lutheran convictions necessarily entail that a genuine natural knowledge of God, even in a qualified sense, is impossible.[11] In short, Mondin charges Quenstedt with a kind of functional equivocity in theological speech, a denial that terms as applied to God and creatures have *any* genuine correspondence relation.

Protestant theologian William Placher, in a 1996 intellectual genealogy of conceptions of divine transcendence, charges Quenstedt with almost precisely the opposite error.[12] For Placher, Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin—and their theological forerunners—were all committed to a near-absolute apophaticism about the nature of the divine, one centered on the radical difference between God and creation.[13] In Placher's telling, that older conception of divine transcendence was compromised when Cardinal Thomas Cajetan, Jesuit thinker Francisco Suárez, Quenstedt, and Reformed theologian Francis Turretin, among others, sought to develop fuller-orbed accounts of the relationship between divine and creaturely being.[14] In other words, Placher accuses Quenstedt of lapsing into

Publishing House, 1972), 45–6, 62.

[9] Battista Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963), 110.

[10] Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 112.

[11] Notably, Mondin's argument that the Reformation theologians worked a serious rupture in metaphysical theology anticipated similar arguments against the Lutheran tradition that have been raised more recently by John Milbank, albeit in a somewhat opposite direction. See John Milbank, "Reformation 500: Any Cause for Celebration?," *Open Theology* 4 (2018): 618–19 (criticizing Protestant scholastic appropriations of the Thomistic doctrine of analogy).

[12] William C. Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence: How Modern Thinking About God Went Wrong* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 76–7.

[13] Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence*, 2–3, 67, 71.

[14] Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence*, 72–9.

a functional *univocity* in theological speech, where so close a similarity exists between God and creatures that any difference between them is "only a matter of degree."[15]

Lutheran scholar Robert Preus, author of the leading English-language work on the history of Lutheran scholasticism, offers an altogether different reading of Quenstedt's theory of analogy. Specifically, Preus declines to read Quenstedt as making metaphysical claims at all, instead taking his account of analogy to be principally "linguistic and semantic."[16] On this view, to speak of Quenstedt's *analogia entis* as something akin to Aquinas's version of the doctrine—which most, but not all, Thomistic scholars have interpreted as thoroughly ontological in character[17]—is simply to misread Quenstedt, asking a malformed question. To date, the question of how best to read Quenstedt's theory of theological analogy remains unsettled.

This study argues, against Mondin, Placher, and Preus, that Quenstedt's *analogia entis* represents substantially the same metaphysical paradigm as that defended by Thomas Aquinas and expounded by generations of Christian metaphysicians after him, albeit with a slight difference in its overall epistemic orientation. Aquinas lays the thematic accent on God's otherness, while Quenstedt is keener to emphasize God's immanence over against those who would deny any real similarity between divine and creaturely being. This distinction, however, amounts to a difference in rhetorical emphasis rather than metaphysical structure.

This study begins with an analysis of the medieval and early-modern theories of analogy within which Quenstedt worked, before expounding Quenstedt's own theory of theological analogy in the *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*. The study then traces the signal points of correspondence between Quenstedt's account of analogy and the version of the *analogia entis* advanced by Aquinas, and critically evaluates Mondin, Placher, and Preus's interpretations of Quenstedt's metaphysics in turn. Finally, it considers the implications of a deeper understanding of Quenstedt's theory of analogy for the direction of Lutheran theology as a whole.

Medieval and Early Modern Conceptions of Theological Analogy

Theology has always had to reckon with the question of how terms predicated

[15] Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence*, 77.

[16] Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, Vol. 2, 43–4.

[17] For an overview of recent historical debates on this question, see Francesca Aran Murphy, *God Is Not a Story: Realism Revisited* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 19–20, 89–93.

of both God and creatures, such as "goodness" and "wisdom," convey meaningful information. Traditionally, the three principal options open to theologians considering this question have been univocal predication, equivocal predication, and analogical predication. Univocal predication entails a one-to-one correspondence between terms as applied to God and creatures: what human beings mean by "love" or "goodness" is essentially the same sort of thing that is meant by theological statements about "God's love" or "God's goodness." Equivocal predication, for its part, contends that no real relationship exists between terms as applied to God and as applied to creatures; any correspondence is merely metaphorical. On this view, what is meant by "God's love" or "God's wisdom" does not properly map onto what is ordinarily meant by terms like "love" and "wisdom." Analogical predication entails that there exists a real relationship between terms like "human love" and "God's love," even if this relationship is not one of precise correspondence between identical referents. This mode of predication is not foreign to ordinary experience: for instance, the adjective "loving" may be predicated of both one's spouse and one's pet, and some genuine similarity plainly exists between the love shown by a spouse and the love demonstrated by a pet, but the character of these two types of love is nevertheless quite distinct.

The question of theological predication becomes perhaps most pressing where the term "being" is concerned. The assertion that *God exists* is the necessary condition for (almost) any theology as such, but Jewish-Christian speech about God has always stressed the vast distance between the character of God's being and that of creaturely being. Over the centuries, many theologians have concluded that univocal and equivocal accounts of divine being are theologically unacceptable, albeit for different reasons. A univocal account of being—in which the term "God exists" means something essentially akin to what is meant by the claim "the President exists"—would treat God as a kind of maximally powerful entity within a single cosmos that transcends both Him and His creatures. As John Milbank puts it, such a view entails that "being" as such "threatens to become greater than God and God [tends] to be idolatrously reduced to the status of a partner with his Creation in causal processes."[18] Conversely, an equivocal account of being—in which the term "God exists" is taken to mean something *wholly* different from what is meant by "the President exists"—entails the conclusion that "when we speak of God we do not know what we are talking about,"[19] such that "statements about God and world become statements about how it

[18] John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), xxiv.

[19] Herbert McCabe, *God Still Matters*, ed. Brian Davies (London: Continuum, 2002), 27.

is appropriate to talk"[20] rather than about metaphysical realities themselves. Christian philosophical theology thus becomes effectively impossible.

Over against these two perceived extremes, the Christian metaphysical tradition running through Thomas Aquinas developed the concept of the *analogia entis*, or the "analogy of being." This concept is an extension of the principle that, in theological speech, "some things are said of God and creatures analogically, and not in a purely equivocal nor in a purely univocal sense."[21] On the analogical view, between God and creatures there exists an infinite and qualitatively meaningful—but not altogether *absolute*—disproportion between the term "being" as applied to God and as applied to creatures. For Aquinas, this position logically follows from the fact that all things proceed ontologically from God as their creator, and so must bear some likeness to their source: "whatever is said of God and creatures, is said according to the relation of a creature to God as its principle and cause, wherein all perfections of things pre-exist excellently."[22] Indeed, Aquinas explains that "we can name God only from creatures," stressing that human knowledge of God's existence and nature inevitably requires prescinding from knowledge of the created order.[23] This position, Aquinas believes, amounts to "a mean between pure equivocation and simple univocation."[24]

According to the *analogia entis* as conceived by Aquinas, God's being is distinguished from creaturely being by virtue of the fact that "God is essential being, whereas other things are beings by participation" (*Deus est ens per essentiam, et alia per participationem*).[25] The very existence of creatures, on this view, is "structurally" derivative of the one God who *is* Being itself (*ipsum esse per se subsistens*).[26] What God is absolutely, creatures possess only in relative measure.

Within the broad conceptual framework of the analogical use of theological language, a number of distinctions and sub-distinctions emerged during the later Middle Ages and thereafter. Most famously, Cardinal Thomas Cajetan proposed a threefold conception of analogy—*analogy of inequality*, *analogy of attribution*, and *analogy of proportionality*.[27] Since this tripartite framework figures prominently in Quenstedt's account of analogy, it is worth tracing the distinc-

[20] Kathryn Tanner, *God and Transcendence in Christian Theology: Tyranny or Empowerment?* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1988), 13.

[21] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I.13.5.

[22] Aquinas, *ST* I.13.5.

[23] Aquinas, *ST* I.13.5.

[24] Aquinas, *ST* I.13.5.

[25] Aquinas, *ST* I.4.3.

[26] Aquinas, *ST* I.4.2.

[27] Ralph M. McInerny, *The Logic of Analogy: An Interpretation of St. Thomas* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 3.

tions between these three positions in some detail here.

In an analogy of inequality, two concepts are identified and a correspondence is drawn between them, but there is no unitary "middle term" in which they share; this "middle term" exists in a strictly linguistic, rather than ontological, sense. One might say, for instance, that a dog and a wolf fall under the common concept "canine," and hence bear an analogical relationship one to another. However, unless something like a Platonic account of Forms is stipulated from the outset, the term "canine" does not denominate a distinctive essence; as Ralph McInerny puts it, "the generic concept is not of a nature absolutely one."[28]

Conceived in theological terms, an analogy of inequality would entail that the analogical likeness between the terms *God* and *creature* would be one merely of degree, as both occupy the same ontological plane. James Anderson characterizes such a move as "a kind of thinking that inevitably results in 'anthropomorphism,' which consists essentially in the attempt to conceive of the uncreated as homogeneous with the created, recognizing between these two orders only a distinction of *degree*."[29] Despite its classification as a form of analogy, analogy of inequality appears inevitably to lapse back into a kind of univocity.[30]

In an analogy of attribution, "that to which a term is primarily and intrinsically applied is fittingly called the 'prime analogate'; the items to which it is then referred are termed 'secondary analogates.' "[31] An example serves to illustrate the point: one might say, for instance, that both a man and a collection of medicines are *healthy*. An analogy of attribution between the man and the medicines is present in such a case, and the health of the man is the "prime analogate" to which the health-promoting qualities of the medicines (the "secondary analogates") is related. The medicines are called "healthy" because, and only to the extent that, they serve as adjuncts to the man's health. On this conception, if there *was* no man or other potential recipient to which the medicines could be referred, it would be unintelligible to speak of the medicines as "healthy."

Within the general framework of analogy of attribution, a further distinction may be drawn between *analogy of extrinsic attribution* and *analogy of intrinsic attribution*. The aforementioned man/medicine example constitutes an example of the former, since the medicines' "healthiness" is altogether extrinsic to the man

[28] McInerny, *The Logic of Analogy*, 5.

[29] James F. Anderson, *Reflections on the Analogy of Being* (Dordrecht: Springer, 1967), 13.

[30] Anderson, *Reflections on the Analogy of Being*, 13. See also Jörg Baur, *Die Vernunft zwischen Ontologie und Evangelium: Eine Untersuchung zur Theologie Johann Andreas Quenstedts* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1962), 42 (interpreting Quenstedt's rejection of analogy of inequality on the grounds that it tends toward univocity).

[31] Anderson, *Reflections on the Analogy of Being*, 15.

whose health "grounds" the entire analogy. An analogy of *intrinsic* attribution, by contrast, could be said to be present if there existed such a discrete reality or essence as "healthiness" in which human beings and medicines might both share. Here, "healthiness" would itself be the prime analogate, present intrinsically in both human beings and medicines in some way, to which the healthiness of human beings and medicines would be referred.[32]

These two conceptions of analogy of attribution produce very different theological outcomes, particularly where the relation of divine and creaturely being is concerned. An analogy of extrinsic attribution, which denies any real presence of the primary analogate "in" the secondary analogates, would seem to entail the conclusion that God alone really exists and creatures do not. Conversely, an analogy of intrinsic attribution, in which the primary analogate is far more intimately related to its secondary analogates, underscores the conclusion that God, as absolute Being, is the immediate causal source of the acts of existence common to creatures.[33]

Last is analogy of proportionality, which Cajetan defends as the proper form of analogy,[34] which remains debated today.[35] McInerny argues that analogy of proportionality tends to affirm a striking indeterminate, but nevertheless still acknowledged, similarity. "For example, to see by corporeal vision and to see intellectually are two uses of 'to see'; they share the common name because, as understanding presents something to the mind, so seeing presents something to the animal."[36] In short, analogy of proportionality can "signify any similarity of relations."[37] From a theological perspective, there is a risk here of slipping into equivocity, of rhetorically acknowledging a similarity between divine and creaturely being without affirming a genuine metaphysical correspondence.

As distinctions grow finer, the lines between these conceptions of analogy become increasingly blurry. To take just one example, Anderson argues that conceiving of God as the primary analogate (Absolute Being, *esse*), to which secondary and finite analogates (beings, *entia*) are referred, runs the risk of collapsing Christian theology into a Spinozistic monism that denies the real existence

[32] The analogy breaks down here given that "healthiness" cannot coherently be said to be intrinsic to a medicine; the coherence of calling medicines "healthy" is based on the structure of an analogy of extrinsic attribution.

[33] See Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 58–60 (explaining that in an analogy of intrinsic attribution, the primary analogate constitutes "a perfection that pervades each one of [the secondary analogates]").

[34] McInerny, *The Logic of Analogy*, 12.

[35] See, e.g., Milbank, "Reformation 500," 618.

[36] McInerny, *The Logic of Analogy*, 11.

[37] McInerny, *The Logic of Analogy*, 11.

and (metaphysical) freedom of creatures.[38] Plainly, this is an argument against an analogy of extrinsic attribution that would deny any real being to creatures while predicating it of God absolutely. But Anderson goes on to deny any validity to the concept of an analogy of intrinsic attribution, averring that such an analogy merely constitutes an analogy of proportionality by another name.[39]

In an effort to navigate beyond terminological impasses like this one, Erich Przywara—perhaps the most celebrated recent defender of the *analogia entis* as a philosophical principle—conceives of analogy of attribution and analogy of proportionality as two sides of the same coin, where the former emphasizes the possibility of human knowledge of God and the latter emphasizes His radical alterity in relation to creation. " 'Longing' (in the ascending *analogia attributionis)* becomes a 'blinding rapture' (in the *analogia proportionis*) in order to become 'service' (in the descending *analogia attributionis)*."[40] Przywara's translator, John Betz, explains that for Przywara, "[p]roperly understood . . . the *analogia entis* (in the form of the theological analogy) comprises two moments: a *tanta similitudo* expressed in the *analogia attributionis* and a *maior dissimilitudo* expressed in the *analogia proportionalitatis*."[41] Przywara, for his part, lays the principal accent on analogy of proportionality in order to stress "God as ever more exalted, beyond everything creaturely, ontic or noetic."[42]

Quenstedt's Theory of Theological Analogy

Johannes Andreas Quenstedt was born in 1617 in the town of Quedlinburg.[43] He was the nephew of Johann Gerhard, one of the Lutheran scholastic tradition's best-known authors.[44] Educated at the University of Helmstedt, where he studied under Georg Calixt, and later in Wittenberg, where he was taught by Wilhelm Leyser, he began teaching at the University of Wittenberg and was eventually named a professor in 1660.[45] Quenstedt's seminal work, the *Theologia Didactico-*

[38] Anderson, *Reflections on the Analogy of Being*, 24–7.

[39] Anderson, *Reflections on the Analogy of Being*, 16–7.

[40] Erich Przywara, *Analogia Entis: Metaphysics—Original Structure and Universal Rhythm*, trans. John R. Betz and David Bentley Hart (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. 2014), 235.

[41] John R. Betz, "Translator's Introduction," in Erich Przywara, *Analogia Entis: Metaphysics—Original Structure and Universal Rhythm*, translated by John R. Betz and David Bentley Hart (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. 2014), 73.

[42] Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 234.

[43] Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, Vol. 1, 62; Robert Kolb, "Quenstedt, Johann Andreas," in *Dictionary of Luther and the Lutheran Traditions*, ed. Timothy J. Wengert (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 628.

[44] Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, Vol. 1, 62.

[45] Kolb, "Quenstedt, Johann Andreas," 628; Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, Vol.

Polemica sive Systema Theologicum, was published in 1685, shortly before his death in 1688.[46] The volume proved popular enough that it was reprinted on four separate occasions thereafter, in 1691, 1696, 1702 and 1715.[47] Robert Preus writes of the *Theologia Didactico-Polemica* that it was "so big, so complete, so concise and systematic, and so excellent that no later Lutheran ever came close to equalling it."[48] Indeed, Quenstedt has been described—albeit somewhat unflatteringly—as the bookkeeper of orthodox Lutheranism, a moniker that has stuck.[49] Moreover, Quenstedt's achievement did not come at the expense of personal virtue; to the contrary, he was characterized by his contemporaries as a moderate, prudent, mild, and non-avaricious man.[50]

Quenstedt's exposition of his doctrine of analogy is found in chapter eight of the first part of the *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, a chapter which broadly focuses on the essence of God when it is considered in an absolute sense. The question of analogical predication is the first subject Quenstedt considers after the chapter's recitation of 37 "didactic" propositions about the divine essence.[51] Following the model of Aquinas and other scholastics, the "polemical" sections of Quenstedt's treatise take the form of theses advanced for discussion, a number of potential objections to the theses, and responses to those objections drawing on the authority of philosophy as such, other authors in the broadly Western monotheistic heritage, and biblical revelation. Accordingly, Quenstedt's discussion of analogy is shot through with references to sources ranging well beyond the Lutheran tradition.[52]

Quenstedt frames the central question straightforwardly: are *essence*, *sub-*

1, 62.

[46] Kolb, "Quenstedt, Johann Andreas," 628; Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, Vol. 1, 62.

[47] Zachary Purvis, "The New Ethicist and the Old Bookkeeper: Isaak Dorner, Johann Quenstedt, and Modern Appropriations of Classical Protestantism," *Journal for the History of Modern Theology/Zeitschrift für neuere Theologiegeschichte* 19 no. 1 (2012): 26; see also Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, Vol. 1, 62.

[48] Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, Vol. 1, 62.

[49] See A. Tholuck, *Der Geist des lutherischen Theologen Wittenbergs im Verlaufe des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Hamburg und Gotha: Friedrich und Andreas Perthes, 1852), 247; see also Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence*, 77.

[50] Johannes Kunze, "Quenstedt," in *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche* Vol. 16, ed. Albert Hauck (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1896–1909), 382.

[51] Johannes Andreas Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica sive Systema Theologicum* (Wittebergae, 1701), I.VIII.II.1.

[52] Cf. Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, Vol. 1, 63 (In general, Quenstedt "quotes church fathers, Luther, the Symbols, predecessors, colleagues, even scholastics and contemporary Catholic and Reformed theologians with remarkable selectivity and economy.").

stance, *spirit* and other attributes predicated of God and creatures univocally, equivocally, or by analogy?[53] He stresses that he is speaking in a strictly technical sense: the relevant matter at hand is whether terms are used of God and creatures in precisely the same way (univocity), or whether there is no real relation between terms predicated of God and creatures (equivocity).[54] As far as analogy is concerned, Quenstedt argues that the relevant question has nothing to do with an analogy of proportion, but of attribution.[55] And beyond that, he draws yet another, further distinction: at issue here is not the propriety of an *analogy of extrinsic attribution*, which Quenstedt contends is quite close to an equivocal account of predication, but an *analogy of intrinsic attribution*.[56] With the contours of the issue so stipulated, Quenstedt advances his formal thesis: that essence, substance, spirit, and other attributes are terms properly predicated analogically between God and creatures.[57] This analogy must take the form of an analogy of intrinsic attribution, in which the relevant attributes at issue are predicated of God *absolutely* and creatures only *dependently*.[58]

Quenstedt begins his exposition of the "Thesis" by pointing out that the concept "univocal" can be ambiguous.[59] Strictly speaking, "univocity" refers to the same term being predicated of things in the same way, without any inequality in the relation.[60] However, Quenstedt explains, the simple fact that the same term or attribute is predicated of two things does not entail that it is predicated of them in the same way. Put another way, two things may share a common term but nevertheless have an unequal relation *to* the term. For Quenstedt, this is ultimately illustrated by the fact that terms are predicated of God absolutely and of creatures only dependently.

All analogies, however, are not the same. Quenstedt next moves to consider Cajetan's threefold account of analogy, which distinguishes between *analogy of inequality*, *analogy of proportionality*, and *analogy of attribution*.[61] As previously noted, this last can be subdivided into *analogy of extrinsic attribution* and *analogy of intrinsic attribution*. Quenstedt embraces the latter, rejecting the analogy of

[53] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[54] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[55] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[56] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[57] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[58] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[59] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[60] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1. See also Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* Vol. 1, trans. Theodore Engelder (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1950), 432 n62 (summarizing and expounding Quenstedt's argument in this subsection).
[61] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

inequality as too akin to univocity, and characterizing analogy of proportionality as likewise improper due to its dependence on metaphor.[62] Only analogy of intrinsic attribution, Quenstedt stresses, can properly capture the dependence relation between God and creatures.[63]

Against this account of analogy are set the two poles of univocal and equivocal predication, which Quenstedt outlines in the "Antithesis" of his inquiry. On the side of univocity, Quenstedt places Duns Scotus and other nominalists following him, including William of Ockham and Gabriel Biel.[64] This group, Quenstedt argues, is committed to the claim that terms like *Being*, *Essence*, and *Spirit* are predicated of God and creatures univocally.[65] Quenstedt suggests that these "univocists" are committed to more than a mere "linguistic univocity" in which a single term is used to refer to realities bearing an analogical relationship to one another, but rather are willing to collapse all analogical intervals into the same referential horizon. On the side of equivocity—those who would deny that terms like *Essence*, *Substance*, and *Spirit* are intelligibly applied at all to both God and creatures—Quenstedt places Calvinist theologians Bartholomäus Keckermann and Amandus Polanus, as well as—on the basis of Aquinas's characterization—Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides.[66]

In response to these diverse opponents, Quenstedt defends the doctrine of analogy at greater length. In response to the proponents of univocity, Quenstedt emphasizes that God is substance absolutely and independently, while the creature only exists dependently and by participation (*per participationem*).[67] Since Being depends upon God in creatures, it is not predicated univocally of God and creatures.[68] Rather, the whole being of creatures is dependent upon God—such that univocity, in the strict sense, cannot be maintained.[69]

On the other hand, if terms were to be predicated *equivocally* of God and creatures, then it would follow that creatures are not properly essences and substances in their own right, and that angels and rational souls are not truly and properly spirits.[70] That goes too far for Quenstedt; he stresses that although God is essence and substance in a singular way, creatures nevertheless participate

[62] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[63] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[64] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[65] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[66] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[67] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[68] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[69] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[70] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

"formally" (*formaliter*) in the definitions of "being" and "essence."[71] And the correspondence between divine and created being is more than merely linguistic: Quenstedt emphasizes that *that in reality which is signified* by the terms "being," "essence," and "substance" properly belongs to created beings as it does to God (albeit clearly in a different sense, though Quenstedt does not reiterate the point here).[72]

Quenstedt is not finished rebutting the advocates of equivocity, however. He emphasizes that if there were no proportion whatsoever between the being of God and the being of creatures, it would be unintelligible to speak of either as having properties at all.[73] Moreover, explicitly citing Aquinas's treatment of the same subject in the *Summa Theologica*, Quenstedt argues that if all language about God were equivocal, nothing could be known at all about God from creatures—a conclusion which stands opposed to both Aristotle and the testimony of the Apostle Paul in Romans 1.[74] And finally, Quenstedt lays out a multi-pronged *reductio ad absurdum*: an equivocal account of predication would seem to entail that (1) God produced "non-beings" in the act of creation, which is conceptually incoherent; (2) creatures, if they were really "non-beings," cannot be referred to God as effects to their cause, which destroys the intelligibility of any dependence relation between God and creature; and (3) in the Incarnation, Christ assumed "non-being" when He assumed human nature, which is also nonsensical.[75]

To conclude his analysis, Quenstedt proceeds to refute various objections that might be raised against his own affirmative position. Some might, for instance, argue that being, as a concept, is inherently univocal. But consistent with his previous claim that univocity—as distinguished from analogy—requires that the same term be predicated of two things equally, Quenstedt argues that where God and creatures are concerned, "Being" and "Essence" are always predicated unequally. This inequality is grounded in the very logic of being itself (*in ipsa ratione essendi*), where God is absolute and independent Being and essence, but the creature only dependently and by participation (*Deus Ens et essentia est absolute et independenter, creatura vero dependenter et per participationem*).[76]

Defenders of equivocal predication, for their parts, might stress the infinite distance between God's essence and the essences of creatures, and the fact that creatures always exist suspended over the abyss of nothingness. Against such

[71] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[72] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[73] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[74] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[75] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[76] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

arguments, Quenstedt reasons that the fact that God's being is infinite does not make the concept of *finite* being correspondingly unintelligible; the beings that constitute creation are plainly intelligible and possess properties, and so genuinely exist, albeit in a relative sense.[77]

Next, Quenstedt considers the relationship of the divine proper name, *YHWH*, to the analogical account of predication and of being that Quenstedt has developed. Quenstedt points out that "Being," taken as a bare term, is inherently underdeterminate; by itself, it can refer to being that is dependent or independent, or finite or infinite. By contrast, the Tetragrammaton directly designates God's distinctive certainty, eternality, immutability, and infinity.[78]

What of the fact that creatures have beginnings and endings? This does not, for Quenstedt, call into question whether creatures genuinely have existence in their own right. Indeed, Quenstedt suggests the question itself is malformed: to speak of creaturely beginnings and endings is to assume that there *are* beings which come into and go out of existence.[79]

Does Quenstedt's method run the risk of elevating "Being" as a master term over and above "God"? Quenstedt responds to this charge by pointing out that, to the extent that God is situated alongside creatures within the horizon of "Being," this conceptual priority of Being is solely a mental operation (*per mentis nostrae operationem*); in reality, nothing can precede God ontologically (*Nihil Deum antecedit, aut antecedere potest*).[80] And in response to those who might try to enlist theologians such as Augustine to call the ontological status of creatures into question, Quenstedt writes that although God alone is essentially being (*solus Deus sit ens per essentiam*), creatures themselves are not nothing by comparison.[81]

In summation, Quenstedt observes that being is attributed to God in a higher, but not equivocal, sense; the bare term "Being" is not a meaningless linguistic descriptor ranging over altogether unrelated referents, but rather reflects a genuine relation of independence and dependence within the concept of Being.[82]

Viewed as a whole, Quenstedt's theory of theological analogy reflects a defined conception of the *analogia entis* that is substantially the same as Aquinas's

[77] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

[78] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1. See also Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* Vol. 1, 385 ("The name Jehovah is that distinctively divine name which denotes the immutable being of God, the absolute essence.").

[79] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

[80] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

[81] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

[82] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

version, though he does not explicitly use the phrase.[83] The linchpin of any

[83] Notably, in the course of his larger genealogical argument, Placher positions Quenstedt as an intellectual heir of the Jesuit metaphysician Francisco Suárez, describing him as making "almost exactly Suárez's moves" in his approach to analogy. Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence*, 77 and n31. In so doing, Placher raises the question of Quenstedt's relationship to Suárez within the larger tradition of Christian metaphysics. That question is particularly important, for present purposes, in view of Étienne Gilson's influential critique of Suárezian metaphysics and its relationship to modernity. See Étienne Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers* (Toronto, Canada: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1952), 98–105. In Gilson's telling, Suárez's chief contribution to the emergence of modern thought was his denial of any "real distinction" between essence (*ens*) and existence (*existentia*)—a distinction between metaphysical principles that, according to Gilson, is critical to Christian philosophical theology. Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 98–105. For Gilson, Suarez's failure to respect this distinction ends up encoding a tacit univocity of being within the language of analogy: God is rendered merely the greatest *ens* among other *entia*, rather than the absolute ontological root of all *entia*. See Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 105. Thus, a problem: if Quenstedt is in fact following Suárez, and if Gilson's analysis of Suárez is accepted, then whatever account of analogy Quenstedt is offering diverges from the Thomistic conception. However, Quenstedt's *Theologia Didactico-Polemica* is by no means a philosophical study on the scale of Suárez's project, and a close look at Quenstedt's implicit metaphysical commitments reveals a complex picture.

The most illuminating treatment of this issue comes in Quenstedt's treatment of the divine simplicity. In his didactic proposition on the subject, Quenstedt outlines a number of mereological "compositions" that *are* proper to created beings, but are *not* proper to God (*omnes enim hae compositionis species sunt in hominibus, . . . sunt in angelis, nulla vero earum in Deo reperitur*). Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.I.XI. Among these, Quenstedt lists the distinction of essence and existence (*Non ex essentia et existentia, est enim Deus ens necessarium, de cujus essentia est, necessario esse et existere.*). Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.I.XI; see also Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.5 (*Nec competit Deo compositio Metaphysica ex essentia et existentia*). That being said, in his more extended treatment of divine simplicity later in the text, Quenstedt refers to a distinction between "real" and "conceptual" types of composition, where "real" composition refers to—among other things—the combination of a thing's proper parts, and "conceptual" composition refers to the existence-essence distinction ([*a*]*d compositionem rationis revocari debet primo ex esse et essentia, seu ex existentia et essentia*). Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.5.

It is easy to read this language of "conceptual" compositions as a straight echo of Suárez's denial of any real essence-existence distinction. However, if the essence-existence distinction does not entail a real distinction in some sense, then how is it that God's being is to be meaningfully distinguished from creaturely being by the *absence* of such a distinction, as Quenstedt contends in both his didactic thesis on divine simplicity and his exposition? Gilson notes Suárez's denial that the essence-existence distinction is "necessarily required to save the distinction between the Creator and his creatures." Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 103–4. By contrast, Quenstedt treats the fact that essence and existence are not distinct in God as a core point of difference between God and creatures. Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.I.XI. Put more simply, if the presence of an essence-existence composition within creatures is itself the ground of a genuine difference between creatures and God (in Whom no such composition exists), then in turn the ground of the essence-existence composition in creatures seemingly must be a real distinction between essence and existence. Else, the distinction Quenstedt means to draw between creatures and God on this point would be unintelligible.

This circle can be squared by considering whether Quenstedt is drawing the distinction between

Thomistic *analogia entis* is the unity of God's essence and existence—a unity that is itself the metaphysical denominator of deity.[84] Aquinas and Quenstedt are both committed to this principle. Both Aquinas and Quenstedt use the same formulation—*ens per essentiam*, "essential being"—to characterize the divine essence,[85] and for both Aquinas and Quenstedt, creatures exist as beings only by participation (*per participationem*). To be sure, at one point Quenstedt suggests that the *word* "being" is itself too abstract as a name of God, since it may refer either to infinite or finite being, and displays a preference for the revealed divine name, *Yahweh*, as a designator of God's certain, eternal, immutable, and infinite being.[86] However, this stipulation for proper theological speech does not directly contravene Quenstedt's underlying metaphysical commitment: God is the absolute ontological reality in which creatures participate, and that renders creatures' own existence ultimately relative, though not *nothing*. Indeed, the sixth of Quenstedt's didactic theses on God's essence, which precede his formal analysis of the question of analogy, stipulates that God is *first* conceived

"real" and "conceptual" forms of *composition* in quite the same way as Suárez distinguishes between "real" and "logical" formulations of the essence-existence *distinction*. "Real" composition, for Quenstedt, is primarily limited to assembly of those parts proper to a thing; "conceptual" composition, in turn, refers to the existence-essence conjunction. Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.5. However, the claim that there is no real distinction between essence and existence *as parts* of an existing thing is *not* the same as the claim that there is no real distinction between essence and existence as *principles* of an existing thing. It is, after all, metaphysically proper to state that existence is not a *proper part* of a thing (as Kant's critique of the "ontological argument" for God correctly acknowledged). Cf. Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 101. Existence (*esse*) is more intimate to the creature than any of its discrete elements. On balance, the most coherent reading is probably to take Quenstedt as tacitly acknowledging a *real distinction between*, alongside a *conceptual composition of*, essence and existence within created beings—since this alone makes sense of Quenstedt's affirmation that the *lack* of an essence-existence distinction in God meaningfully differentiates God from created beings. Notable here also is Quenstedt's characterization of the essence-existence distinction as a "metaphysical" composition (*compositio Metaphysica ex essentia et existentia*)—a formulation that is absent from Suárez's *Metaphysical Disputations*. Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.5.

Finally, this broadly "Thomistic" reading finds further support in Quenstedt's insistence that there is nothing in God except existence and that God is his own existence (*nihil in Deo sit, nisi esse, et Deus sit ipsum esse suum*). Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.5. To the extent that Gilson's principal philosophical concern is to preserve the distinctive "existentiality" of the Christian God over against those (such as Suárez) who would render Him a mere essence (*ens* or *essentia*) among other essences, Quenstedt is not to be faulted on that score. See Étienne Gilson, *God and Philosophy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1941), 64–6.

[84] See E.L. Mascall, *He Who Is: A Study in Traditional Theism* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1943), 10–1.

[85] Aquinas, *ST* I.4.3; Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

[86] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

as Being, and that this constitutes an insight from which God's other divine attributes—such as unity, simplicity, truth, and goodness—can be derived.[87] Here, Quenstedt follows Aquinas directly.[88]

Przywara's systematic exposition of the *analogia entis* is particularly instructive on this point. Building on Aquinas's reasoning, Przywara characterizes an authentic *analogia entis* as committed to the following five philosophical propositions: (1) the ontological "suspension" of the creature between God and nothingness; (2) a metaphysical relation within the creature characterized by a "pointing ever-beyond-itself"; (3) an orientation of this relation towards transcendence; (4) an apprehension of this relation as a matter of "dynamic antithetics" that defy any unitary conceptualization; and finally, (5) an understanding that this relation ultimately "leads us through and beyond its positive articulation to a negative declaration."[89]

Quenstedt's theory of theological analogy closely tracks Przywara's framework. Quenstedt emphasizes that (1) the creature has a kind of being in itself, albeit an inherently dependent sort; (2) the logical structure of being itself (*ipsa ratione essendi*) entails an inherent inequality between divine and creaturely being, and so the relation of God and creature always points beyond itself; that (3) that God is ontologically "before," and so logically transcendent of, all created things (*Nihil Deum antecedit*), and that (4) the concept of being attributed to God must be conceived in a much higher way (*longe sublimior modus*), albeit not an equivocal one.[90] And Quenstedt affirms, notwithstanding the account of analogy he has developed, that (5) an infinite distance always remains between God and creature (*manet infinita inter Deum et creaturam distantia*).[91] In short, a careful examination of Quenstedt's account of theological predication reveals that Quenstedt adheres to a conception of the *analogia entis* closely paralleling that advanced by Aquinas and defended by the Thomistic tradition following him.[92]

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[87] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.I.VI ("*primo enim omnium concipimus Deum esse Ens, ex entitate colligimus unitatem, simplicitatem, veritatem, bonitatem, etc.*").

[88] See Aquinas, *ST* I.5.2 ("[I]n idea, which is first conceived by the intellect . . . being is prior to goodness").

[89] Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 190–91.

[90] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1

[91] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1

[92] Indeed, the substantial similarity between Quenstedt's *analogia entis* and that put forward by Aquinas lies at the root of Karl Barth's lengthy criticism of Quenstedt in the second volume of the *Church Dogmatics*. See Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics Vol. 2: The Doctrine of God, Part I*, eds. G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1957), 237–43. Barth denounces Quenstedt's method on the grounds that "there is not a single reference to God's revelation in the whole *quaestio* in which Quenstedt speaks of [analogy of intrinsic attribution]" such that "in Quenstedt revelation is not nec-

Evaluating Alternative Interpretations of Quenstedt's Analogy Theory

In the last several decades, a number of rival readings of Quenstedt's approach to theological analogy have emerged, each alleging that Quenstedt's approach diverges from the Thomistic metaphysical tradition of the *analogia entis*. Three such interpretations of Quenstedt—advanced by Battista Mondin, William Placher, and Robert Preus, respectively—must be considered and evaluated in turn.

A. *Quenstedt Against Equivocity*

Battista Mondin's critique of Quenstedt's project amounts to the accusation that Quenstedt lapses into a functional equivocity of being. That is to say, Mondin reads Quenstedt's account of theological analogy as the use of a metaphysical grammar that Quenstedt does not actually understand or embrace, and that lacks any real correspondence to ontological realities.[93]

Mondin reaches this conclusion by interpreting the Lutheran theological tradition as necessarily entailing the flat denial of any natural knowledge of God. Mondin attributes to Luther the views that "general, natural knowledge, that which is acquired by the philosopher, does not give us any true knowledge of God," that "[i]n the present situation of man a natural knowledge of God is no longer possible since there is no analogy between man and God, and that even the knowledge of God afforded by revelation cannot go beyond an analogy of external attribution.[94] Mondin ultimately concludes that in Luther, "the image of God in man is so corrupted by sin that a natural knowledge of God becomes impossible forever."[95] Hence, according to Mondin, when Quenstedt considers metaphysical questions he inevitably does so inaptly: Quenstedt deploys the

essary to make us participants in the truth of God. We are so already, to the extent that we are, already, what God is absolutely." Barth, *Church Dogmatics Vol. 2: The Doctrine of God, Part I*, 239, 241. Barth explains that that "Quenstedt . . . obviously has in mind a relationship between the Creator and the creature which as such can be known even apart from the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ." Barth, *Church Dogmatics Vol. 2: The Doctrine of God, Part I*, 239–40. And according to Barth, an account of analogy that cashes out in a metaphysical relation between absolute and relative being constitutes a "perceptible fellowship . . . between God and man" that improperly neglects the central role of Christology in theology. Barth, *Church Dogmatics Vol. 2: The Doctrine of God, Part I*, 241–2; see also Archie J. Spencer, *The Analogy of Faith: The Quest for God's Speakability* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 229 (following Barth in charging Quenstedt's account of analogy with "forgetful[ness] of the priority of the gospel"). A full treatment of Barth's criticism of the *analogia entis*, and the many responses to that critique, lies beyond the scope of the present study. It is worth noting, however, that it is precisely divine revelation that Quenstedt invokes to justify the plausibility of a natural knowledge of God. Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

[93] Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 112.

[94] Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 104–5.

[95] Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 110.

language of intrinsic attribution "not very intelligently, i.e. without making the necessary adaptations."[96] While "a Catholic theologian is in a position to interpret the analogy between God and creatures as an analogy of intrinsic attribution," conversely "Quenstedt, as a Protestant theologian, as a disciple of Luther and Calvin, is not."[97] On this view, only an analogy of extrinsic attribution, one that would deny the real existence of the creature, could be deemed genuinely *Lutheran*.[98]

Mondin's argument here rests on a number of misconceptions. Perhaps most significantly, Mondin fails to note the context of Luther's remarks on human knowledge of God: a limited knowledge of God's existence and attributes, which Luther expressly affirmed, is distinct from knowledge of God's salvific purposes towards human beings.[99] Accordingly, Mondin appears to beg the question against Luther; notably, Mondin does *not* read Aquinas's own statements regarding divine incomprehensibility[100] as altogether precluding the possibility of a genuine natural knowledge of God, suggesting that Mondin's characterization of Protestant theology tends to be more polemical than analytical.

In any event, wholly apart from the question of Luther's own views, Quenstedt explicitly adopts Aquinas's argument that a natural knowledge of God is possible: according to both Quenstedt and Aquinas, such knowledge is both a truth of philosophy, as Aristotle demonstrated, and a truth expressed in revelation, as noted in Romans 1.[101] Even if Mondin's reading of Luther as denying any natural knowledge of God is correct, it is certainly a position that Quenstedt himself did not share.

B. *Quenstedt Against Univocity*

[96] Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 112.

[97] Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 112.

[98] Paralleling Mondin's argument here, Milbank and Betz both fault Luther, and the Protestant scholastic tradition after him, for allegedly offering a concept of God that would deny the real ontological status of the creature. See Milbank, "Reformation 500," 618 (arguing that in Protestant scholasticism, "even an embrace of the primacy of attribution . . . can conceal an effective adherence to univocity . . . if this is seen in terms of efficient causal instigation by a therefore entirely unknown goodness and truth etc as opposed to a real participatory communication of a formality and a teleology"); Betz, "Translator's Introduction," 51 (criticizing Lutheran theology for allegedly espousing ("a theopanism of 'God alone' (whereby God is or does essentially everything and the creature is or does essentially nothing)"). Quenstedt's actual doctrine of analogy, which affirms the real being of created existents and explicitly advocates for an "analogical-participatory world-view," belies these charges. Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory*, xxvi.

[99] For a careful treatment of Luther's own views on this subject, see Ralph A. Bohlmann, "The Natural Knowledge of God," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 34 (1963): 727–8.

[100] See, e.g., Aquinas, *ST* I.12.7.

[101] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

William Placher charges Quenstedt with precisely the opposite of the error Mondin alleges. For Placher, Quenstedt's mistake is his embrace of a functional univocity of being, one that entails "the domestication of God's transcendence" by employing terms like "being (or goodness, or wisdom) of God and creatures in the same way."[102] For Quenstedt, as interpreted by Placher, "the analogy [between God's being and the being of creatures] seems only a matter of degree: God's being is infinite, creatures' finite."[103]

Placher groups Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin together as theologians who properly acknowledged the infinite mystery of God, before error set in and analogical predication came to "function as a way of explaining just what we do mean" in God-talk, rather than as "offering a series of reminders concerning how we cannot understand what we mean when we speak of God."[104] Placher's argument here is heavily influenced by postliberal theologians such as Kathryn Tanner, who defend an "apophatic or agnostic reading" of the Christian tradition in which "theological statements are not conveying information about God so much as they are suggesting how to talk in circumstances where we do not pretend to understand fully what we are saying."[105] On Placher's account, a functional equivocity regarding theological speech is precisely the appropriate tack; "a dangerous determination to systematize and clarify" the language of theological metaphysics leads into error.[106]

Setting aside the fact that this "grammatical" reading of Aquinas represents a historically idiosyncratic reading of the Thomistic tradition,[107] Placher's interpretation of Quenstedt—as treating the interval between divine and creaturely being as solely a "matter of degree," thereby contributing to the collapse of divine transcendence—misses the mark.[108] Namely, it reads Quenstedt as, in essence, deploying a conception of analogy—analogy of inequality—that Quenstedt explicitly rejects. While Quenstedt does indeed state that God's being is infinite (*Ens, ut est in Deo, sit infinitum*), this claim does not exhaust the metaphysical content of the God-creature relation; creatures exist only by participation (*per participationem*) and the entirety of a creature's being depends upon God (*Nam tota Entitas creaturae dependet a Deo*).[109] In Quenstedt's conception of the *analogia entis*, God

[102] Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence*, 76–7.
[103] Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence*, 77.
[104] Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence*, 67, 74.
[105] Tanner, *God and Transcendence in Christian Theology*, 12.
[106] Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence*, 74.
[107] See Murphy, *God Is Not a Story*, 303.
[108] Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence*, 77.
[109] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

is not merely the same *kind of thing* as a creature, albeit infinitely exalted; rather, creaturely being is necessarily dependent and participating, while divine being is absolute and participated.[110] There is no conceivable "scale of being" according to which God and creatures might be evaluated as a matter of degree, because God *is* Being by essence (*ens per essentiam*).[111] Accordingly, Placher's reading of Quenstedt lacks substantial support in the actual text.

C. *Quenstedt as Metaphysician*

Robert Preus, perhaps the most influential English-language interpreter of the Lutheran scholastic tradition, argues that Quenstedt's account of theological analogy should not be read as "metaphysical" at all: "The question to which Quenstedt addresses himself is not primarily cognitive . . . or ontological, but linguistic and semantic. . . . Neither is Quenstedt speaking of an ontological question, of our creature relationship to God."[112] Preus's characterization, however, is difficult to reconcile with Quenstedt's insistence that when terms like "being," "essence," and "substance" are predicated commonly of God and creatures, a correspondence exists not merely in name, but also in reality (*non solum nudo nomine, sed etiam quoad rem*).[113] Quenstedt is entirely capable of distinguishing between the linguistic and ontological significations of the terms used in his argument, and he does not limit his theory of analogy to the merely semantic. Moreover, it is difficult to know what to make of Quenstedt's claim that creatures exist by participation if the question of the "creature relationship to God" is not deemed to be part of Quenstedt's analysis.

In keeping with his "linguistic" reading of Quenstedt, Preus interprets Quenstedt's theory of theological analogy as perhaps deliberately stopping short of a full-orbed *analogia entis*: "Can God and man be comprehended under one concept such as being? Quenstedt does not answer the question, nor do the other Lutherans, possibly sensing that the whole use of analogical language in speaking of God will be undermined if the question is answered yes or no."[114] But as has been demonstrated, Quenstedt *does* answer this question. Metaphysically speaking, God does not fall "under" being, since God is always ontologically first (*Nihil Deum antecedit*); to the extent that God is *spoken of* as coming under the concept of being, this is merely a cognitive operation (*per mentis nostrae operationem*).[115]

[110] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[111] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[112] Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, Vol. 2, 43–4.
[113] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[114] Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, Vol. 2, 44.
[115] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

This is a procedure that is wholly consistent with Quenstedt's conception of God *as* absolute Being (*primo enim omnium concipimus Deum esse Ens*), the touchstone of the *analogia entis*.[116]

New Directions for Lutheran Philosophy

Quenstedt's *analogia entis*, understood as part of an existing tradition of Christian metaphysics, represents an underexplored direction for Lutheran theology and philosophy more generally. Perhaps most significantly, Quenstedt's account of the *analogia entis* represents a notable counterexample to widespread claims that the Reformation—and the Protestant theology that emerged from it—constituted a rejection of the Western philosophical and metaphysical tradition up to that point.[117] Lutherans need not read Luther's attacks on "reason"—challenges to the dominant synergistic theologies of his day—as broadsides against philosophical theology as such; Quenstedt, Gerhard, and other Lutheran scholastics certainly did not reject such projects.

A rediscovery of Quenstedt's formulation of the *analogia entis* also carries with it implications for currents internal to Lutheran theology. Likewise advancing a narrative of decline, proponents of the "New Finnish Interpretation of Luther" have argued that the ontological dimensions of Luther's original theology were sacrificed during the process of confessionalization, which produced a strictly forensic account of justification and severed Lutheran theology from its initial metaphysical underpinnings.[118] Paradoxically, however, Quenstedt proves to be a *more* thoroughly metaphysical thinker than Luther; to name just one example, unambiguously participationist language is difficult to identify in Luther's works,[119] but participation is explicitly taught in Quenstedt's account of analogy.[120] Accordingly, theologians keen to draw out ontological themes in the Lutheran tradition—themes that have often been downplayed in Lutheran

[116] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.I.VI. See also Baur, *Die Vernunft zwischen Ontologie und Evangelium*, 42 (agreeing with this reading of Quenstedt).

[117] See, e.g., Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation*, 41.

[118] See, e.g., Simo Peura, "Christ as Favor and Gift (donum): The Challenge of Luther's Understanding of Justification" in *Union With Christ: The New Finnish Interpretation of Luther*, eds. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 42–8.

[119] See, e.g., Dennis Bielfeldt, "Response to Sammeli Juntunen, 'Luther and Metaphysics,'" in *Union With Christ: The New Finnish Interpretation of Luther*, eds. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 164–5 ("The preference Luther expresses for Plato over Aristotle in the *Heidelberg Disputation* is made to carry too much weight [by Finnish School proponents] in suggesting that all of created, natural being (*esse naturae*) itself participates in God.").

[120] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.

thought[121]—may benefit from reconsidering the scholastics.

Finally, a notable feature of Quenstedt's *analogia entis* is its difference in epistemic emphasis as compared to some other presentations of the doctrine. As previously noted, Quenstedt understands appropriate theological analogy to be an analogy of intrinsic attribution, rather than analogy of proportionality.[122] Przywara, conversely, treats analogy of attribution and analogy of proportionality as two movements within the same ontological "structure," but tends to emphasize the latter as better securing God's transcendence by stressing His absolute differentiation (*maior dissimilitudo*) from creation.[123] One might therefore say that Quenstedt's emphasis on analogy of attribution is more oriented towards acknowledging God's immanent presence within created reality. Such a construal is supported by the amount of space Quenstedt devotes to rebutting advocates of equivocity in theological predication: for Quenstedt, denying the meaningfulness of speech about God seems to pose more of a problem than stressing the actuality of the metaphysical relation between God and creatures.[124] This preference on Quenstedt's part is theologically notable. In a modern milieu widely characterized by "disenchantment"—a loss of the sense "that God is there, acting in the cosmos, founding and sustaining societies, acting as a bulwark against evil," in a world that "testifie[s] to divine purpose and action"[125]—Quenstedt's analogy of intrinsic attribution more strongly emphasizes divine proximity than an analogy of proportionality emphasizing God's distance from creation. As far as his *analogia entis* is concerned, modern "disenchantment" is never a matter of divine absence, but merely of forgetfulness.

[121] Bielfeldt, "Response to Sammeli Juntunen," 163.
[122] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[123] Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 234.
[124] Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, I.VIII.II.1.
[125] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2007), 25–6.

Analogy in Thomas Aquinas and His Commentariat: The Discovery of the Analogy of Attribution at the Nexus of *Ens Commune* and *Ipsum Esse Subsistens*

By Josh Tinkham[1]

Abstract: *In traversing the expansive corpus of St. Thomas Aquinas, a marked development observed in his thought is the doctrine of analogy. As a metaphysician, whose concern is with the real (i.e., being* qua *being), St. Thomas sought to develop a form of analogy that properly reflects the ontological cause-and-effect relation between the God and the creature. Phrased differently, since God, as self-subsistent being (*ipsum esse subsistens*), is outside the ontological order of the creature (*ens commune*), the analogy of attribution* ad alterum *("one to another") provides, for St. Thomas, sufficient grounding to speak of creatures as participating in imperfect qualities which find their source in whom they originate and from whom they are communicated—God. Stemming from the development in St. Thomas' thought concerning the notion of analogy is the diversity of opinion found within the Angelic Doctor's commentary tradition. Therefore, in addition to elucidating what form of analogy St. Thomas settled upon when considering the matter on the transcendental level (i.e., the analogy of attribution), is the demonstration of how some of his disciples may have taken his doctrine of analogy to conclusions he did not deduce because they were inquiring after solutions to questions he did not consider.*

Keywords: St. Thomas, Cajetan, Scotus, analogy of attribution, analogy of proportionality

Introduction

Surpassing the sheer volume of writings produced by St. Thomas are the commentaries written on his works. There is hardly left untouched any aspect of the Master in *Sacra Pagina's* works that has not been commented upon by subsequent followers. Within this tradition of commentary, however, is no shortage of opinions on what St. Thomas meant when elucidating a certain topic, most notably his doctrine of analogy.

The function of analogy is important to the Christian tradition because it sets the basis for how we speak of God. Univocal speech concerning God and creation will result in the loss of the transcendence of God. Alternatively, equivo-

[1] Josh Tinkham is the pastor of Covenant Community Church in Newark, Ohio. He holds a Th.M. in systematics from Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary and is a Ph.D. student in philosophy of religion at Southern Evangelical Seminary.

cal speech will result in the creature's inability to obtain any real knowledge of God (i.e., agnosticism). Moreover, on the level of being, analogy likewise sets the foundation for our ontological conceptions of God and creation. A univocal conception of being (*ens*) between God and creation places Him within the creaturely domain (e.g., pantheism). Equivocity separates creation as wholly independent from God. As somewhat of a *via media*, analogy, according to St. Thomas, establishes the proper relationship of diversity and unity between God and creation.[2]

The matter in dispute amongst St.Thomas' commentators, however, is what form of analogy is utilized by him in reference to the relationship between God and creation (i.e., the transcendental analogy of being). Notable commentators spanning from Thomas de Vio Cajetan[3] to Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange[4] are proponents of the analogy of proper proportionality. On the other hand, more recent commentators have asserted that such usage of the analogy of proper proportionality between God and creation cannot be squared with the thought of St. Thomas himself, stating that "The writings of Scotus forced Aquinas' disciples to search their master's texts for answers to questions he was not considering."[5] In examining the texts of St. Thomas, what will be demonstrated is that in his mature writings, the analogy of attribution *ad alterum* ("one to another") was favored and settled upon to establish the relationship between God and creation.

[2] That is common being's (*ens commune*) distinctiveness from self-subsistent being (*ipsum esse subsistens*), yet its dependency upon self-subsistent being for existence.

[3] "Analogates are twofold. Certain ones [are analogous] according to a determinate relation of one to another. Certain others [are analogous] according to proportionality. For example, substance and accident are analogates under being in the first way. But God and creatures [are analogates] in the second way, for there is an infinite distance between God and creature." Cajetan, *In de Ente et Essentia*, q. 3, in Domenic D'Ettore, *Analogy After Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University Press of America, 2019), 128.

[4] Garrigou-Lagrange states,

> The analogy of attribution can express the relation of one thing to another (as of the air to the health of the animal), or of several things to one object (as of the salubrious air and the healthful remedy to the health of the animal). And since extrinsic denomination suffices for this analogy of attribution in the secondary analogates (for the air is not intrinsically healthy), this analogy does not as yet clearly make known in what the analogates are intrinsically alike, when they are truly so alike. Hence, although this analogy is perhaps prior in the way of investigation, yet if we wish to know in what the analogates, which have something intrinsically in common, are intrinsically alike among themselves, we must have recourse to the more profound analogy of proportionality.

Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *The One God: A Commentary on the First Part of St. Thomas' Theological Summa* (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1943), 399–400.

[5] D'Ettore, *Analogy After Aquinas*, 182.

Not to be neglected is the recognition of St. Thomas' utilization of different types of analogy throughout his corpus, specifically the analogy of proportionality in one early work. Nonetheless, the importance underlying the delineation between such tedious nuances of types of analogy lies not only in conceptual semantics (i.e., the intelligible notion used to speak of a likeness between God and creature) but in metaphysical implications.

The State of the Question for St. Thomas: Conceptual or Metaphysical?

Critical to understanding why there has developed a diversity of opinion amongst St. Thomas' disciples concerning the topic of his use of analogy, especially concerning analogy on the transcendental level, is that, as Bernard Montagnes argues, many followers of St. Thomas have shifted their theory of analogy from "ontology to logic."[6] Stated differently, how one approaches the matter itself, as a logician or a metaphysician, will greatly influence how St. Thomas is interpreted. For instance, according to Lawrence Dewan, "The logician's outlook is limited to things from the viewpoint of their mode of being in the intellect."[7] In contrast, it is the metaphysician who "considers beings as beings."[8]

When approaching the matter of analogy between God and creation (i.e., the transcendental level of being), Montagnes terms the respective method of the former as "a metaphysics of the idea of being," and for the latter, "a metaphysics of the degree of being."[9] The logician's focus, therefore, is upon the concept (i.e., the abstracted phantasm) that is either analogically or univocally used to compare the similitude amongst various analogates. The metaphysician's inquiry, however, is broader. Starting with the thing (*res*) in reality, the metaphysician abstracts from it a mental conception (i.e., a phantasm), thus encompassing the method of the logician, but for the purpose of subsequently comparing the abstracted notion with the real—the formal concept (i.e., the *ratio* in the mind) with the external thing (i.e., the *actus essendi* of the thing).

The force influencing this shift from a philosophy of being to a philosophy of concepts originates, as Domenic D'Ettore claims, from Duns Scotus' critique of Henry of Ghent concerning analogy as a foundation for natural theology.[10] In his *Ordinato*, Scotus asks, "Can the intellect of the wayfarer have a simple con-

[6] Bernard Montagnes, *The Doctrine of the Analogy of Being According to Thomas Aquinas* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2004), 132.

[7] Lawrence Dewan, *Form and Being: Studies in Thomistic Metaphysics* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University Press of America, 2006), 84.

[8] Dewan, *Form and Being*, 85.

[9] Montagnes, *Analogy of Being*, 158–9.

[10] A summary of this background can be found in D'Ettore, *Analogy After Aquinas*, 21–6.

cept in which God is conceived?"[11] The reasoning behind such a question lies in Scotus' argument that "if there is to be science of God, it must rely on names said through one and the same *ratio* and, therefore, on univocity and not analogy."[12] Accordingly, if we are to acquire real knowledge of God within the domain of natural theology, the names or concepts man attributes to either God or the creature must in some fashion have identical (i.e., univocal) meaning within the conceptual realm.

Explaining how one is to obtain such univocal concepts, Scotus proceeds to assert,

> Every metaphysical inquiry about God proceeds in the following manner: one considers the formal character [*raison*] of something; one eliminates the imperfection that this formal character would have in creatures; one posits this formal character separately by attributing to it the absolutely supreme perfection; and one attributes it to God in this form. For example, the formal character of wisdom (intelligence) or will: considered in and for itself, it includes neither imperfection nor limitation; once the imperfections that accompany it in creatures have been eliminated, one attributes it to God by carrying it to the supreme degree of perfection. Every inquiry about God therefore supposes that the intellect has the same univocal concept there as it draws from creatures.[13]

Once a concept has been abstracted (e.g., wisdom), and through privation removed of any imperfections, this pure concept, according to Scotus, can then be applied to both God and the creature. Phrased differently, the pure concept takes conceptual priority by encompassing the analogates, thus bridging the intelligible gap from creature to God.[14]

[11] Scotus, *Ordinatio I*, d. 3, pars 1, qq. 1–2, as translated in D'Ettore, *Analogy After Aquinas*, 22.

[12] D'Ettore, *Analogy After Aquinas*, 26.

[13] Scotus, *Ordinatio I*, dist. 8, pars 1, q. 3, n. 39, translated in Montagnes, *The Doctrine of the Analogy of Being*, 119, 120.

[14] Of note is the debate if Scotus would also grant univocity on the metaphysical level. D'Ettore states,

> Scotus distinguishes in his *Ordinatio* between conceptual and real diversity, saying that God and creatures are not primarily diverse in concepts, although they are primarily diverse in reality because they agree in no reality. In other words, although Scotus holds that God and creatures agree in one univocal concept—including the concept signified through the name "being"—he also says that the concept of being is not answered by a single reality. . . . Texts such as these have provoked debate on whether Scotus restricts the univocity of being (and presumably other names said

Most notable amongst St. Thomas' followers who would subsequently respond to Scotus' proposition of employing univocal conceptions between God and creation is Thomas de Vio Cajetan. In seeking to be faithful to his master's thought, Cajetan sought to counter Scotus' notion of univocal conceptions by conceiving of an analogical conception between God and creation via the analogy of proper proportionality. The analogy of proper proportionality finds agreement, not between a determinate relationship between the two analogates *per se* (e.g., the analogy of attribution), but it "is rather based on the agreement or similarity of two proportions with another."[15] For example, the notion of sight can be said of vision and understanding in the sense that sight is to the eye and understanding to the mind. Or as John Wippel asserts, "In this way we may say that just as the infinite is to the infinite, so is the finite to the finite. Hence there is this kind of likeness between a creature and God, since just as God has those things which belong to him, so does a creature have those things which belong to it."[16] Therefore, like Scotus, Cajetan admits of a common concept between analogates, but one that "makes the proper formal concept of one analogate an imperfect representation of the others."[17]

Elucidating the similarity between Scotus and Cajetan of both holding to a singular concept wherein one can move from the creature to God, Wipple states,

> of God and creatures) to the level of concepts while granting that the realities are metaphysically analogous. In effect, does Scotus hold that being is simply speaking univocal or does he hold that being is univocal to the logician although analogous to the metaphysician?

D'Ettore, *Analogy After Aquinas*, 26–8.

[15] John Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being* (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 200), 552.

[16] Wippel, *Metaphysical*, 554.

[17] D'Ettore, *Analogy After Aquinas*, 38. Cajetan himself correspondingly asserts,

> The sense is that one concept which perfectly represents one of two analogates, as such, imperfectly represents the other. With respect to the external word, however, there is no difference between analogous and univocal characters. . . . As regards the imperfect mental concept, although it is distinguished [from the analogates] just as what is one absolutely from what is many absolutely, nevertheless it is not distinguished from them as the one which abstracts from the many in representation, as is the case with univocal terms. For from the foregoing it is clear that that concept, say, of quality insofar as it is a being, is an adequate representation of one of the analogates, viz. of quality itself, insofar as concerns its relationship to its own 'to be' and does not abstract from the quiddity of quality. Of the other analogates, however, such as quantity and substance, the concept is an imperfect representation insofar as it is similar to them proportionally.

Tommaso de Vio Cajetan, *The Analogy of Names, and the Concept of Being* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2009), 34, 35.

"This common core serves as a bridge, as it were, which enables us to move from knowledge of perfections in their finite and participated state to such a pure perfection considered in itself, and from this to its application to the infinite and unparticipated source of all being."[18] Accordingly, whether an analogical likeness or univocal pure perfection is used, conceptually, both Scotus and Cajetan's respective methods subsume the analogates under a common term for the purpose of providing conceptual intelligibility between God and the creature.

What makes Cajetan's peculiar notion of analogy "proper," however, is that the analogous term does not merely stay within the domain of the conceptual, but it is formally and intrinsically in each of the analogates. Stated differently, in the analogy of proper proportionality, whether an analogical likeness is attributed to one analogate in a more perfect way, or another in a diminished way, the conceptual form of the term must yet, in some fashion, be present within each respective analogate. Elucidating this particular form of analogy found in Cajetan, George Klubertanz states,

> The analogy of proportionality is that analogy in which there is no direct relationship between the analogates themselves; there is instead a relationship within each of the analogates, and these relationships are similar . . . an analogy is called "proper" if the perfection is intrinsic to each of the analogates in question, and "improper" or "extrinsic" if the perfection is present only in one of the analogates. . . . This type alone is analogy in the proper sense, since only in this type does each of the analogates intrinsically possess the analogous perfection, which is proportionately similar in all analogates.[19]

Echoing this sentiment, H. D. Gardeil likewise asserts, "What distinguishes this analogy (the analogy of proper proportionality) most sharply from the analogy of attribution is that the nature or idea (*ratio*) signified by the analogous term occurs intrinsically and formally in each of the analogates."[20] Respectively, for Cajetan, why the only proper analogy is the analogy of proper proportionality is because it is not merely extrinsic, but it is intrinsic.[21]

[18] Wippel, *Metaphysical*, 571.

[19] George P. Klubertanz, *St. Thomas Aquinas on Analogy: A Textual Analysis and Systematic Synthesis* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2009), 7, 9.

[20] H. D. Gardeil, *Introduction to the Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas Vol. 4: Metaphysics* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2012), 54.

[21] A summary concerning Cajetan's view of analogy of proper proportionality can be found in Montagnes, *The Doctrine of the Analogy of Being*, 127.

Following in the footsteps of Cajetan, Edward Feser states, "Now, the analogy of proper proportionality differs from the univocal use of terms in that the concept expressed is not applied in exactly the same way to each analogate, even if we do not have (as we do in the equivocal use of terms) the expression, in each application of the term, of utterly different concepts. Rather, the concept is applied to all the analogates in an indistinct and indeterminate way on the basis of a real likeness or similarity they bear to one another."[22] Like Cajetan, Feser seeks to establish a shared pure perfection between the analogates, but following further into the Cardinal's example, he also states that the pure concept is present "in an indistinct and indeterminate way"[23] in each of the analogates. For instance, he writes, "An example of the analogy of proper proportionality would be the predication of life to plants, animals, human beings, and angels. What makes the analogy in question here one of proper proportionality is, first, that life exists intrinsically in each of the analogates (in contrast to the analogy of attribution); and secondly, that it exists formally in each of them."[24]

The analogy of proper proportionality's progression of a singular pure perfection that does not merely remain in the logical but also is intrinsically and formally present in each of the analogates according to proportion comes under critique by Montagnes when he states, "For, once one grants that there is an analogous concept which is truly one, even if the unity of this concept is imperfect and proportional, one is inevitably led to attribute to it properties that belong to the univocal concept."[25] Phrased differently, where it is debated that Scotus was hesitant to bring his univocal conceptions between God and the creature from the domain of logic to the real, Montagnes implies that the logical outcome of Cajetan's analogy of proper proportionality goes further by placing shared formal conceptions (though differing according to proportion) really within God and the creature.

Although Cajetan's notion of proper proportionality can be useful on the predicamental level (e.g., the predication of being to dog, man, and angel),[26] it yet seems that he collapses the transcendental level of analogy into the predica-

[22] Edward Feser, *Scholastic Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction* (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Books, 2014), 258.

[23] Feser, *Scholastic Metaphysics*, 258

[24] Feser, *Scholastic Metaphysics*, 257.

[25] Montagnes, *The Doctrine of the Analogy of Being*, 134.

[26] "What analogy of proportionality can do is help us understand better the divine nature of the divine attributes by comparing them to various human or creaturely qualities and characteristics that we comprehend more fully." Gregory P. Rocca, *Speaking the Incomprehensible God* (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University Press of America, 2004), 127.

mental level when seeking to establish a relation of proportionality between God and the creature.[27] As Montagnes asserts, "While Thomas in the *De Veritate* distinguishes transcendental analogy from predicamental analogy in order to emphasize the separating role of the first, Cajetan unites them into a single one, the analogy of proper proportionality, to which he attributes a unifying function and which is closer, all things considered, to the univocity of Scotus than to the analogy of Thomas."[28] However, one of the difficulties with this, as Battista Mondin argues,

> is that when we try to set up a proportionality between God and creatures, e.g. human existence is to human essence as divine existence is to divine essence, there seems to be no similarity between the two proportions; because the relation between the elements of the divine proportion is only logical (since there is no distinction between essence and existence in God) while the relation between the elements of the human proportion is real (since there is a real distinction between essence and existence in man).[29]

In sum, the problematic nature of Cajetan transferring his type of analogy, which is fitted well for the predicamental level,[30] to the transcendental level, is that: (1) There is no "one to another" relation of God to His essence as there is to man and his essence (e.g., God is subsisting wisdom in contrast to man possessing a quality of wisdom). Hence, the four terms required to establish the two couplets in an analogy of proportionality fail because there can only be three terms (e.g., God, man/essence). Furthermore, (2) Cajetan's analogy according to proper proportionality, as will be demonstrated, inevitably falls too close to what St. Thomas consistently sought to safeguard against. Specifically, any type of analogical or univocal predication that would subsume God and the creature under some common notion or form.

In conclusion, with subsequent disciples of St. Thomas, such as Cajetan,

[27] For example, Garrigou-Lagrange asserts, "That to attribute being to God is to say that the First Cause is to His existence what the creature is to its existence, just as intellection is to the intelligible what sensation is to the sensible." Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *God: His Existence and His Nature II* (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1955), 210.

[28] Montagnes, *The Doctrine of the Analogy of Being*, 137.

[29] Battista Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology* (Netherlands: Springer Media, 1963), 101.

[30] "Cajetan's failures are due to his exaggerated Aristotelianism. Indeed his version of analogy is thoroughly Aristotelian. It does not take into account the long evolution and deep transformation of the notion of analogy, especially by the Neoplatonists and by Aquinas." Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy*, 51.

coming to the defense of their master by combating Scotus' proposition of univocal conceptions between God and creation, it must be asked: "Did their shift into more of a philosophy of concepts expose them to metaphysical pitfalls that St. Thomas himself sought to avoid?" More narrowly, in searching "their master's texts for answers to questions he was not considering,"[31] was Cajetan's employment of the analogy of proper proportionality truly authentic to St. Thomas' metaphysical analogy that is grounded in common being's (*ens commune*) causal relation to God (i.e., *ipsum esse subsitens*)? Our subsequent examination will lead us to conclude that it was not. For St. Thomas was first and foremost a metaphysician whose concern was with the real as the basis for the notions of the conceptual. Correspondingly, an analysis of St. Thomas' doctrine of analogy must begin with an examination of being (*ens*) and the relationship to its efficient cause.

Grounding Being in Its Efficient Causality

In the *Summa Theologiae* 1a.2.3, St. Thomas takes up the question of "Whether God Exists?" Of crucial note to his endeavor, St. Thomas is not seeking here to demonstrate the God of the Christian faith *per se*, but the notion of the term "God" (i.e., that a haver of divinity exists). Furthermore, the name "God" is not a proper name in that it does not directly manifest or comprehend the divine essence, but it is a notion that is used to signify the actions of one whose nature it is to transcend all things, is the principle of all things, and is removed from all things (i.e., a transcendent cause).[32]

It is, however, the effects of God (not any *a priori* notions of the divine) that gives St. Thomas his entry point into intelligibly answering the question of "Whether God Exists." The reason for this *a posteriori* starting point is the inherent limitation of man's mode of cognition (*modus cognoscendi*) when considering knowledge of God. For when man encounters an individuated thing (*res*) outside of himself, the intellect is awakened to activity by the bodily senses beginning the process of apprehension wherein the determinations of the individuated reality are conceptually assimilated. From this collective deposit gathered by

[31] D'Ettore, *Analogy After Aquinas*, 182.

[32] "Because therefore God is not known to us in His nature, but is made known to us from His operations or effects, we name Him from these. . . hence this name "God" is a name of operation so far as relates to the source of its meaning. For this name is imposed from His universal providence over all things; since all who speak of God intend to name God as exercising providence over all;" Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae 1-49*, Vol. 13 Latin/English ed., Trans. by Fr. Laurence Shapcote (Green Bay WI: Aquinas Institute, 2021), 1.13.8.

the sensitive organs, the imagination,[33] to make the external object intelligible, then proceeds to form an internal representation of the external object—which is termed a "phantasm." Phantasms are what the intellect turns to in order to illumine the form (*quiddity*) that exists in the external object. Subsequently, with the form provided in the phantasm, the intellect is then able to make its judgment by descending back to the external object and attributing to it a formal or universal determination (e.g., "this thing is a human").[34] In short, St. Thomas' realism "is based upon the double fact that our knowledge truly attains reality because reality is the cause of our knowledge"[35] by pressing itself upon our senses. The senses, however, are "only bearers of a message which they are incapable of reading, for only the intellect can decipher it"[36] by abstracting the form from the sensible datum. As is evident, knowledge of all forms or universals that man conceives first originate from sense perception of the concrete singular, and not from *a priori* notions.

The limitation of man's mode of obtaining knowledge, however, is brought to the forefront by the inability of obtaining immediate knowledge of God's being through the senses. For God's being is not a composite of substance and existence by which man can extract the form and comprehend it. Stated differently, because God (subject) is identical with the predicate (to exist)—thus placing God outside of the order of created being[37]— consequently, man cannot know God's existence (*an sit*) in a self-evident manner because we cannot know His essence (*quid sit*). Therefore, in order to give a demonstration for the existence of God, one must proceed from what is better known to us (i.e., the effects of God) to the cause. As St. Thomas asserts,

[33] "The primary and basic power of forming images is imagination. . . . Its operation supposes the persistence of sense impressions after the stimulus which produced these impressions is removed. The proper object of imaginal power, therefore, is something absent. Its product is a phantasm, which is the sensible representation of an original experience." Robert Brennan, *Thomistic Psychology: A Philosophical Analysis of the Nature of Man* (Tacoma, WA: Cluny Media, 2016), 13. "Sensation is the act of a corporeal organ suited for reception of the particular as such; that is, the universal form existing in an individual corporeal matter. The sensible species, or medium through which it passes, and the sense itself are realities of the same order since they fall, all three, into the genus of the particular. The same is true of the imagination, in which phantasms reside." Etienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), 217.

[34] An expanded summarization on epistemology from a Moderate Realism perspective can be found in Thomas White, *Wisdom in the Face of Modernity* (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press of Ave Maria University, 2016), 121-4. And Brennan, *Thomistic Psychology*, 1–26.

[35] Etienne Gilson, *Thomist Realism and the Critique of Knowledge* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2012), 203.

[36] Gilson, *Thomist Realism*, 199.

[37] The principles of created being (*ens commune*) are essence (*essentia*) and existence (*esse*).

> When an effect is better known to us than its cause, from the effect we proceed to the knowledge of the cause. And from every effect the existence of its proper cause can be demonstrated, so long as its effects are better known to us; because since every effect depends upon its cause, if the effect exists, the cause must pre-exist. Hence the existence of God, in so far as it is not self-evident to us, can be demonstrated from those of His effects which are known to us.[38]

An example of this *a posteriori* demonstration is St. Thomas' argument of an efficient cause found in the Second Way (*ST* I.2.3) and the *Summa Contra Gentiles* 1, Ch. 15. He states,

> We find in the world certain beings, those namely that are subject to generation and corruption, which can be or not be. But what can exist has a cause because, since it is equally related to two contraries, namely being and non-being, it must be owing to some cause that being accrues to it. Now, as we have proved by the reasoning of Aristotle, one cannot proceed to infinity among causes. We must therefore posit something that is a necessary being. Every necessary being, however, either has the cause of its necessity in an outside source or, if it does not, it is necessary through itself. But one cannot proceed to infinity among necessary beings the cause of whose necessity lies in an outside source. We must therefore posit a first necessary being, which is necessary through itself.[39]

Two arguments are being demonstrated by St. Thomas here. The first is the dependency of created being (*ens commune*) upon an outside efficient cause for its existence (*esse*). The underlying rationale for this dependency of finite being upon an outside cause (or giver of existence) is St. Thomas' conception of all created beings as essence and existence (*essentia-esse*) composites. He states, "Now it is impossible for a thing's existence to be caused by its essential constituent principles, for nothing can be the sufficient cause of its own existence, if its existence is caused. Therefore that thing, whose existence differs from its essence, must have its existence caused by another."[40] Stated succinctly, a created being cannot be both the active agent and the patient of its own existence; thus, a being's

[38] Aquinas, *ST* I.2.2.

[39] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles: Books I-II.* Latin/English Edition of the Works of St. Thomas Aquinas, Vol. 11. Trans. by Laurence Shapcote (Green Bay WI: Aquinas Institute, 2021), 1, 15, 5.

[40] Aquinas, *ST* I.3.4.

essence cannot be the cause of its existence. This entails that the existence a being receives or participates in is a contingent existence, therefore resulting in the creature being a contingent being.[41]

St. Thomas' notion of being by participation (i.e., finite existence that is both communicated and actualizes a particular being of a given determination) concludingly requires a first and efficient cause who would not be a being among other beings, or contained within common being (e.g., nominalism). Nor would this being be common being itself (e.g., pantheism). Rather, this first cause is himself, whose essence is his existence, self-subsistent existence (*ipsum esse subsistens*). Furthermore, as self-subsistent existence, this efficient cause would be the origin of the participated existence of created being. Phrased differently, all created beings "receive their being from this one, and can therefore participate in existence uniquely because he causes them to exist as Creator."[42]

As is evident, for St. Thomas, "*Esse* is the act that constitutes the proper terminus of transcendent causality (creation, conservation) and it is by virtue of this direct causality of *esse* that God operates immediately in every agent. Hence, the derivation of participated *esse* from *esse per essentiam* is direct, and along strict metaphysical lines, as grounded act from grounded Act."[43] *Esse*, therefore, is the perfection that unites all beings to one another in a sort of commonality. Moreover, *esse* is that which orders all beings under one common efficient cause (*causa essendi*), self-subsistent existence itself (i.e., God). Accordingly, St. Thomas' doctrine of participation (i.e., the communication of *esse*) not only grounds both the transcendence of God as outside of common being (*ens commune*) and the immanence of God as the efficient and direct cause of all common being's existence, but it also grounds the metaphysical relation of creatures to God as one of effect to cause.

In conclusion, it is this very ontological ordering of creatures to God, as that of effect to cause, that is the foundation for St. Thomas' notion of analogy. More narrowly, it is because every effect in some way is like its cause,[44] that eliminates recourse to pure equivocal speech between God and creation for St. Thomas. Fur-

[41] St. Thomas further adds, "just as that which has fire, but is not itself fire, is on fire by participation; so that which has existence but is not existence, is a being by participation." Aquinas, *ST* I.3.4.

[42] White, *Wisdom*, 245.

[43] Fabro, *Metaphysics and Participation*, 87.

[44] "Therefore, if there is an agent not contained in any 'genus,' its effect will still more distantly reproduce the form of the agent, not, that is, so as to participate in the likeness of the agent's form according to the same specific or generic formality, but only according to some sort of analogy; as existence is common to all. In this way all created things, so far as they are beings, are like God as the first and universal principle of all being." Aquinas, *ST* I.4.3.

thermore, because this efficient cause is of another ontological order, univocal speech, which depends upon a common form, is likewise not a viable option for providing conceptual intelligibility between God and creation. It is, therefore, the notion of analogy, specifically a form of analogy that orders the creature to God as that of an effect to its cause, that St. Thomas will turn to in order to ground the creature's speech of God.

Analogy of Attribution *Ad Alterum* ("One to Another") in St. Thomas

In q. 13 of the *Summa Theologiae*, St. Thomas takes up the matter of analogy at the transcendental level (i.e., between the creature and God) by asking whether God can be named by us (i.e., names of pure perfections). He begins answering this question by asserting that the names we attribute to God cannot signify the divine essence itself because "the names we attribute to God signify what belongs to material creatures, of which the knowledge is natural to us."[45] Said differently, the names attributed to God, whether "abstract names to signify His simplicity or concrete names to signify His substance,"[46] will fall short of expressing God's mode of being (*modus essendi*) because we cannot know Him as He is (*in* se) according to our mode of cognition.[47]

The distinction being made by St. Thomas is between the concept signified (*res significata*) and the way in which the concept is signified (*modus significandi*). Concerning these distinctions, Wipple states,

> On the contrary, they are truly attributed to God as regards that which they signify. What they signify is in some way present in him. But as regards the way in which they signify, this is indeed to be denied of God; for every such name signifies some definite or determined form and cannot be attributed to him in that way. Because such names do not belong to God in the way in which they are signified, they are to be denied of him. And the way in which they signify reflects the way in which they inhere in our intellects.[48]

Accordingly, though the names or perfections we attribute to God exist in Him more properly "because these perfections flow from God to creatures,"[49] their

[45] Aquinas, *ST* I.13.1.

[46] Aquinas, *ST* I.13.1.

[47] Along this same train of thought St. Thomas asserts, "And in this sense there can be a proportion of the creature to God, inasmuch as it is related to Him as the effect of its cause, and as potentiality to its act; and in this way the created intellect can be proportioned to know God." Aquinas, *ST* I.12.1.

[48] Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 528.

[49] Aquinas, *ST* I.13.6.

mode of signification (i.e., the way in which the concept is signified) applies only to the creature. Hence, every name (i.e., the concept signified) attributed to God by the creature will inherently possess the creaturely way in which the concept is signified. For example, St. Thomas states,

> Thus also this term 'wise' applied to man in some degree circumscribes and comprehends the thing signified (i.e., how wisdom exists in man); whereas this is not the case when it is applied to God; but it leaves the thing signified as incomprehended, and as exceeding the signification of the name. Hence it is evident that this term 'wise' is not applied in the same way to God and to man.[50]

It is, therefore, because a creaturely concept circumscribes and comprehends what it signifies in its creaturely mode of existence that the concept itself, when applied to God, is in need of being predicated in a more excellent way (*per viam eminentiae*) and negated of all creaturely aspects (*per viam negationis*). Consequently, whatever name (e.g., wise) that is applied to both God and the creature cannot be done so with the same intelligible content (*ratio*).

This conclusion—that a name applied to both God and the creature cannot share in the same *ratio*—leads St. Thomas to dismiss univocal predication because this would then signify the presence of a shared form between both God and the creature. Moreover, the denial of one shared intelligible concept being the bridge of predication between God and the creature stands in stark contrast to Cajetan's notion of analogy by proper proportionality. For Cajetan, the analogous perfection (one *ratio*) does not only exist in the domain of the conceptual, but it is intrinsically and formally in each of the analogates (while proportionally differing). Conversely, St. Thomas does not admit of one analogous perfection with the same intelligible content predicated to both God and the creature. The reason is that the concept signified has its creaturely mode of existence intrinsically attached to it, thus the concept must go through the process of eminence and negation before being predicated to God—yet it still is incapable of signifying the divine essence as it is in itself.[51]

In stating, however, that God and the creature cannot share in one conceptual notion, it could then be retorted that there is no real intelligibility between the two analogates (i.e., equivocal speech). Preventing St. Thomas from

[50] Aquinas, *ST* I.13.5.

[51] "Now it was shown above (q. 12, a. 11, 12) that in this life we cannot see the essence of God; but we know God from creatures as their principle, and also by way of excellence and remotion. In this way therefore He can be named by us from creatures, yet not so that the name which signifies Him expresses the divine essence in itself." Aquinas, *ST* I.13.1.

falling into this opposite fallacy of equivocal predication, he borrows the Pseudo-Dionysian metaphysical argument that since "God prepossesses in Himself all the perfections of creatures" as their cause, then the effects of God (i.e., creatures) will participate in "some kind of likeness."[52] More narrowly, after quoting Pseudo-Dionysius,[53] St. Thomas asserts, "Likeness of creatures to God is not affirmed on account of agreement in form according to the formality of the same genus or species, but solely according to analogy, inasmuch as God is essential being, whereas other things are beings by participation."[54] Accordingly, the conceptual bridge by which there can be intelligibility between God and the creature is grounded, for St. Thomas, in the creature's metaphysical relationship to God as a created similitude that proceeds from and is constituted by its cause.

After recourse is given to the imperfect likeness in which the creature participates in as the ground for conceptual intelligibility between creation and God,[55] St. Thomas then concludes that the particular analogical mode that best suits this metaphysical reality is "according to proportion (*proportionem*)."[56] Commenting upon St. Thomas' usage of proportion, Thomas White asserts,

> Aquinas himself tends to use the term *proportio* to express the notion of the reference of one to another who is first, or of a multitude to a first (a *pros hen* analogy). Cajetan entitled these forms "analogies of attribution." A similitude between two different relations (A is to B as C is to D) Aquinas calls *proportionalitas*, and Cajetan named these "analogies of proper proportionality." The terms from Cajetan tend to be employed constantly in Thomistic as well as Aristotelian scholarship, and so I use them also to designate these two kinds of analogy found in both thinkers' work.[57]

[52] Aquinas, *ST* I.13.2.

[53] "For the same things can be like and unlike to God: like, according as they imitate Him, as far as He, Who is not perfectly imitable, can be imitated; unlike according as they fall short of their cause, not merely in intensity and remission, as that which is less white falls short of that which is more white; but because they are not in agreement, specifically or generically." Aquinas, *ST* I.4.3.

[54] Aquinas, *ST* I.4.3.

[55] "This is not the case with the names we give to God, since they correspond to a relation of cause and effect. There is always, then, this positive feature in what we say about God, that there must be a kind of resemblance, not between God and things, but rather between them and God: the resemblance an effect always bears to its cause, however inferior it may be." Etienne Gilson, *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas* (Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2002), 110.

[56] "Therefore it must be said that these names are said of God and creatures in an analogous sense, i.e. according to proportion." Aquinas, *ST* I.13.5.

[57] White, *Wisdom*, 90 n66.

In sum, St. Thomas' analogy according to proportion—later termed analogy of attribution ("one to another")—is an appropriation of both Aristotle's *pros hen* (Gk.) analogy and the Neoplatonic metaphysical relation of cause-and-effect between the creature and God. More narrowly, God is the primary analogate to which the secondary analogate (i.e., the creature) is related to via its ontological constitution as a created likeness.[58] As St. Thomas concludes,

> Now, nothing is predicated in the same order of God and other things, but according to priority and posteriority [*sed secundum prius et posterius*], since all predicates of God are essential (for he is called "being" because he is being itself, and "good" because he is goodness itself), whereas predicates are applied to others by participation (thus Socrates is said to be a man not as though he were humanity itself, but because he has humanity). Therefore, it is impossible for any thing to be predicated univocally of God and other things.[59]

Once St. Thomas has settled upon a form of analogy (i.e., attribution) that satisfies the metaphysical relation of creatures to God, he then proceeds to delineate between two different types of attribution. The first is a *multa ad unum* ("many to one") analogy of attribution. This type of analogy exists when many things to which a name is applied are ordered to or under one primary term. In articulating the reason for St. Thomas's rejection of this mode of attribution, White asserts,

> It is essential to note in this context that Aquinas wishes to exclude definitively the use of this form of analogy to speak about the relation between creatures and God. This is precisely because it would make both God and creatures fall under a common heading, *multa ad unum*, that of "being." This would include both God and creatures under a unique subject of study, that of "common being."[60]

[58] Commenting upon this mode of analogy, Mondin asserts,

> Aquinas believes that an adequate interpretation of the God-creature relation can be provided by analogy of intrinsic attribution. Analogy of intrinsic attribution is able to signify both that there is a likeness between primary and secondary analogate, and that the secondary analogate is an imperfect imitation of the primary. Intrinsic attribution is able to stress the likeness between analogates as much as their difference. It says that the analogous perfection is predicated of the primary analogate essentially and of the secondary analogate by participation.

Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy*, 2.

[59] Aquinas, *SCG*, 1. 32.

[60] White, *Wisdom*, 90.

Throughout St. Thomas' corpus on the topic of analogy, his consistent resistance is against any type of analogical or univocal predication that would subsume God and the creature under the same order. This type of attribution, therefore, is dismissed because in no way can it be said that God participates in some shared form with the creature.[61]

The second type of attribution, an *unius ad alterum* ("one to another") analogy of attribution, provides for St. Thomas the proper metaphysical ordering of the creature to God. More narrowly, the "one to another" type of attribution orders the creature to God by way of participation. For instance, any perfection applied to God is predicated of Him primarily (*per prius*) as the source in which the perfection is perfectly realized.[62] Subsequently, when the same perfection is predicated of the creature, it is done so secondarily (*per posterius*), or as one possessing the perfection in a relative and partially realized way. Accordingly, the *modus significandi* (i.e., the way in which the concept is signified) of the perfection takes on various senses depending on whether it is predicated of the primary analogate in which it finds its perfect realization, or of the secondary analogates which possess the perfection in a partial and relative way.[63]

The illustration St. Thomas provides to elucidate this "one to another" concept is Aristotle's well-known analogy of health. As he states, "According as one thing is proportionate to another, thus *healthy* is said of medicine and animal, since medicine is the cause of health in the animal body. And in this way some things are said of God and creatures analogically, and not in a purely equivocal nor in a purely univocal sense."[64] In utilizing this specific instance of the healthy analogy, what St. Thomas is seeking to convey is the cause-and-effect relation between the two analogates. Correspondingly, the finite qualities in which creatures participate (e.g., wisdom) find their source in whom they originate and from whom they are communicated—God.

Of crucial importance, however, the *ad alterum* type of attribution initially derives the conceptual notion (*res significata*) from the mode of signification (*modus significandi*) that is more knowable and attainable by the intellect, that is

[61] "But no name belongs to God in the same sense that it belongs to creatures; for instance, wisdom in creatures is a quality, but not in God." Aquinas, *ST* I.13.5.

[62] "Thus whatever is said of God and creatures, is said according to the relation of a creature to God as its principle and cause, wherein all perfections of things pre-exist excellently." Aquinas, *ST* I.13.5.

[63] "But when anything is predicated of many things analogically, it is found in only one of them according to its proper nature." Aquinas, *ST* I.16.6.

Of note, the analogy of proper proportionality does not provide primary and secondary analogates because all analogates are primary. See, Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy*, 101.

[64] Aquinas, *ST* I.13.5.

from the creature—though the notion or perfection is said to exist originally and primally in God. The conception signified from the creature will, therefore, intrinsically possess the metaphysical ordering it has as an imperfect likeness from its cause. In order, then, to be attributed to God, the conceptual notion must go through the process of eminence and negation, thus giving it not only a different mode of signification but also a new *ratio* (i.e., multiple *rationes*). In this way, St. Thomas is able to provide a sort of intelligibility between the creature and God that not only respects the metaphysical ordering of the creature to God, but also does not subsume God into the domain of the creature.

Throughout his corpus, however, St. Thomas did not exclusively utilize the *ad alterum* type of attribution. But where the diversity within the Angelic Doctor's commentariat stems from is his early employment of the analogy of proportionality in the *De Veritate*. Specifically, in *DV* 2.11, St. Thomas distinguishes between two types of analogy of proportion. The first type is what Rocca terms a "narrow sense of proportion,"[65] because St. Thomas intended to express a determinate relation between two analogates.[66] For instance, expressing this type of analogy's use on the predicamental level, St. Thomas states, "We find something predicated analogously of two realities according to the first type of agreement when one of them has a relation to the other, as when being is predicated of substance and accident because of the relation which accident has to substance, or as when healthy is predicated of urine and animal because urine has some relation to the health of an animal."[67]

When considering analogy on the transcendental level, however, St. Thomas dismisses the narrow use of proportion, stating, "Consequently, nothing can be predicated analogously of God and creature according to this type of analogy; for no creature has such a relation to God that it could determine the divine perfection."[68] The refusal of this strict mode of proportion on the transcendental level stems from St. Thomas' resistance to subsuming God and the creature under the same term. Stated differently, to place both God and creature under a determinate relation is to subsume them under the same order of being. Subsequently, St. Thomas proceeds to opt for the second type of proportion that he terms "proportionality" because, according to him, this type of analogy has "no

[65] Rocca, *Speaking*, 120.

[66] "There is a certain agreement between things having a proportion to each other from the fact that they have a determinate distance between each other or some other relation to each other, like the proportion which the number two has to unity in as far as it is the double of unity." Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate* (https://isidore.co/aquinas/QDdeVer2.htm), q. 2, a.11.

[67] Aquinas, *Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate*, q. 2, a. 11.

[68] Aquinas, *Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate*, q. 2, a. 11.

definite relation . . . between the things which have something in common analogously."[69] The example he proceeds to give is that of sight, "Sometimes, however, a thing is predicated analogously according to the second type of agreement, as when sight is predicated of bodily sight and of the intellect because understanding is in the mind as sight is in the eye."[70] Commentating on this specific usage of proportionality, Fabro asserts that it seems to be a "purely logico-formal way of considering beings."[71] The rationale behind this statement is that if this proportionality were "proper," it then would entail a shared form, and this St. Thomas rejects.[72]

In examining the *De Veritate* as a whole, chronologically, Rocca concludes that "only from mid-1256 to mid-1259 was proportionality even suggested as a possible solution to the problem of relating the finite and the infinite, and only for a few months (however long it took Thomas to write fourteen articles of the *De Veritate*, from 2.3 to 3.1) was it put forward as the only solution."[73] The reason Rocca provides for this momentary usage of the analogy of proportionality on the transcendental level is because of St. Thomas' retooling and expansion of the meaning of proportion from its limited early Greek usage of finding ratios between numbers, to then expanding its usage to broadly and simply mean "one to another."[74] Moreover, Mondin adds,

> Analogy of proper proportionality is rarely used by Aquinas, and only in his early works. It is entirely abandoned in his mature works. He arrived at this complete divorce of proportionality both because proportionality is vitiated by serious internal difficulties when applied to God and, more important, because proportionality is inadequate to express at the same time God's transcendence and immanence. Proportionality is certainly able to express God's transcendence, but fails to adequately express His immanence, since it cannot express the dependence of the finite on divine causality.[75]

In sum, St. Thomas' consistent rejection of any type of analogy that could subsume God and creature formally under a common form led him, momentar-

[69] Aquinas, *Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate*, q. 2, a. 11.
[70] Aquinas, *Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate*, q. 2, a. 11.
[71] Fabro, *Selected Works of Cornelio Fabro Vol. 1*, 87.
[72] "The likeness of the creature to God is imperfect, for it does not represent one and the same generic thing." Aquinas, *ST* I.13.5.
[73] Rocca, *Speaking*, 122.
[74] Rocca, *Speaking*, 123.
[75] Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy*, 101.

ily in his career, to opt for the analogy of proportionality because it was more logical in nature. However, as St. Thomas matured and deepened his thought within the Neoplatonic casual notion of being, he began to broaden the usage of proportion to simply infer a relation of "one to another." This broadened usage of proportion was St. Thomas' gateway of properly relating the ontological order and dependency of the creature to its unifying cause, God. Accordingly, though various disciples of St. Thomas can and have laid claim to their master's utilization of proportionality in the *De Veritate*, the particular form of proper proportionality employed by Cajetan and his followers stands in stark contrast to the proportionality found in the *De Veritate*.

Conclusion

In seeking to answer Scotus' critique against analogical predication, it must be put into question if such disciples as Cajetan stayed thoroughly faithful to his master's original thought concerning the notion of analogy. The reason given was that "The writings of Scotus forced Aquinas' disciples to search their master's texts for answers to questions he was not considering."[76] More narrowly, the conceptual emphasis of Scotus forced numerous subsequent disciples of St. Thomas to take his doctrine of analogy to a more conceptual bent in contrast to the metaphysical emphasis found throughout his corpus. As Montagnes asserts, "A philosophy of concepts is substituted for a philosophy of reality."[77] Accordingly, there stands a stark contrast between what St. Thomas' thought is on a particular matter, and seeking to stay faithful to the principles of his thought when considering topics that he himself may not have addressed. In the case of St. Thomas' doctrine of analogy, this holds true. In order, therefore, to stay faithful to St. Thomas' doctrine of analogy, recourse must be given again to the proper ontological order and dependency of the creature to its unifying cause, God. From this metaphysical reality of the effect (i.e., the creature) participating in an imperfect similitude that is communicated from its cause, the analogy of attribution *ad alterum* ("one to another") will be discovered as a fitting instrument by which intelligibility can be had between God and creation.

[76] D'Ettore, *Analogy After Aquinas*, 182.
[77] Montagnes, *The Doctrine of the Analogy of Being*, 137.

The Mediatorship of Christ: A Christological Parting of Ways

By Alan Quiñones[1]

***Abstract**: Evangelical theology has historically held that the name Mediator transcends the incarnation of the Son of God. This means that the mediatorial actions of Christ are carried out through his divine nature as well as his human nature. This claim, however, was challenged by post-Tridentine Roman Catholic polemicists, who—following the medieval Schoolmen—countered that Christ mediates only according to his humanity. After all, mediatorial acts—such as prayer, self-offering, suffering, and death—are proper only to man, not God. Consequently, the Reformed were saddled with the burden of demonstrating not only how the divine nature of Christ concurs in his mediatorial actions, but also how this could be affirmed without undermining his deity. The answer would be found in the doctrine of the pactum salutis. This study, then, first outlines and assesses the post-Tridentine position (as presented by their most capable exponent, Robert Bellarmine), then it explains the Protestant view, and finally, it upholds the* pactum salutis *as the means by which Christians may confess the soteriology of the Reformation while also upholding the theology proper of orthodoxy and the Christology of Chalcedon.*

Keywords: Mediation, Theanthropic, Christology, post-Tridentine, *pactum*.

Introduction

The notion that the medieval period witnessed little in terms of new developments in Christology is hardly a matter of debate.[2] That is to say, Christian theology generally accepts that the Church's doctrine of Christ underwent no substantial expansion between Chalcedon and Wittenberg.[3] While this may be true broadly speaking (considering that the refutation of heresies such as Monophysitism and Monothelitism consisted simply in the repetition and reapplica-

[1] Alan Quiñones (M.Div, The Master's Seminary) serves as the teaching pastor of Grace Fellowship Church in Bradenton, Florida

[2] This study is adapted from Alan Quiñones, "In the Council Chamber of the Triune God: An Exegetical, Trinitarian, and Christological Formulation and Defense of the Reformed Doctrine of the Pact of Salvation" (M.Div. Thesis, The Master's Seminary), 2021. Thanks to Dr. Peter Sammons for overseeing that project, and to Chad Vegas for first suggesting to me the topic discussed in the present study.

[3] E.g., I. A. Dorner, *History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, trans. D. W. Simon (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1891), 2:225; Louis Berkhof, *The History of Christian Doctrines* (London: Banner of Truth, 1969), 114; Gregg R. Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 377–8.

tion of the beliefs set down in the councils of Nicaea, Constantinople I, Ephesus, and Chalcedon), it is also true that the medieval Schoolmen laid a Christological egg in their day which, when hatched by post-Tridentine theologians, released a torrent of controversy between the post-Tridentine and the Reformed.

In their refutation of the errors of the Italian Hebraist Franciscus Stancarus,[4] Protestant theologians agreed that Christ carries out his mediatorial work according to both his human and his divine nature.[5] Against this teaching, however, post-Tridentine Roman Catholics[6]—following the medieval Schoolmen—stated that Christ mediates only according to his humanity. Consequently, the Reformed were saddled with the burden of demonstrating not only how the divine nature of Christ concurs in his mediatorial actions, but also how this could be affirmed without undermining his deity. The answer would be found in the doctrine of the *pactum salutis*.

This study, then, will first outline and assess the post-Tridentine position on Christ's mediation (as represented by its most capable exponent, Robert Bellarmine). Then it will explain the Protestant view. Finally, it will uphold the *pactum salutis* as the means by which Christians may confess the soteriology of the Reformation while also upholding the theology proper of orthodoxy and the Christology of Chalcedon.

Christ's Mediatorship in Post-Tridentine Roman Catholicism

[4]The debate with Stancarus was sparked by yet another controversy, namely, the Osiandrian. The Lutheran theologian Andreas Osiander taught that the ontological righteousness of God was the material means of justification. Phillip Melanchthon and others rose in opposition to this view; however, the debate was further complicated by the radically opposite argument of the Italian Hebraist Franciscus Stancarus. He argued that Christ was mediator according to his human nature alone, and on those grounds concluded that our justification has its basis upon the humanly acquired righteousness of Christ. To be sure, while the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness is in fact the orthodox Protestant position of justification, it is not based on Stancarus' belief that Christ is mediator only according to his human nature. James Weis, "Calvin Versus Osiander on Justification," in *The Springfielder* 29 no. 3 (Autumn 1965), 31–47: 33, comments, "Not only Osiander, but Melanchthon, Calvin, and virtually every other contemporary Protestant theologian took issue with Stancarus. The same paragraph of the Formula of Concord which addressed itself to the issues raised in the Osiandrian controversy also addressed itself to and rejected the theological views of Stancarus on Justification."

[5]This is reflected in FC III.56; WCF 8.7; SD, 2LCF 8.7. As Richard Muller points out, the belief that Christ is mediator according to both natures is "a point followed with remarkable consistency" in Reformed theology. Richard A. Muller, "Toward the *Pactum Salutis*: Locating the Origins of a Concept," in *MJT* 18 (2007), 11–65: 48.

[6]Francis Turretin (*Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 3 vols., trans. George Musgrave Giger, ed. James T. Dennison, Jr [Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1993], 2:379) includes Becanus and Bellarmine in this group. Dorner (*History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, 2:225) adds the name of the Spanish Jesuit Turrianus.

Protestant theologians of the past dubbed the Italian Jesuit Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621) "the last Goliath of the Philistines."[7] David Schaff argued that no other Roman Catholic writer since the Reformation has excelled him, "both in the mastery of his subject and in his permanent influence."[8] Nick Needham similarly calls him "the greatest theologian of the Catholic Counter-Reformation," whose magnum opus—*Controversies of the Christian Faith*—became, in seventeenth-century Europe, "the standard against which any true Protestant theologian must test his mettle."[9] Bellarmine therefore towers over post-Tridentine Roman Catholic theology. His polemical prowess has repeatedly called Reformed theologians to answer his statements.

One of such statements is the notion that the Reformed understanding of the mediatorship of Christ amounts to a novel heresy.[10] Following John Calvin—and those who refuted the errors of Stancarus with him—Protestants have historically affirmed that Christ mediates according to both his human and his divine nature (theanthropic mediation). Bellarmine, in contrast, rejected this view, arguing that Christ is Mediator according to his human nature alone.

He asserted that this was the historic position of the Church.[11] Augustine, after all, had said in *The City of God*, "For it is as man that He is the Mediator and the Way."[12] In his celebrated *Sentences*, Peter Lombard defined a mediator as one who stands between two extremes, and—citing Augustine's exposition on the twenty-ninth psalm—concluded, "By his infirmity, he was close to us [who are mortal and weak] , . . by righteousness, to God. And so rightly is he called mediator, because between the immortal God and mortal man there is the God man, reconciling man to God: insofar as he is man, he is mediator; insofar as he is the Word, he is not an intermediary, because he is one with God the Father."[13] Similarly, Thomas wrote that the Mediator is a mean (medio).[14] His office (which

[7] Cotton Mather; cited in David S. Schaff, "Cardinal Bellarmine—Now Saint and Doctor of the Church," in *Church History* 2 no. 1 (March 1933), 41–55: 42.

[8] Schaff, "Cardinal Bellarmine," 41.

[9] Nick Needham, *2000 Years of Christ's Power*, vol. 4, *The Age of Religious Conflict* (London: Christian Focus, 2016), 457, 459.

[10] Robert Bellarmine, *On the Office of the Mediator*, Book Five, in *Controversies of the Christian Faith* trans. Kenneth Baker (Saddle River, NJ: Keep the Faith, 2016), 575, 588.

[11] Bellarmine, *Controversies*, 572.

[12] Augustine, *City of God*, XI, 2; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. the Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 3a.26.2, cites *City of God*, IX, 15, where Augustine said, "Not because He is the Word, is Christ Mediator, since He Who is supremely immortal and supremely happy is far from us unhappy mortals; but He is Mediator, as man." See also idem, *Confessions*, X, 40.

[13] Peter Lombard, *The Sentences*, trans. Giulio Silano (Toronto, CA: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2008), III.19.7.1 (p. 83). See Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, 2, on Ps. 29, n1.

[14] Thomas, *ST*, 3a.26.2.

is to join two extremes) requires him to be distant from each.[15] This cannot be said of Christ according to his divine nature, but only according to the human; therefore, Thomas reasoned, "as man, He is distant both from God, by nature, and from man by dignity of both grace and glory."[16] Medieval tradition, then, in Bellarmine's view, represented Christ as Mediator according to the humanity alone. He was rising in its defense.

He based his presentation on a distinction between the "principle which" (*principium quod*) and the "principle by which" (*principium quo*).[17] He argued, "the mediator himself, or . . . the *principle which* produces the works of the mediator, was not God alone, or man alone, but both together."[18] In other words, Bellarmine affirmed that the Mediator is in fact the God-man—both divine and human. He is the "presupposition," "active principle," or *principium quod* behind the mediatorial work.[19] Bellarmine's denial, then, is not that the person of the Mediator is divine;[20] but rather, that the divine nature of the Mediator is involved in the carrying out of the mediatorial actions. He said, "the *principle by which* [or formal principle[21]] those [mediatorial] works were done . . . were the human nature, not the divine nature."[22] Therefore, the God-man mediates, but he does so only according to the humanity.

To say that Christ mediates according to both natures, Bellarmine reasoned, is to make his deity inferior to that of the Father.[23] Christ's mediatorial activity, after all, consisted in prayers, self-offering, suffering, and death.[24] These actions are proper only to man, not God. Borrowing Augustine's form of God/form of servant categories (drawn from Phil 2:6–7),[25] Bellarmine therefore concluded,

[15] Thomas, *ST*, 3a.26.2.

[16] Thomas, *ST*, 3a.26.2.

[17] Bellarmine, *Controversies* 571.

[18] Ibid. Emphasis added.

[19] Muller (*Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms: Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986], 246) also defines the *principium quo* as the basis for an event or a causative principle.

[20] This is where Bellarmine felt his position avoided Stancarus'—and therefore the Nestorian—pitfall. Although there is a significant overlap between Stancarus' and the Roman Catholic position on Christ's mediatorship (both argue that Christ is mediator according to the human nature alone), even Rome ultimately rejected Stancarus. After citing him approvingly, Bellarmine assigns him a place in the Nestorian wasteland for attributing "the office of mediator to the man Christ alone in such a way that he does not seem to require the divine suppositum in any way, or at least to require it as the efficient cause of the work." Bellarmine, *Controversies*, 572.

[21] Muller, *Dictionary*, 246, defines the *principium quod* as "a passive principle that is acted on."

[22] Bellarmine, *Controversies*, 571. Emphasis added.

[23] Bellarmine, *Controversies*, 571.

[24] Bellarmine, *Controversies*, 571.

[25] Augustine, *De Trinitate*, trans. Edmund Hill, ed. John E. Rotelle (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press,

"although it was the incarnate God who prayed, suffered, obeyed, made satisfaction, he did all these things in the form of a servant, not in the form of God."[26]

The Jesuit polemicist found scriptural support of his view in 1 Timothy 2:5, "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."[27] In these words, he argued, Paul distinguishes the Mediator from God—hence the addition of the word "man" (*anthropos*). Bellarmine wrote, "Why I ask, did he add the word 'man,' unless it is to express the nature according to which Christ is the mediator?"[28] The Lord's mediation, therefore, cannot be specifically between the Father and us (with him standing in the middle) but between the Trinity and us, with Christ—according to his humanity only—standing as Mediator. He concluded,

> For, not only was the Father hostile to us because of our sins, and therefore had to be placated by a mediator, but also the Son and the Holy Spirit; therefore the whole Trinity had to be reconciled with men by a Mediator . . . the same Christ because of the two natures is both numbered among the persons of the Trinity, to which reparation must be made, and at the same time it is he who makes the satisfaction. For he himself, as man, is mediator to himself as he is God.[29]

In other words, the divinity does not mediate between the transgressor and itself. For Bellarmine, that would be absurd. Instead, he maintains that Christ's sacrifice appeased the Son as much as it did the Father. As man, he offered the sacrifice of himself; as God, he received it.

Assesment

In assessing Bellarmine's view, it is important to note that the distinction be-

1991), I.3–4 (pp. 76–96). For a helpful explanation of these categories, see Keith E. Johnson, "Augustine, Eternal Generation, and Evangelical Trinitarianism," in *Trinity Journal* ns 32.2 (2011): 141–63.

[26] Bellarmine, *Controversies*, 571.

[27] *Ehis gar theos, heis kai mesites theou kai anthropon, anthropos Christos Iesous*.

[28] Bellarmine, *Controversies*, 575. Contemporary commentaries that share this view include the Roman Catholic Jerome D. Quinn and William C. Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 184. Also, see H. D. M. Spence, *The Epistles to Timothy and Titus*, Ellicott's Commentary on the Whole Bible, ed. Charles John Ellicott, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n. d.), 186; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 192, 197; Philip Towner, *The Goal of Our Instruction: The Structure of Theology and Ethics in the Pastoral Epistles* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989), 54–6, 82–7.

[29] Bellarmine, *Controversies*, 576.

tween *principle which* and *principle by which* is, in fact, helpful in the quest to make sense of the actions of the incarnate Son. These actions, to be sure, fall into three categories: either purely human, purely divine, or both divine and human. The purely human include things like eating, drinking, and sleeping. In them, the *principle which* eats, drinks, and sleeps is the eternal Word; but the *principle by which* the Word eats, drinks, and sleeps is the human nature alone. On the other hand, the purely divine actions of Christ include things like upholding creation (Col 1:17; Heb 1:3) and filling every point of space (Matt 18:20). The *principle which* carries out these works is Christ; but the *principle by which* he does them is his divine nature alone.

The third category, again, consists of works that involve the divine nature as well as the human nature. For example, in Jesus' death, the divine nature had to support the human both by rendering that death—and previous life of obedience—efficacious for those who would believe, and by resurrecting it.[30] Otherwise, without the divine nature, the death of Christ would have been of no saving value (more below). Bellarmine's position, however, leaves no room for this kind of concurrence between the natures.

After all, he did not feel that this was necessary. To him, it was enough that the *principle which* behind these actions is the divine Son: the Son is the king who performs the same work as a private person, but his dignity makes that work differ in value; however his majesty "adds nothing physical or real to that work."[31] The problem with this analogy, however (which is reflective of Bellarmine's position as a whole), is that it assumes that the work being performed can be performed by either the private person or the king.[32] In other words, Bellarmine does not account for the fact that mediatorial actions have to have a divine *in addition to a human* character to be efficacious. Therefore, the "private

[30] Wilhelmus a Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, trans. Bartel Elshout, ed. Joel Beeke, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 1992), 1:510.

[31] Bellarmine, *Controversies*, 582.

[32] This is why the Reformed argued that the Roman Catholic theologian's design was "to make more plausible room for human mediators." Robert L. Dabney, *Systematic Theology* (1871; repr., Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1985), 473. Turretin, *Institutes*, 2:379. Along those lines, the Roman Catholic commentator George T. Montague (*First and Second Timothy, Titus*, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008], 56.) writes, "Obviously, [when he speaks of Christ as the only Mediator between God and men] Paul does not mean to exclude the mediation of the Church or of himself as an apostle or of any other ministry or channel of grace, as long as it serves the mediation of Christ, which alone is sufficient." For a response, see John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, John T. McNeill ed., Ford Lewis Battles trans. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960), 3.20.20, who simply pointed out that Paul's emphasis on there being but one Mediator between God and men would make no sense if there were many mediators.

person" would never be able to carry them out. This is surely not contradicted by 1 Timothy 2:5.

1 Timothy 2:5

At the outset, it is paramount to note the context in which Paul makes the important assertion found in this verse. Broadly speaking, in vv. 1–8, the apostle is addressing various issues related to congregational prayer.[33] In the interest of evangelism, in vv. 1–2 he encourages believers to intercede for their civil authorities, for this will result in societal conditions favorable for the Church's evangelistic enterprise.[34] This leads to the statement, in v. 4, that God desires all kinds of people "to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."[35] There is a direct connection, then, between salvation and the knowledge of the truth. Furthermore, in vv. 5–6, the apostle narrows down "the truth" that is inseparably linked to salvation: "For there is one God and also one Mediator between God and men; Christ Jesus, himself man, who gave himself as a ransom for all."[36]

Paul's allusion to the heart of the *Shema*—that there is but one God (Deut 6:4)—highlights the interest that every human society has in the God of Christians. If there were many gods, perhaps other men would not stand in need of him. Nevertheless, since he is both the Creator and Sustainer of all and the only God, he then must also be the salvation of all. That salvation, as Paul points out, is available through the one Mediator he has appointed.

Now, as Bellarmine himself taught, a mediator is "someone who places himself in the middle between people who are in disagreement . . . in order to bring them to harmony."[37] Paul identifies this arbiter or "daysman" between God

[33] Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990), 652; Andreas J. Köstenberger, L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd edition (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2016), 743.

[34] John F. MacArthur Jr., *1 Timothy*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 65; Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin Jr., *1, 2 Timothy, Titus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, NAC (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 88.

[35] For a defense of the "every person without distinction" as opposed to the "every person without exception" reading, see Thomas Schriener, " 'Problematic Texts' for Definite Atonement in the Pastoral and General Epistles," in *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her: Definite Atonement in Historical, Biblical, Theological, and Pastoral Perspectives*, ed. David Gibson and Jonathan Gibson, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 375–97. Augustine himself adopted this reading in his argument that the reference here was to "the predestinated . . . because every king of man is among them." Augustine, *On Rebuke and Grace* 14.44, in Peter Gorday and Thomas C. Oden, *Colossians, 1–2 Thessalonians, 1–2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon*, ACCS (IVP Academic, 2000), 156.

[36] *Ehis gar theos, heis kai mesites theou kai anthropon, anthropos Christos Iesous, ho dous heauton antilytron hyper panton*.

[37] Bellarmine, *Controversies*, 570. Albrecht Oepke, "μεσιτες," *TDNT*, 4:599, 601., similarly states

and men, of course, as "Christ Jesus, himself man" (*anthropos Christos Iesous*).

This translation of the Greek phrase *anthropos Christos Iesous* reflects the absence of the article before the noun *anthropos* ("man"), which is intended to emphasize Christ's humanity.[38] Paul has strategic reasons for doing so. Job, after all, in the only OT passage (LXX) in which the term "mediator" (*mesites*) appears, had bemoaned the fact that there was "no umpire [*mesites*] between us, who may lay his hand upon us both" (Job 9:33).[39] Paul rather insists here that Jesus Christ *is* that umpire, because although being truly God, he also is true man. Therefore, the purpose of the word "man" in 1 Timothy 2:5 is to instill boldness into the praying saints.[40]

Calvin rightly said, "Lest anyone be troubled about where to seek the Mediator, or by what path we must come to him, the Spirit calls him 'man,' thus teaching us that he is near us, indeed touches us, since he is our flesh."[41] In a similar vein, Augustine wrote, "It was in order to make the mind able to advance more confidently toward the truth that Truth itself, the divine Son of God, put on humanity without putting off his divinity and built this firm path of faith so that man, by means of the God-Man, could find his way to man's God."[42] Therefore, although Paul could have said "God," or left out "man" as he did "God," he included "man" in order to help with our weakness—to help us pray.[43] This was not to exclude Christ's deity, but rather, to emphasize his humanity.

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that the term *mesites* denotes "a 'negotiator' in the sense of one who establishes a relation which would not otherwise exist." See also Horst Robert Balz and Gerhard Schneider, "μεσιτες," *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 410.

[38] William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, WBC (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 88; Homer A. Kent Jr., *The Pastoral Epistles: Studies in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus* (Chicago: Moody, 1982), 100, on the other hand, writes, "The absence of the article with *anthropos* emphasizes the generic sense rather than the particular specimen." cf. Ronald A. Ward, *Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus* (Waco, TX: Word, 1974), 235; MacArthur, *1 Timothy*, 71. Interestingly, both Ambrose and Augustine translated the passage in this way. Ambrose, *Letters* 27; Augustine, *The City of God* II. 2; in Gorday and Oden, *1–2 Timothy*, 158–9.

[39] On the appeal to Job 9:33 on this passage, see A. T. Hanson, *Studies in the Pastoral Epistles* (London: S.P.C.K., 1968), 57–8; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 88; Oepke, "μεσιτες, Μεσιτεύω," *TDNT*, 601. For a monograph on this subject, see S. O. Stout, *The 'Man Christ Jesus': The Humanity of Jesus in the Teaching of the Apostle Paul* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011).

[40] Turretin, *Institutes*, 2:382. George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 121, writes, "The humanity of the mediator is specified to emphasize his identity with those whom he represents as mediator."

[41] Calvin, *Institutes*, 2.12.1.

[42] Augustine, *The City of God*, II.2, cited in Gorday and Oden, *1–2 Timothy*, 159.

[43] Calvin, *Institutes*, 2.12.1. Along these lines, I. Howard Marshall, *New Testament Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 409, writes, "The insistence in 1 Timothy 2:5 that Christ Jesus was human [is] a point that there was no need to emphasize if he was not already thought of as divine."

In fact, if the concrete name of God (or the noun "man") were used in Scripture to designate the nature, it would be impossible to interpret texts such as Acts 3:15, "you killed the Author of life" (ESV); Acts 20:28, ". . . shepherd the church of God which he purchased with his own blood"; or 1 Corinthians 15:47, "the second man is from heaven."[44] On the other hand, if the name "God" invariably indicates the whole Trinity, "it follows that Christ is both his own son and the son of the Holy Spirit!"[45] It follows, moreover, that Christ sent himself into the world (John 3:16), and that in John 17 he was interceding with himself or with the Holy Spirit. It goes without saying, therefore, that the name "God" does not always refer to the person of the Son. It may in fact refer to the Father economically. This is not an inherently Arian position.[46] Instead, it is difficult to see how a denial of this truth would escape the charge of modalism (cf. Mt 27:46; John 20:17; Rev 3:12).

That said, as Turretin pointed out, even if the title "God" should be taken in this text as a reference to the Trinity, "still [Christ's] divine nature is not excluded from the mediation. For it is one thing for Christ to be a Mediator according to his divine nature absolutely, inasmuch as it is common to the three persons; another, according to the divine nature regarded economically with respect to his voluntary humiliation."[47] In other words, even if one were to grant that the divine nature of the Son, absolutely considered, was included in Paul's reference to God, one would still need to say that the Son's divine nature, *economically* considered, is involved in the work of mediation. John Davenant thus rightly said, "The same Christ, therefore, *received* the sacrifice of reconciliation, as God offended in his nature; but he *offered* it as Mediator, the God-man, in the Divine economy, or voluntary dispensation of grace."[48] In other words, Christ is both the offended party, and the party that makes reconciliation.

Summary

[44] Turretin, *Institutes*, 2:382.

[45] Calvin, "The Controversy on Christ the Mediator: A Response to the Polish Nobles and to Francesco Stancaro of Mantua," 154, cited in Joseph N. Tylenda, "The Controversy on Christ the Mediator: Calvin's Second Reply to Stancaro," in *Calvin Theological Journal* 8 (1972): 131–37.

[46] This was the charge Bellarmine leveled against Calvin and his followers (*Controversies*, V.III:575). More below.

[47] Turretin *Institutes*, 2:382.

[48] John Davenant, *An Exposition of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians*, trans. Josiah Allport (London: Hamilton, Adams, and co., 1831), 239. This Protestant idea that subordination may be applied to the Son *with respect to His mediatorial office* broadened the exegete's options for interpreting biblical statements concerning him: passages may refer to his divine essence, his eternal procession from the Father, his proper mode of acting from the Father, his human nature, or his mediatorial office. See Stephen J. Duby, "Trinity and Economy in Thomas Aquinas," in *SBJT* 21 no. 2 (2017), 29–51: 46.

Consequently, Scripture demands a break from the tradition of the Schoolmen on this point—or at least Bellarmine's interpretation of it.[49] Nevertheless, Protestant theology never departed from Augustine's position, inasmuch as it was consistent with Scripture.[50] In his *Confessions* he had remarked, "But a mediator between God and the human race ought to have something in common with humanity. If the Mediator were in both aspects like humanity, he would be far distant from God. If he were in both aspects like God, he would be far distant from humanity, and so would be no mediator."[51] In other words, our redemption calls for the person and work of a Mediator who is both true God and true man.

This is confirmed by the fact that elsewhere he had written, "Godhead without humanity doesn't mediate, humanity without godhead doesn't mediate. But what mediates between godhead in itself and humanity in itself is the human godhead and divine humanity of Christ."[52] Therefore, in the places where Augustine seemed to have excluded Christ's deity, he was merely emphasizing the Savior's humanity.

Bellarmine's belief that his view on Christ's mediatorship was the historic

[49]To be sure, it falls beyond the scope of this study to demonstrate whether Bellarmine was interpreting the Schoolmen rightly. Francis Turretin (*Institutes*, 2:379), on the one hand, arguably assumed that he had, as he included Lombard and Thomas among those who agreed with Bellarmine. This may have been because in *The Sentences*, III.19.7.1, under the heading "According to which nature is He mediator," Lombard wrote, "And so he is called mediator according to his humanity, not according to his divinity." Moreover, Thomas, in *ST*, 3a.26.2, argued, "... as man, He can be Mediator, but not as God." Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 3:364, however, believed that Bellarmine had misread the Schoolmen, saying, "Augustine, Lombard, and Aquinas believed nothing other than that Christ was and could be a mediator, not by his divine nature as such (in isolation from his human nature), but only as the incarnate Son of God."

Carl Trueman, "From Calvin to Gillespie on Covenant: Mythological Excess or an Exercise in Doctrinal Development?" in *IJST* 11 no. 4 (October 2009): 378–97, helpfully notes that in approaching questions such as that of Christ's mediatorship, the church in the Middle Ages tended to emphasize the metaphysical problems resulting from the hypostatic union rather than the historical person of the Mediator. This forced theologians into the false dilemma of choosing one nature or the other, rather than centering their answer on the person of the Mediator. In other words, medieval theologians assumed that Christ's medial position was a matter of essence rather than a title of personal office. Thomas (*ST*, 3a.24.1), however, arguably foreshadowed Calvin's move to make mediatorship a matter of both essences when he corrected Augustine's statement to the effect that predestination applies to the human nature, arguing that since persons are predestined rather than natures, predestination must apply to the hypostatic union.

[50]This was Calvin's argument. "The Controversy on Christ the Mediator," 155.

[51]Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), X.42 (219).

[52]Idem., "Sermon 47," in *The Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. Edmund Hill, 2:316.

position of the Church, therefore, was incorrect. While it might have represented the thought of the medieval Schoolmen on the subject,[53] Augustine himself had noted that mediation could only be possible under the union and joint operation of both the divine and human natures in the person of Christ.

More importantly, a close look at 1 Timothy 2:5 finds Bellarmine's position wanting. That the Mediator himself is a man does not in any way suggest he is not also God, nor even that he mediates according to the humanity alone—as if he were two persons. Protestant theologians have good reason, then, to argue that Christ is the Mediator according to both his human and his divine nature.

Christ's Mediatorship in Protestant Orthodoxy

Evangelical theology has historically held that the name Mediator transcends the incarnation of the Son of God. This office dates back to eternity. He is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev 13:8, KJV), and "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb 13:8).[54] Hence, even at the moment of creation the Son of God was operating in the world according to his future incarnation[55]—the more technical term for this important distinction being *Logos incarnandus*, or the Word to be incarnate.[56]

The first five verses of John's prologue justify this idea. They draw the reader back to Genesis 1.[57] According to the apostle, not only was the Logos in the beginning with God, and was himself God (v. 1), but he also communicated his life and light to creatures (v. 4): "In him life was, and the life was the light of men."[58] In other words, even since before the fall, the Son has been the mid-point between God and creatures, diffusing both the life and the light in creation which would otherwise remain hidden in him.[59] As Franciscus Junius put it, "No account of God exists in created reality by any reason except by this theology of Christ."[60]

[53] See n48.

[54] *Iesous Christos echthes kai semeron ho autos kai eis tous aionas*.

[55] Herman Bavinck, *The Wonderful Works of God: Instruction in the Christian Religion According to the Reformed Confession*, trans. Henry Zylstra (Glenside, PA: Westminster Seminary Press, 2019), 265.

[56] Muller, *Dictionary*, 152; Geerhardus Vos, *Reformed Dogmatics: A System of Christian Theology*, single volume edition, trans. and ed. Richard B. Gaffin Jr (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), 3:446.

[57] Richard Bauckham, "The Trinity and the Gospel of John," in *The Essential Trinity: New Testament Foundations and Practical Relevance*, ed. Brandon D. Crowe and Carl Trueman, 91–117 (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2017), 92–3; Colin G. Kruse, *John*, TNTC (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic), 55, 57.

[58] Bavinck, *RD*, 3:280. Translation of v. 4 mine (*en auto zoe en, kai he zoe en to phos ton anthropon*).

[59] Calvin, "How Christ is the Mediator: A Response to the Polish Brethren to Refute Stancaro's Error," in Joseph Tylanda, "Christ the Mediator: Calvin versus Stancaro," in *Calvin Theological Journal* 7 (1972), 5–16: 13.

[60] Franciscus Junius, *A Treatise on True Theology*, trans. David C. Noe (Grand Rapids: Reformation

That is to say that since the finite cannot contain the infinite (*finitum non capax infiniti*), all knowledge of the divine is funneled to creation through the Son as he was to be—and is—incarnate (see Col 2:3). Therefore, we may say that even the angels have always acquired their knowledge of God through him—thus the titles "the firstborn of all creation," and "the head over all rule and authority" (Col 1:15–7; 2:10).[61]

To be sure, this is not to imply that the Son mediates for angels (or man in his prelapsarian state), inasmuch as his work of revealing God to them does not also entail negotiating between disagreeing parties. Therefore, Reformed theology uses the distinct term *medius* as "a neutral term indicating the position of Christ as God-man between God and man."[62] So while the Son is the *medius* between God and unfallen (or glorified) creatures, he is and has always been the Mediator between God and fallen humanity.[63]

John alludes to that when he writes that the Light shines in the darkness and enlightens every man (John 1:5, 9).[64] His point is that since both prior to and after his incarnation, Jesus Christ has divided the fallen human race into those who reject the knowledge of God (v. 10), and those who receive it (1:12–3).[65] In other words, no one has ever been saved apart from the official activity of the Messiah.[66]

Geerhardus Vos argued that we must reject "every thought as if the Mediator occupied His offices only after His incarnation."[67] After all, as William Ames put

Heritage Books, 2014), 124–5. He adds, "For because the knowledge of the divine is an unapproachable fountain and great abyss, it was definitely necessary that wisdom be supplied to that humanity which God assumed, like a most abounding stream but adjusted to created things. From this we all will drink, just as water-masters offer to those who thirst water flowing from an unapproachable fountain or drawn from a reservoir or lake."

[61] Calvin, "How Christ is the Mediator," 12.

[62] Muller, *Dictionary*, 189.

[63] Jonathan Edwards, *A History of the Work of Redemption; Comprising an Outline of Church History* (New York: The American Tract Society), 1816, 28, writes,

> As soon as man fell, Christ entered on his mediatorial work. Then it was that he began to execute the work and office of a Mediator. He had undertaken it before the world was made. He stood engaged with the Father from eternity, to appear as man's Mediator, and to take on him that office, when there should be occasion. And now the time was come. Christ the eternal Son of God clothed himself with the mediatorial character, and therein immediately presented himself before the Father as Mediator between a holy, infinite, offended Majesty, and offending mankind.

[64] Bavinck, *RD*, 3:280.

[65] Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 124.

[66] Vos, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3:452.

[67] Vos, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3:452.

it, "The mediation was equally necessary in all ages."[68] Scripture speaks of his advent as taking place in "the fullness of time" (Gal 4:4), thereby suggesting that the incarnation's delay was not arbitrary nor accidental, but designed according to the wisdom of God—its groundwork having been laid in the preceding history.[69]

Therefore, we should say that Christ has held his mediatorial office during two dispensations, namely, the "shadowy" and the "embodied."[70] In the former, the Logos was in the process of coming into the world. He was first known as the "Angel" (Ex 23:20) or "Angel of the covenant" (Mal 3:1), who conducted Israel in the wilderness (cf. Ex 23:20–21 with 1 Cor 10:4, 9).[71] And subsequently, he exercised his mediatorial office through the anointed prophets, priests, and kings, who "derived their official authority from the person Himself whom they as office bearers proclaimed in a shadowy fashion."[72] The Son was thus actively mediating between God and men in the OT; his threefold office was active.

The Use of the Divine Nature in Christ's Prophetic Office

Peter leaves no doubt that the prophetic office of the Messiah was active in the old dispensation when he writes that the prophets prophesied by "the Spirit of Christ" (1 Pet 1:10–11; cf. Matt 23:37).[73] The Messiah, then, superintended the writing of the OT Scriptures, and this required the use of his divine nature. Moreover, even after the incarnation, Christ could act as the supreme and most authoritative interpreter of heavenly matters precisely because he was doing so

[68] William Ames, *The Marrow of Theology*, trans. John Dykstra Eusden (repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968), 1.XVIII.9, 129.

[69] Bavinck, *RD*, 3:280.

[70] Vos, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3:452.

[71] Poole, *Annotations*, 1:107. Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments* (1948 repr; Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1975), 76, argues that the only difference between incarnate appearance of the Son and his appearance as the Angel "is that under the Old Testament the created form was ephemeral, whereas through the incarnation it has become eternal."

[72] Vos, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3:452.

[73] Calvin, "How Christ is the Mediator," 14. Culver helpfully writes,

> What did Jesus mean when He uttered the anguished appeal: 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!' (Matt. 23:37)? The answer comes clear if we understand He was the One who inspired Jeremiah's urgent appeals and who sent the prophet 'Zechariah' (Matt. 23:35) to reprove the backslidden Joash, who then allowed the bold prophet to be stoned (2 Chr. 24:20), and He was the One who sent other prophets, likewise rejected (2 Chr. 24:19).

Robert Duncan Culver, *Systematic Theology: Biblical and Historical* (Gaines House, Fearn, Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus, 2005), 444

according to the divine nature.[74] John confirms this when he notes that it is "the only-begotten God"—who is, "in the bosom of the Father"—who "explains" the Father to us (John 1:18), and the Lord Himself confirms it when he states, "No one has ascended into heaven, but he who descended from heaven: the Son of Man" (John 3:13).[75] Therefore, the divine nature is as necessary for Christ's prophetic office as the human is.

The Use of the Divine Nature in Christ's Priestly Office

The priestly office of the Messiah likewise requires the two natures. The book of Hebrews makes this clear by its insistence on the direct connection between the Lord's divine Sonship and his priestly function, of which connection precisely qualifies him to be our great High Priest (1:5; 5:5–10; cf. also Ps 2:7; 110).[76] No one but God, after all (as Turretin said), "could oppose infinite merit to the infinite demerit of sinners and pay a ransom . . . of infinite value to the justice of God."[77]

To be clear, Christ was our sacrifice primarily according to his humanity; therefore, Scripture attributes this offering not only to his person, but also to his body (Heb 13:12; 1 Pet 2:24; Col 1:22), his blood (Col 1:20), and his soul (Isa 53:12; Matt 20:28). Nevertheless, without his deity, his sacrifice would not have been effectual (Acts 20:28; Rom 8:3).[78] Accordingly, in Hebrews 9:14, he is represented as both the Offeror and the Offering, who accomplishes his priestly work through the eternal Spirit. This means that the execution of Christ's priestly office required both his divine and human natures.

The Use of the Divine Nature in Christ's Kingly Office

The same is true of his kingly office. Thomas himself argued that Christ was the head of the church in the OT, and that according to the divine nature, since his human nature did not yet exist.[79] William Ames, on the other hand, said, "If he were not God he could not be the spiritual king of our souls, dispensing eternal life and death, and if he had not been man he could not have been a head of the same nature as his body [Eph 4:15]."[80] As God, then, he has always ruled over

[74] Turretin, *Institutes*, 2:380.

[75] Ames, *The Marrow of Theology*, 1.XIX.16, 133. Vos, *Biblical Theology*, 74–5, references this text in relation to the ministry of the Angel of Yahweh in the OT.

[76] Calvin, "How Christ is the Mediator," 14. See also A. W. Pink, *An Exposition of Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1954), 239–40.

[77] Turretin, *Institutes*, 2:381.

[78] Turretin, *Institutes*, 2:381.

[79] Thomas, *Truth*, 3 vols., trans. Robert W. Schmidt, S.J. (Chicago, IL: Henry Regnery Company, 1954), q29.4.9, 10.

[80] Ames, *The Marrow of Theology*, 1.XIX.16.

the Church through his Spirit, who effectually calls, gifts, and—in the present—strengthens the elect in the fulfillment of the great (kingly) commission (Matt 28:19–20).[81] As man, moreover, he will rule from Zion in his millennial kingdom (Ps 2:6; 110:2; Rev 14:1).

The great Prophet, Priest, and King of Israel, then—the antitype of all other mediators—has been in the exercise of his mediatorial office since the fall. Though in the old dispensation he did not yet have a human nature, we can still speak in this manner because we speak concerning not the divine nor the human nature, but the person.[82]

The Communication of Properties

The balance between the distinction of the two natures and their union in the person of Christ is preserved by the use of a concept known as the communication of properties, or *communicatio idiomatum*.[83] Simply put, this doctrine suggests that the properties of both the human and the divine natures of Christ "are now the properties of the person, and are therefore ascribed to the person."[84] Therefore, as Christ is said to be hungry (Luke 4:2), which is proper only to the human nature, so is he said to have been in the beginning (John 1:1), which is proper only to the divine.[85]

In view of the unity of his person, the properties of either one of the natures may therefore also be attributed to the other. Consequently, the apostles write that "the Lord of glory" was "crucified" (1 Cor 2:8), that God was "taken up in glory" (1 Tim 3:16), that "the Author of life" was killed (Acts 3:15), and that God purchased the Church "with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). In reality, however, only the human nature bled, was crucified, killed, and taken up in glory. But Scripture still predicates those things of God, inasmuch as they refer to the subject or person in the

[81] Also, concerning Christ's kingship over the Church, Dabney, *Systematic Theology*, 201, writes, "Christ has all power committed to His hand, for the Church's good. It requires omniscience to comprehend this, and omnipotence to wield it, especially when we recall the power of our enemies. See Rom. viii: 38, 39; Eph. vi: 12."

[82] Vos, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3:452.

[83] Ames, *The Marrow of Theology*, 1.XVIII.13. Ames pointed out that the union of the two natures in Christ's person "adds nothing to the divine person and nature except a relationship." However, the assumption does elevate Christ's human nature to the "highest perfection," and makes it, "so to speak, an arm [*membrum*] of the same whole τηεάντηρōπος, God-man, of which the divine nature is, as it were, another part." Cf. A Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 1:505–10.

[84] Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 324; cf. Culver, *Systematic Theology*, 490; Otto Weber, *Foundations of Dogmatics*, vol. 2, trans. Darrell L. Guder (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 124–7.

[85] Ames, *The Marrow of Theology*, 1.XVIII.13.

concrete.[86] The same one who is called almighty, omniscient, and omnipresent is thus also called a "man of sorrows" (Isa 53:3), of limited knowledge and power (Mark 13:32; John 4:6), and subject to human want and miseries (John 11:35; 19:28).

This is not to say, however, that one nature really participates in the attributes of the other.[87] We must be careful not to assume that "anything peculiar to the divine nature was communicated to the human nature, or vice versa."[88] That Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever does not mean that his human nature is eternal.[89] That God purchased the Church with his own blood does not mean that the divine nature now bleeds. Rather, the *person* of the Son is eternal according to his deity, and the *person* of the Son bled according to his humanity. The person is, therefore, the partaker of the attributes of both natures, "so that whatever may be affirmed of either nature may be affirmed of the person."[90] This emphasis upon the unity of Christ's person ultimately conveys that both the divine and the human natures were necessary in the work of reconciling God and man, for all the actions that tend to this end must refer to the person.[91]

The Communication of Operations

As with the communication of properties, the balance between the distinction of the two natures and their union in the *actions* of the Mediator is preserved by the use of a concept known as the communication of operations, or *communicatio operationum*.[92] This doctrine states that "the redemptive work of Christ, and particularly the final result of that work—the *apotelesma*—bears a divine-human character."[93]

[86] D. Glenn Butner Jr., *The Son Who Learned Obedience: A Theological Case Against the Eternal Submission of the Son* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2018), 81.

[87] See a Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 1:507–9.

[88] Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 324.

[89] This is the point at which the great hymn writer Isaac Watts, *Useful and Important Questions Concerning Jesus the Son of God Freely Composed: With a Humble Attempt to Answer them According to Scripture* (London: printed by J. Oswald and J. Buckland, 1746), q.3, sect.2 (pp. 119–129), went astray. he believed that the *pactum salutis*, being made between the Father and the Son from all eternity, necessitated the Son's humanity. Therefore, the human soul of Christ had to have been begotten from eternity. However, what Watts missed is that while the humanity of the Mediator was *eternally* and *ideally* present according to the eternal counsel of God, it was not, however, *really* present. See Vos, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3:446.

[90] Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2:392.

[91] Calvin, "How Christ is the Mediator," 14–5.

[92] Also, the *communicatio apotelesmatum*, or "*the communication of mediatorial operations in and for the sake of the work of salvation*." See Muller, *Dictionary*, 74.

[93] Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 324; a Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 1:509, states, "As God, the Person of Christ functions according to His human nature. Thus, each nature contributes

Calvin made use of this distinction when he and the ministers of Geneva wrote that "certain actions, considered in themselves, refer to one nature, but because of a consequent effect they are common to both."[94] As an example, he pointed to the death of Christ as proper to the human nature, but whose effect is that it purifies our consciences, "because he offered himself through the spirit (Heb 9:14)."[95] Therefore, Calvin concluded that the natures must not be separated in the act of dying, "since atonement could not have been effected by man alone unless the divine power were conjoined" [see Ps 49:7–8].[96] This is consistent with the Chalcedonian definition, which calls for the preservation of the properties of each nature without confusing or dividing them.

This may be more clearly understood through the following explanation:

> 1) The efficient cause of the redemptive work of Christ is the one undivided personal subject in Christ;
> 2) this redemptive work is brought about by the cooperation of both natures;
> 3) in this redemptive work, each of these natures works within its own special *energeia*
> 4) this notwithstanding, the result forms an undivided unity, because it is the work of a single person.[97]

In other words, the presupposition or *principle which* (*principium quo*) behind the mediatorial work is the God-man. Each of his acts, however, has a *principle by which* (*principium quod*) or "formal principle" (this would be either the divine or human nature), under which the act is carried out. The power of those acts depends upon the formal principle, such that the act itself is human if the *principle by which* is the human nature, and divine if the *principle by which* is the divine nature. Nevertheless, the effect or *apotelesma* is ultimately undivided, for it proceeds from a single person.[98]

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to the execution of the *one* work of redemption in all its parts."

[94] Calvin, "How Christ is the Mediator," 14–5.

[95] Calvin, "How Christ is the Mediator," 14–5.

[96] Calvin, "How Christ is the Mediator," 14–5.

[97] Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 324.

[98] John of Damascus, *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*; cited in Turretin, *Institutes*, 2:379. Turretin summarizes Damascus as follows:

> Four things must be accurately distinguished here in reference to the actions of Christ, as John of Damascus pointed out (*Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* 4.18 [*NPNF2*, 9:90–2]). (1) He is one that works (*ho energon*), the agent or principle which acts (which is the *suppositum* or person of Christ). (2) The activity (*energetikon*) or formal principle by which he acts—that by which the agent or person of Christ works (to

This concept, as Turretin pointed out, may be illustrated by human speech. Speech has a "common principle," which is the person speaking. On the other hand, speech has two "formal principles," which are the speaker's body and his soul. As the speaker speaks, then, distinct powers are at work; nevertheless, the end result—the message communicated—is undivided.[99] Similarly, the work of our redemption bears a divine-human character. The things in Scripture that apply to the office of the Mediator are not spoken simply either of the divine or of the human nature, but of both at once.[100]

The Role of the *Pactum Salutis* in Dual Mediation

To Robert Bellarmine, the Protestant doctrine of the theanthropic mediation of Jesus Christ represented a form of Arianism.[101] After all, the Reformed had argued that Christ mediates between God and men according to the divine nature—in addition to the human. This, he believed, implied that his deity is inferior to that of the Father.[102] This conclusion, however, grows out of a false premise; namely, that Christ's medial position is a matter of essence.[103] In other words, it assumes that the title Mediator is meant to convey a substantial quality.

However, Protestants have historically maintained that the title "Mediator" is one of personal office.[104] As Christ is called Savior because he saves, so he is called Mediator because he mediates between two parties. In other words, theanthropic mediation does not render the persons unequal according to the essence (Arianism), but rather, it distinguishes "the Son from the Father according to a voluntary economy by which he emptied himself."[105] That is to say, the Son is made "less" than the Father "not in nature (*physei*), but in economy (*oikonomia*)."[106] This economy arises out of the *pactum salutis*.[107]

> wit, the two natures. . .). (3) The energy (*energeia*) or operation which depends upon the principle-by-which and partakes of the nature of its own principle, so that it is divine if the principle-by-which is the divine nature, but human, if it is the humanity. (4) The effect (*energema*) or accomplishment (*apotelesma*) which depends upon the principle-by-which and is the external work, which we call a mediation.

Turretin, *Institutes*, 2:379.

[99] Turretin, *Institutes*, 2:383.

[100] Calvin, *Institutes*, 2.12.3.

[101] Bellarmine, *Controversies*, 575.

[102] Bellarmine, *Controversies*, 575, 588.

[103] Calvin, "The Controversy on Christ the Mediator," 150.

[104] See Carl Trueman, "From Calvin to Gillespie on Covenant: Mythological Excess or an Exercise in Doctrinal Development?" in *IJST* 11 no. 4 (October 2009), 378–97: 382.

[105] Turretin, *Institutes*, 2:384.

[106] Turretin, *Institutes*, 2:383.

[107] See Benjamin B. Warfield, "The Biblical Doctrine of the Trinity," in *Biblical and Theological Studies*

According to the Reformed doctrine of the *pactum*, the distribution of economic tasks among the persons of the Godhead flows out of an agreement made between them in eternity (Ps 89:3–4; 110:4; Isa 53:10–12; 2 Tim 1:9; Titus 1:2).[108] This agreement, to be sure, was "to plan and execute the redemption of the elect."[109] The economic offices which result from it are fitting to the particular order of subsisting of each divine person—as the Father is the first person, so is he, in the economy, the Architect, Lord, Creator, Director, Lawgiver, etc.; as the Son is the second person, so is he the Mediator and Surety of his people; as the Spirit is the third person, so is he the Emissary and Advocate of the Trinity, who consummates the work of redemption.[110] Nevertheless, they do not imply any form of essential inequality among the persons of the Trinity.

After all, as Samuel Willard argued, not only is the design of the *pactum* the glory of one God in three persons, but also, "if we consider the mutual obligation; they stand equally bound, each of them, to the terms that each undertakes."[111] In other words, the roles of the divine persons in the economy of redemption are grounded on eternal federal transactions; and this very fact rules out the possibility that one Trinitarian person might be superior to another. So, while the Son may in fact be "less" than the Father in the economy (John 14:28)—and may thus mediate according to his divine nature—he is not so by nature.[112]

Rightly, then, do Joel Beeke and Mark Jones state that the *pactum* accounts for "the particularity of Christ's mediatorial work."[113] After all, because of it, Christian theology can say that as God, Christ is co-equal with the Father; as man, he is subordinate to God; as Mediator, he is "*voluntarily* subordinate in the

(Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1952), 54; Robert L. Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998), 228–9.

[108] For more on the *pactum*, see Quiñones, "In the Council Chamber of the Triune God"; Samuel Willard, *The Covenant of Redemption*, ed. Don Kistler (Orlando, FL: The Northhampton Press, 2022); J. V. Fesko, *The Trinity and the Covenant of Redemption* (Geanies House, Great Britain: Christian Focus, 2016); idem., *The Covenant of Redemption: Origins, Development, and Reception*, Reformed Historical Theology 35 (Bristol, CT: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016).

[109] Fesko, *The Trinity and the Covenant of Redemption*, 131.

[110] Petrus van Mastricht, *Theoretical- Practical Theology*, Vol. 2: *Faith in the Triune God*, trans. Todd M. Rester, ed. Joel R. Beeke (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2019), 506.

[111] Willard, *The Covenant of Redemption*, 37.

[112] Herman Witsius, *The Economy of the Covenants Between God and Man*, 2 vols. (repr., Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2017), II.iii.xx; Mastricht, *Theoretical- Practical Theology*, 2:506; John Owen, *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, with Preliminary Exercitations*, A New Edition, in Four Volumes (London: Printed for Thomas Tegg, 1839), Exercitation 28, 1:466.

[113] Joel R. Beeke and Mark Jones, "The Puritans on the Covenant of Redemption," in *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life*, 237–58 (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2012), 255.

exercise of his office and that according to both natures."[114] Calvin, on the other hand, rightly stated,

> These two facts, that the λόγος and eternal son of God is equal to the Father and that the mediator is less than the Father are no more incompatible than these two, that the λόγος by itself and separately is a divine person and, nevertheless, that the one person of Christ the mediator is constituted by two natures.[115]

In other words, the coupling of essential equality with economic minority is no more irrational or impossible than the coupling of the human and the divine nature in the divine person of Christ. Both are mysteries that faith may embrace.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the controversy over dual mediation, for Protestants, consisted in the reaffirmation of the Christology of Chalcedon and its reapplication to present circumstances. At stake was both the unity of the suppositum and the efficacy of his mediatorial actions. The Reformed demonstrated that if the divine Son was going to mediate between God and men, he needed to do so as both God and man. On the other hand, dual mediation opened them up to the question of how he could do so without also forfeiting his true deity. The answer came in the *pactum salutis*. No wonder, then, Herman Bavinck referred to that doctrine as "*the* divine work par excellence."[116] After all, in it, the Son is made to shine as both true God, and the one who gloriously makes himself less than the Father, in the economy, for us and for our salvation.

[114] Muller, "Toward the *Pactum Salutis*," 61.
[115] Calvin, "The Controversy on Christ the Mediator," 153.
[116] Bavinck, *RD*, 3:215. Emphasis original.

"This Old Rule Should Be Remembered": Three Historical Arguments for Inseparable Operations

By Jacob S. Trotter[1]

Abstract: *Recent evangelical scholarship has emphasized the importance of inseparable operations, summarized in the phrase opera Trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt ("the external works of the Trinity are indivisible"). To support this trend, this article will categorize three historical arguments for inseparable operations for use in systematic theology today. Additionally, presenting these historical arguments will show that inseparable operations is historically undeniable, biblically grounded, and theologically necessary.*

Keywords: Trinity, Reformed Orthodox, systematic theology, Gregory of Nyssa, Thomas Goodwin, Classical Theism

Introduction

Augustine claimed that Christianity holds the doctrine of inseparable operations (ISO) "against all heretical perverseness."[2] By the time of the Reformation, Melanchthon referred to it as an "old rule" which "should be remembered."[3] In the period of Reformed Orthodoxy, Goodwin likewise refers to ISO as a settled "rule."[4] With such an apparent historical pedigree, it should not be surprising that several evangelicals have recently taught and defended this doctrine.[5]

[1] Jacob Trotter is currently a ThM student in Reformation and post-Reformation theology at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary.

[2] Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. John Gibb and James Innes (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), 7:132. Muller offers a succinct definition of ISO: "The ad extra (or external) works of the Trinity are undivided." Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017), 246.

[3] Philip Melanchthon, *Melanchthon on Christian Doctrine: Loci Communes 1555*, ed. and trans., Clyde L. Manschreck (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 16.

[4] Thomas Goodwin, "An Exposition of the Epistle to the Ephesians—Sermon XXX" in *Works of Thomas Goodwin* (Grand Rapids: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 2021), 1:461.

[5] See Kyle Claunch, "What God Hath Done Together: Defending the Historic Doctrine of the Inseparable Operations of the Trinity." *The Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 56/4 (2013): 781–800; Tyler R. Wittman, "On the Unity of the Trinity's External Works: Archaeology and Grammar." *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 20.3 (July 2018): 359–380; Adonis Vidu, *The Same God Who Works All Things: Inseparable Operations in Trinitarian Theology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2021); Torey J.S Teer, "Inseparable Operations of the Trinity: Outdated Relic or Valuable Tool?" *Southeastern Theological Review*, 12.1 (Spring 2021): 37–59; Matthew Barrett, *Simply Trinity: The Unmanipulated Father, Son, and Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2021), 287–315; Peter Sammons, "When Distinction Becomes Separation: The Doctrine of Inseparable Operations." *The*

This article will join the effort to defend ISO by categorizing and explaining three common historical arguments used to explain the doctrine.[6] These arguments from various corners of church history will demonstrate that ISO is historically undeniable, biblically grounded, and theologically necessary. While a chronological treatment of the historical sources would be beneficial, this article will arrange them topically to demonstrate the core features of the three common arguments and how they might be used for systematic theology today.[7]

Argument I: Unity of Essence

The first common argument for ISO can be called the "unity of essence" argument. This argument states that the divine persons work inseparably because they are undivided in their essence. Claunch summarizes, "Divine essential unity ("God is one" – Deut 6:4) and, consequently, perichoretic co-inherence ("I am in the Father, and the Father is in me" – John 14:11) necessitate the axiom *opera trinitatis indivisa sunt* (the works of the Trinity are undivided)."[8] Simply put, ISO is a necessary result of monotheism. Historical examples of this argument are legion.

Gregory of Nyssa provides a foundational iteration of the unity of essence argument in his letter *On Not Three Gods*. This work by Gregory argues toward the essential unity of the three divine persons from their undivided work. Radde-

Master's Seminary Journal 33.1 (Spring 2022): 75–97; R.B. Jamieson and Tyler R. Wittman, *Biblical Reasoning: Christological and Trinitarian Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2022), 106–125; D. Glenn Butner Jr., *Trinitarian Dogmatics: Exploring the Grammar of the Christian Doctrine of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2022), 175–197.

[6] Portions of this article are modified from Jacob S. Trotter, "'Against All Heretical Perverseness': The Doctrine of Inseparable Operations Considered Historically and Exegetically" (MDiv Thesis, The Master's Seminary, 2022).

[7] The method of this article is not to trace the development of ISO historically or in any particular period, but to show how certain arguments for the doctrine from the past can be synthesized and categorized for use in the present. If the task of the systematic theologian in using church history is to "penetrate historically-determined forms of doctrinal statement . . . to discern their doctrinal intention" then "present that intention, even when it demands the use of new and different terms, to the church of the present day," this article focuses on the latter without excluding the former. In short, this is an attempt to use historical theology in the service of systematic theology. Richard A. Muller, "The Role of Church History in the Study of Systematic Theology" in *Doing Theology in Today's World: Essays in Honor of Kenneth S. Kantzer*, eds. John D. Woodbridge and Thomas Edward McComiskey (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991), 95.

[8] Kyle David Claunch "The Son and the Spirit: The Promise of Spirit Christology in Traditional Trinitarian and Christological Perspective" (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017), 137–8. On a popular level, Barrett offers the succinct axiom, "The three persons are undivided in their *external* works because they are undivided in their *internal* nature." Barrett, *Simply Trinity*, 291.

Gallwitz explains from Gregory's writing that the unity of divine works is what negates the idea that the Father, Son, and Spirit are three separate instances of a divine nature.[9] This influential letter by Gregory deals carefully with the language used to speak of the Trinity's nature.[10]

In objection to Gregory's formulation of the Trinity, some say, "Peter, James, and John, being in one human nature, are called three men: and there is no absurdity in describing those who are united in nature, if they are more than one, by the plural number of the name derived from their nature."[11] Why is it that Peter, James, and John have the same human nature and are three humans, yet the Father, Son, and Spirit have the same nature but are not three Gods?[12]

Part of Gregory's answer to this objection is that "the word 'Godhead' is not significant of nature but of operation."[13] He argues this because the word *theotés* ("Godhead") refers, in some sense, to the act of "beholding" and should be understood as an act of the Father, Son, and Spirit.[14] From this undivided action, he reasons back to an undivided power and an undivided nature. As we will see below, the unity of essence argument for ISO will eventually argue *to* ISO *from* the unity of the divine essence, whereas here Gregory argues *to* the unity of the divine essence *from* ISO.[15]

[9] He explains that Gregory's "principal claim . . . is that it is the unity of activity—as opposed to the unity of nature—that defeats the idea that the three hypostases are three gods." Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, "Gregory of Nyssa and the Three Gods Problem: Activity and Etymology in *To Ablabius*" in *Exploring Gregory of Nyssa: Philosophical, Theological, and Historical Studies*, eds. Anna Marmodoro and Neil B. McLynn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 199.

[10] Ayres notes, "Gregory's Trinitarian theology is best approached by focusing on the ways in which he makes a particular contribution to the emergence of a pro-Nicene 'grammar' of divinity through developing a complex account of divine power." Lewis Ayres, "On Not Three People: The Fundamental Themes of Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian Theology as Seen in *To Ablabius: On Not Three Gods*." *Modern Theology* 18.4 (October 2002), 446.

[11] Gregory of Nyssa, "On 'Not Three Gods,'" in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series*, eds. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 5:331.

[12] So Ayres, "Gregory's opponents are alleging that the relationship between substance and person deployed by the Cappadocians is susceptible to the logic that applies in the case of three people." Ayres, "On Not Three People," 447.

[13] Nyssa, "On 'Not Three Gods,'" 5:334.

[14] Nyssa, "On 'Not Three Gods,'" 5:334.

[15] Ayres, "On Not Three People," 452. He writes elsewhere, "Father, Son, and Spirit all seem to be engaged in *some* activity of seeing and contemplating. Thus, says Gregory, if the activities of the three are the same, then the power which gave rise to them is the same and the ineffable divine nature in which that power is inherent must also be one." Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 355. Emphasis original.

Emery likewise expounds Nyssa, "In creation and salvation, the effects produced by the three divine persons show the unity of their activity and uncover, at the root of their activity, the unity of

While the breadth and depth of this letter cannot be exhausted here, one clear point must be made: Gregory affirms ISO as an argument for the undivided nature of the three persons.[16] Against the original objection, he explains that the action of the three divine persons is fundamentally different than the action of three human persons. Three men working together may display harmony or cooperation at best.[17] This is not the case with the three divine persons. Plantinga writes, "Not so with God. In a strong statement of the *opera ad extra indivisa* principle, Gregory simultaneously links divine missions with persons and unifies his Trinity theory."[18] Gregory's own words are abundantly clear:

> But in the case of the Divine nature we do not similarly learn that the Father does anything by Himself in which the Son does not work conjointly, or again that the Son has any special operation apart from the Holy Spirit; but every operation which extends from God to the Creation, and is named according to our variable conceptions of it, has its origin from the Father, and proceeds through the Son, and is perfected in the Holy Spirit. For this reason the name derived from the operation is not divided with regard to the number of those who fulfil it, because the action of each concerning anything is not separate and peculiar, but whatever comes to pass, in reference either to the acts of His providence for us, or to the government and constitution of the universe, comes to pass by the action of the Three, yet what does come to pass is not three things.[19]

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their power (*dunamis*). . . . A number of patristic texts explain or express the consubstantiality of the divine persons by their unity of activity and of power. The common nature of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is often described as a unity of operation and of power: asserting the unity of operation is a way of confessing the one essence of the three persons. This teaching is a leading component of Christian Trinitarian monotheism." Gilles Emery, *The Trinity: An Introduction to Catholic Doctrine on the Triune God*, trans. Matthew Levering (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 93.

[16] White summarizes, "Nyssa's point is that there is only one divine essence, only one deity, and it is not multiplied by the real distinctions of the persons. Rather, within the life of the Trinity, each of the persons possesses the fullness of the divine essence together with the others, albeit according to his own mode." Thomas Joseph White, *The Trinity: On the Nature and Mystery of the One God* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2022), 149. For a terse explanation of Gregory's argument, see Robert Letham, *The Holy Spirit* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2023), 25–6.

[17] Plantinga notes, "the crucial difference is that in God, as opposed to humanity, there is complete unity of work. Men work separately, sometimes even at cross-purposes." Cornelius Plantinga, Jr. "Gregory of Nyssa and the Social Analogy of the Trinity," *The Thomist*, 50.3 (July 1986), 336.

[18] Plantinga, "Gregory of Nyssa and the Social Analogy of the Trinity," 336.

[19] Nyssa, "On 'Not Three Gods,'" 5:334.

This is a clear, early statement of ISO. This is no small fact considering the significance of Gregory's letter.[20] In any case, other examples of the unity of essence argument are readily available in pro-Nicene thought. Augustine offers another clear example of the unity of essence argument.[21] He states, "As the Father and the Son are inseparable, so also the works of the Father and of the Son are inseparable."[22] He cites John 10:30 to support this claim then continues, "Because the Father and Son are not two Gods, but one God, the Word and He whose the Word is, One and the Only One . . . Therefore, not only of the Father and Son, but also of the Holy Spirit; as there is equality and inseparability of persons, so also the works are inseparable."[23] This argument, summarized here by Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine, is the most well-established of the three listed in this article.[24]

[20] Radde-Gallwitz calls it, "one of the most widely cited works of patristic Trinitarian theology." Radde-Gallwitz, "Gregory of Nyssa and the Three Gods Problem: Activity and Etymology in *To Ablabius*," 199.

[21] Letham writes, "Perhaps the most dominant theme in Augustine's discussion of the Trinity is its indivisibility and, as a corollary, the inseparable operations." Letham, *The Holy Spirit*, 36.

[22] Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, 7:132. Claunch's summary of Augustine on this point is excellent. He writes that Augustine's exegesis of 1 Corinthians 1:24 "shows that the power by which God acts in the world is to be predicated of the one substance, which is common to all three persons; this substance is the basis of their eternal ontological unity. Hence, when any person of the Trinity acts in the economy of salvation, he acts by the one power which is common to all three persons." Kyle Claunch, "What God Hath Done Together," 790. See also his whole discussion beginning on 789.

[23] Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, 7:132–3.

[24] Teer provides an overview of pro-Nicene writers and concludes, "the fourth century Eastern and Western fathers spoke with one voice concerning the Trinity: the Godhead, though personally differentiated, is inseparable. Both in nature and in operation." Teer, "Inseparable Operations of the Trinity: Outdated Relic or Valuable Tool?" 38–43. See also Michel René Barnes, "One Nature, One Power: Consensus Doctrine in Pro-Nicene Polemic" in *Studia Patristica* Vol. 29, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone (Leuven Peeters, 1997), 205–23, Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 280–1, and D. Blair Smith, "Trinitarian Relations in the Fourth Century." *Reformed Faith & Piety*, 2:1 (2017), 49.

Two more early examples of the unity of essence argument can be found in Hilary of Poitiers and Basil of Caesarea. Hilary states of the Father and Son, "the unity of Their nature is such, that the several action of Each implies the conjoint action of Both." Again, on John 14:11, he adds of the Son, "His power belonged to His nature, and His Working was the exercise of that power; in the exercise of that power, then, they might recognize in Him the unity with the Father's nature." Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity*, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series,* eds. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 9:171–2 and 173.

Likewise, Basil of Caesarea first says that the only way we can know anything about the divine nature is through divine operations. Second, he states negatively, "Suppose we observe the operations of the Father, of the Son, of the Holy Ghost, to be different from one another, we shall then conjecture, from the diversity of the operations, that the operating natures are also different." Finally, he states positively, "we perceive the operation of Father, Son and Holy Ghost to be one and the same, in no respect showing difference or variation; from this identity of operation we necessarily infer the

While the unity of essence argument is well documented among pro-Nicene theologians, significantly less research is available on the Reformers and the Reformed Orthodox.[25] However, one instance of this argument during the era of the Reformation is found in the writings of Beza. On the statement "The works of the Trinity are inseparable," he writes, "We do by no means separate from the Father, neither from the Son nor yet the Holy Ghost either in the creation or in the government of all things, nor yet in any thing which appertaineth to the substance of God."[26] Beza's contemporary Vermigli likewise states, "There are three divine persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, consubstantial, equal, of the same essence, and just as they are of the same nature, so they also have one will and operation."[27] Musculus agrees that the working and power of God are equally common to the three persons.[28]

Following these Reformers, the Reformed Orthodox are remarkably consistent on this point. Perkins writes, "The works of God are all those which He does out of Himself—that is, out of His divine essence." Because the works are out of

unity of the nature." Basil of Caesarea, *Letters*, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series*, eds. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, trans. Blomfield Jackson (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 8:231.

[25] While notable exceptions exist, Muller writes "The trinitarian thought of the Reformers and their orthodox successors has, in fact, received comparatively little treatment . . . The same problem appears in the case of the trinitarian theology of the seventeenth century writers." Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics* (*PRRD*), *The Triunity of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 4:24.

[26] I am grateful for Mitchell Wygant for pointing me to this reference: Theodore de Beza, *A briefe and pithie summe of the Christian faith, made in forme of a confession, with confutation of all such superstitious errours, as are contrary thereunto*, trans. Robert Fyll (London: Richard Serll, dwelling in Flete lane, at the synge of the halfe Eagle and the Key, 1565), II.4. Cf. Theodore Beza, *Confession de la foy chrestienne* (J. du Pan, 1563), 13.

Like many others, Beza's understanding of divine simplicity likely informs his understanding of ISO. Beza's chatechism states, "God's essence is most single, infinite, and unable to be parted: therefore these three persons are not separated one from another, but only distinguished." Theodore Beza, *A booke of Christian Questions and answers. Wherein are set foorth the cheef points of the Christian religion*, trans. Arthur Golding (London: William How for Abraham Veale, dwelling in Paules Church yarde at the sign of the Lambe, 1572), 4.

[27] Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Life, Letters, and Sermons*, The Peter Martyr Library, Vol. 5, trans. and ed. John Patrick Donnelly (Kirksville, MO: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1999), 200. Cf. *Epistolae duae, ad ecclesias Polonicas, Iesu Christi* (Tiguri: Froschauer, 1561), 12.

Muller comments, "Vermigli recognizes as a fundamental presupposition of his argument that the actions of the Father, Son, and Spirit are distinct only *ad intra* and that all acts *ad extra* have as their cause or author the One God: the entire Godhead acts as one in all works or relations that 'go out' from the Godhead." Muller, *PRRD*, 4:256.

[28] He states that "essence, nature, godhead, majesty, working, will, power, honor and continuance forever, is common to them all, all coessential, all coeternal." Wolfgang Musculus, *Common places of Christian religion, gathered by Wolfgang Musculus, for the use of such as desire the knowledge of godly truth*, trans. John Man (London: Imprinted by Henry Bynneman, 1578), 13. Cf. Wolfgang Musculus, *Loci communes in usus sacrae Theologiae canditatorum parti* (Hernagiana, 1560), 9.

his essence, he explains, they are "common to the Trinity."[29] Likewise, Manton affirms, "they are one in essence, therefore, one in will, and one in operation; and what the Father doth, the Son doth, because of the unity of essence." Manton's use of "therefore" and "because" expose his reasoning here—the unity of the divine essence necessitates ISO.[30] Witsius and Brakel offer clear affirmations of the unity of essence argument as well.[31]

Goodwin states most clearly, "As things are in being, so in working; which axiom holds in God himself as well as in his creatures. Hence, that as all three persons have in common but one essence, so one equal hand in works."[32] When Goodwin affirms, "As things are in being, so in working," he is referencing the axiom *agere sequitur esse*.[33] In context, Goodwin uses this axiom as the first of four assertions to explain ISO.[34]

Without stating this axiom, Owen emphatically affirms the unity of essence argument. He writes, "the several persons are undivided in their operations, acting all by the same will, the same wisdom, the same power. Every person, therefore, is the author of every work of God because each person is God, and the divine nature is the same undivided principle of all divine operations; and this ariseth from the unity of the persons in the same essence."[35] This is "absolutely

[29] William Perkins, *A Golden Chain*, in *The Works of William Perkins*, eds. Joel R. Beeke and Greg A. Salazar (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2018), 6:23.

[30] Thomas Manton, "Several Sermons Upon Titus ii.11–14" in *The Complete Works of Thomas Manton* (Birmingham, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2008), 16:243.

[31] Herman Witsius says, "As God is one, so the power and operation of all Persons are one and undivided." Herman Witsius, *Dissertations on the Apostles' Creed*, trans. Donald Fraser (Escondido, CA: The den Dulk Christian Foundation, 1993), 121. Cf. Herman Witsius, *Exercitationes sacrae in symbolum quod apostolorum dicitur et in orationem dominicam*, 3rd ed. (Amsterdam: J. Wolters, 1697), 76.

Brakel writes, "Since God is one in essence, and the three Persons are the one God, their will and power are one and the same. All God's extrinsic works are common to the three Persons, being the work of a triune God." Wilhelmus à Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, trans. Bartel Elshout (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 1992), 1:267.

[32] Shortly after this, he adds, "when the essence is but one, the operation must needs be one and the same." Thomas Goodwin, *Man's Restoration by Grace*, in *Works of Thomas Goodwin* (Grand Rapids: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 2021), 7:530.

[33] Muller says this is "an axiom of traditional metaphysics and physics, indicating the basic truth that a thing must exist in order to engage in its proper operations or activities and also, by extension, indicating that the being of a thing determines how it operates or acts." Muller, *Dictionary*, 19–20.

[34] Goodwin, *Man's Restoration by Grace*, 7:530.

[35] John Owen, *A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit*, in *The Works of John Owen* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2018), 3:93. Wittman writes, "Owen's construal of trinitarian agency is obviously traditional when put in its proper context and in light of potential influences like Aquinas. His continuity with Augustine and the tradition after him necessitates that we understand this tradition, the doctrine of inseparable operations, and Reformed Orthodoxy more generally in order to understand the Puritan divine." Tyler R. Wittman, "The End of the Incarnation: John Owen, Trinitarian Agency and

necessary," he says, "because of their union in nature."[36] Owen and Goodwin argue a necessary connection between the unity of the divine nature and the unity of divine works.

If these statements were not clear enough, Owen says elsewhere, "every divine work, and every part of every divine work, is the work of God, that is, of the whole Trinity, inseparably and undividedly."[37] This statement by Owen disallows any interpretation of ISO which distributes the labor of external divine works. Each person performs not only "every work" but "every part" of every divine work.[38] However, the fact that each divine person performs "every part of every divine work" does not remove the distinctions between the persons. This is where Goodwin's second assertion must not be missed.

Distinct Modes of Operation

Just as Goodwin affirms the necessary connection between a unified essence and a unified act because of the axiom *agere sequitur esse*, he affirms that each person's mode of existence (*modus essendi*) is reflected in their mode of operation (*modus operandi*) for the same reason. He writes,

> Yet although they be but one essence, yet they are three distinct subsistencies or personalities, and still that axiom holds, that the operation of each follows the distinction of their existences [*agree sequitur esse*], and bears resembleance of them; and look what order or distinction they have in subsisting, they have in operation to accompany it; but the distinction of their personality (if abstractedly considered from the essence) being but *modus essendi*, therefore in like manner the distinction of their operation and concurrence is but *modus operandi*, a distinct manner of concurring.[39]

Christology" in *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 15.3 (July 2013), 300.

Likewise, Trueman affirms the fundamental nature of the unity of essence argument in Owen: "Fundamental to Owen's doctrine of God is the traditional idea that all acts of God are acts of the whole God. This is an obvious implication of belief in the consubstantiality of the three persons of the Godhead." Carl R. Trueman, *The Claims of Truth: John Owen's Trinitarian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2021), 118.

[36] Owen, *A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit*, 3:198.

[37] Owen, *A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit*, 3:93.

[38] Turretin makes a similar point: "The external works are undivided and equally common to the single persons (both on the part of the principle and on the part of the accomplishment)." Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1992), 1:281–2. Cf. Francisco Turrettino, *Institutio Theologiae elencticae* (Leiden/Utrecht: Fredericum Haring/Ernestum Voskuyl, 1696), 310.

[39] Goodwin, *Man's Restoration by Grace*, 7:530.

Just as their *modus essendi* (mode of existence) in no way divides the divine essence, their *modus operandi* (mode of operation) in no way divides their work. Instead, the former is reflected in the latter.

Goodwin's argument is that the distinction between the persons is still present in ISO because their mode of existence is present in their undivided acts *ad extra*. Emery summarizes this point, "There is therefore a single power and one action of the whole Trinity, within which each person acts according to what distinctly characterizes him—that is to say, in the relative mode that is proper to him. Each person acts *in virtue of the common nature and according to the mode of his personal property*."[40] As an example, when Jesus says the Son does not act "of Himself," he is saying the one who *is* from the Father (mode of existence) also *acts* from the Father (mode of operation) (John 5:19).[41] To borrow Owen's language, the Father performs every part of every external divine work as the Father, the Son performs every part of every divine work as the Son, and the Spirit performs every part of every divine work as the Spirit.

Just as the unity of essence argument is widely affirmed, so is this necessary distinction.[42] When explaining how the divine persons may be distinguished, Ursinus affirms both ISO and distinct modes of operation. Speaking of the Trinity's works *ad extra*, he writes, "These works are indeed wrought by the common will and power of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but yet the same order is preserved among the persons of the Godhead, in working, which there is as it respects their existence."[43] This same affirmation is found throughout the Re-

[40] Emery, *The Trinity*, 164. Emphasis original. Emery explains elsewhere, "Each person is characterized therefore by a relative mode of existence (the content of the 'proper mode of existence' lies in the personal relation). *This distinct mode does not disappear in the action of the persons*; it remains present and qualifies intrinsically this act. The distinct mode of acting bears the same noteworthiness and the same profundity as does the mode of existing. . . the three persons are distinct under the aspect of the *mode* of being of the divine essence in them and, consequently, under the aspect of the *mode* of acting corresponding to the mode of being. . . Each person exists and acts in accordance with his relation to the other persons." Gilles Emery, *Trinity, Church, and the Human Person: Thomistic Essays* (Naples, FL: Sapientia Press of Ave Maria University, 2007), 135–6. Emphasis added. See also White's second proposition for understanding appropriations, White, *The Trinity*, 526.

[41] Many theologians reference John 5:19 to make this point, as will be discussed below. See Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 1:281–2; Perkins, *A Golden Chain*, 6:24. Cf. Turrettino, *Institutio Theologiae elencticae*, 310.

[42] Wittman's claim is hardly objectionable that ISO "remains vulnerable to easy distortion when separated from the second clause of its more extended form: the order and distinction of the persons being preserved (*servato ordine et discrimine personarum*)." Tyler R. Wittman, "On the Unity," 359.

[43] Zacharius Ursinus, *The Commentary of Dr. Zacharius Ursinus on the Heidelberg Catechism*, trans. G.W. Willard (Philipsburg, PA: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1852), 137. Cf. Zacharias Ursinus, *Corpus Doctrinae Christianae Ecclesiarum a Paptu Romano reformatarum* (Typis Jacobi Lasché, 1602), 137

formed tradition.

With his typical clarity, Turretin summarizes both ISO and distinct modes of operation: "For although the external works are undivided and equally common to the single persons (both on the part of the principle and on the part of the accomplishment), yet they are distinguished by order and by terms. For the order of operating follows the order of subsisting [*ordo operandi sequitur ordinem subsistendi*]."[44] Johann Heidegger likewise affirms that the mode of subsistence is reflected in the mode of operation, "This mode of working outwardly (*ad extra*) follows the mode of working inwardly (*ad intra*) [*Qui modus operandi ad extra modum operandi ad intra sequitur*]."[45] Many other examples of this distinction are readily available.[46]

Argument II: Multiple Attribution

The second common argument for ISO can be called the multiple attribution

[44] Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 1:281–2. Cf. Turrettino, *Institutio Theologiae elencticae*, 310.

[45] Johann Heinrich Heidegger, *The Concise Marrow of Theology*, Vol. 4, *Classical Reformed Theology*, trans. Casey Carmichael (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2019), 31. Cf. Johann Heinrich Heidegger, *Medulla medullae theologiae Christianae* (Tiguri: typis Henrici Bodmeri, 1697), 30.

[46] See Vermigli, "We preach, teach, and write just what we believe: there are three divine persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, consubstantial, equal, of the same essence, and just as they are of the same nature, so they also have one will and operation, which however *we want to be understood as preserving the properties of the persons*." Vermigli, *Life, Letters, and Sermons*, 200. Emphasis added. Cf. *Epistolae duae, ad ecclesias Polonicas, Iesu Christi* (Tiguri: Froschauer, 1561), 12.

Owen, "but on those divine works which outwardly are of God there is an especial impression of the order of the operation of each person, with respect unto their natural and necessary subsistence, as also with regard unto their internal characteristical properties, whereby. We are distinctly taught to know them and adore them." Owen, *A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit*, 3:93.

Mastricht, "In the mode of operating, which imitates the manner of subsisting and order of, insofar as, outside himself, the Father works from himself, through the Son and Holy Spirit; the Son from the Father, through the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit from the Father and Son, through himself. In this the operative force indeed is only one, common to the three, but the order of operation, and also its terminus, is diverse." Petrus van Mastricht, *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, Vol. 2, *Faith in the Triune God*, trans. Todd M. Rester, ed. Joel R. Beeke (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2019), 505. Cf. Petrus van Mastricht, *Theoretico-practica theologia*, 2nd ed. (apud Gerardum Muntendam, 1698), 1:238.

Ames, after affirming ISO, writes, "The distinct manner of working in each person working according to the particular form [ratio] of his subsistence." William Ames, *The Marrow of Theology*, trans. John Dykstra Eusden (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 93. Cf. William Ames, *Medulla theologica* (Amsterdam: Apud J. Janssonium, 1634), 24.

Brakel states that Scripture makes a distinction between the persons, "in manner of existence, as the Father is of Himself, the Son is of the Father, and the Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son," and also "in the manner of operation, as the Father works of Himself, the Son is engaged on behalf of His Father, and the Holy Spirit on behalf of both." Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 1:146–7.

argument. Many theologians argue that the attribution of one divine work to multiple divine persons implies ISO or can only be explained by ISO. While Scripture does not attribute every divine work to each person separately, it happens frequently enough to substantiate this argument. The act of creation is commonly used to make this point.[47]

Augustine famously states, "the Father made the world, the Son made the world, the Holy Ghost made the world. If three Gods, then three worlds; if one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, then one world was made by the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Ghost."[48] Perkins applies this same logic in his exposition of the Apostles Creed. When he comes to the line, "God the Father, creator of heaven and earth," he notes "it may seem strange to some that the work of creation is ascribed to the first person in [the] Trinity, the Father, whereas in the Scripture it is common to them all three equally."[49] He gives biblical evidence that both the Son (John 1:3; Heb 1:2) and the Spirit (Gen 1:2; Job 26:13) also created. Although he is answering a different question, Perkins relies on the multiple attribution argument from creation to do so.[50]

Vermigli and Goodwin each demonstrate that the resurrection is equally attributed to the Father (Eph 1:20), Son (John 2:19; 5:21, 28–29; 6:40; 10:17–18; 11:25), and Spirit (Rom 8:11).[51] Vermigli also teaches that, while the Son alone became incarnate, the divine act of incarnating has as its efficient cause the Father (Gal 4:4), Son (Phil 2:7), and Spirit (Matt 1:18).[52] Manton makes a similar argument by noting that Scripture sometimes teaches that Christ gave himself

[47] See Petrus van Mastricht, *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, Vol. 3, *The Works of God and the Fall of Man*, trans. Todd M. Rester (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2021), 110–1; Cf. Petrus van Mastricht, *Theoretico-practica theologia*, 2nd ed. (apud Gerardum Muntendam, 1698), 1:314; Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 1:267–8; Owen, *A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit*, 3:93.

[48] Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, 7:135.

[49] William Perkins, *An Exposition of the Creed* in *The Works of William Perkins*, eds. Joel R. Beeke and Greg A. Salazar (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2017), 5:42.

[50] He assumes ISO and even explicitly affirms it throughout his argument here. Perkins, *An Exposition of the Creed*, 5:42–3.

[51] Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Philosophical Works*, The Peter Martyr Library, Vol. 4, trans. and ed. Joseph C. McLelland (Kirksville, MO: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1996), 105 and Goodwin, "An Exposition," 1:461. Cf. Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Melachim, Id Est, Regnum Libri Duo posteriors* (Tiguri: Froschauer, 1566), fol. v228.

[52] He concludes, "We see therefore, that it appeareth sufficientlie by the holie scriptures, that Christ was both the efficient cause, and the effect." Vermigli, Pietro Martire, *The common places of the most famous and renowmed diuine Doctor Peter Martyr diuided into foure principall parts,* trans. Anthonie Marten (London: In Pater noster Rovve at the costs and charges of Henrie Denham, Thomas Chard, VWilliam Broome, and Andrew Maunsell, 1583), 600. Cf. Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Loci communes* (Londinium: Kyngstoni, 1576), 456.

(Gal 1:4; Titus 2:14) and other times it teaches that he was given by the Father (John 3:16).[53] Ames lists seven works that are attributed to different divine persons at different points in Scripture.[54]

Each of these arguments—from creation, resurrection, incarnation, or otherwise—show that ISO arises naturally from the biblical text. These writers each form their doctrine in a way that accounts for all the appropriate biblical data. Sometimes they use the multiple attribution argument to argue for ISO. Other times they appeal to the unity of essence argument to explain the fact that divine works are attributed to different persons throughout Scripture. In any case, this method of reasoning has been used far and wide to explain trinitarian activity *ad extra*. However, this argument in no way ignores the reality that Scripture attributes particular works to particular persons for particular reasons.

Appropriations

A necessary corollary to ISO generally and the multiple attributions argument specifically is the practice of divine appropriations. In the context of ISO, the practice of appropriations refers to ascribing inseparable divine works to separate divine persons ("separate" rhetorically, not essentially). The purpose of appropriating divine works to particular persons is to reveal something unique about the persons.[55] Aquinas, who advanced the doctrine of appropriations, clarifies that things essential to the Trinity "are not appropriated to the persons as if they exclusively belonged to them; but in order to make the persons manifest."[56] Just as the *modus essendi* is preserved within the Trinity's undivided acts,

[53] His explanation for this fact is that the Father and Son "are one in essence, therefore, one in will, and one in operation; and what the Father doth, the Son doth, because of the unity of essence." Manton, "Several Sermons," 16:243.

[54] He lists election (Matt 24:31; 1 Pet 1:2), creation (Gen 1:1; John 1:3), "governing of created things" (Heb 1:3; Zech 4:6), working miracles (Acts 2:4; 4:10), "bestowal of spiritual life," ecclesiastical gifts (1 Cor 12:11; Eph 4:8, 11), and the future resurrection (John 6:5; Rom 8:11) as examples of divine acts that are ascribed to multiple divine persons. Coupled with Ames' explicit affirmation of ISO (p. 93), his view that these works are each accomplished equally by the persons in undeniable. Ames, *The Marrow of Theology*, 89–90. Cf. William Ames, *Medulla theologica* (Amsterdam: Apud J. Janssonium, 1634), 18–9.

[55] Emery, "The goal of appropriation is to make better manifest the divine persons, in their distinct properties, to the mind of believers." Emery, *The Trinity*, 165.

[56] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica: Prima Pars, 1–49*, trans. Laurence Shapecote (Green Bay, WI: Aquinas Institute, Inc., 2012), I, q.39, a.7.

White elaborates, "The doctrine of appropriation refers to the practice of ascribing essential names or actions of God to particular persons of the Trinity, even though the three persons all possess the essential attributes, and even though all three persons are active in one undivided action."

so also those acts are variously ascribed to persons in order to reveal their *modus operandi*.

Therefore Perkins, after affirming in the clearest possible terms that creation is an undivided act of the three persons, can explain why it is still particularly ascribed to the Father. He writes, "And this is the reason why the work of creation is ascribed here unto the Father, because He alone creates after a peculiar manner—namely, by the Son and by the Holy Ghost."[57] Likewise, Brakel writes, "each of these extrinsic works is attributed to individual Persons according to their relationship which each Person has to the particular work. Consequently, creation is attributed to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the Spirit."[58] Thus, although the work of creation is an inseparable, trinitarian act, it may be attributed to the Father to teach his place in the order of subsistence—the one from whom proceed the Son and Spirit.[59]

Yet, it is not the case that the ascription of divine acts to individual persons is artificial. White explains that, rather than reflecting "our manner of knowing and our subjective spiritual intuitions," appropriations "help us to see something real regarding the very mystery of the inner life of God. This is the case because they have an objective basis in the relations existing within the mystery of the Triune God himself."[60] The practice of appropriation reflects the real personal distinctions within the Trinity by speaking of the divine persons the way Scripture speaks of them.[61]

In summary, Scripture regularly attributes single divine works to multiple divine persons. According to the multiple attribution argument for ISO, the best explanation of this—in light of the rest of Scripture—is to conclude that each per-

White, *The Trinity*, 520.

[57] Perkins, "An Exposition of the Creed," 5:43.

[58] Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 1:267. Mastricht elaborates on this point, "We must beware that we do not speak of them as partial and joint causes, because in all three the working power is one, and much more that we do not speak of them as subordinate causes from the fact that economically, creation is throughout the Scripture attributed in particular to the Father; for this prerogative, as it were, is attributed to the Father not with respect to the power of creating, which is the same for all, but with respect to the order of creating, in which the first operation concerning the creatures is attributed to the first person." See Mastricht, *Theoretical-Practical*, 3:110–1; Cf. Petrus van Mastricht, *Theoretico-practica theologia*, 2nd ed. (apud Gerardum Muntendam, 1698), 1:314.

[59] Beeke and Jones demonstrate appropriations in the trinitarian theology of Goodwin and Owen as well. Joel R. Beeke and Mark Jones, *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2012), 91–93.

[60] White is summarizing Aquinas here. White, *The Trinity*, 522–3.

[61] Ayres writes, "Appropriation is, for pro-Nicenes, an important habit of Christian speech because it is central to Scriptures own speech about the divine persons." Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 297.

son performs the single divine act. Yet, because of appropriations, single divine acts are often attributed to separate divine persons in order to teach something unique about that person—without excluding the other persons from the act.[62]

Argument III: Explicit Statement

A third popular argument for ISO may be called an argument from explicit statement. This argument arises from the fact that John 5:17–19 is commonly understood as explicitly affirming ISO. Indeed, this is the *locus classicus* of the doctrine.[63] While many of the authors represented here reference this passage or comment on it in passing, they do not all offer a full treatment of these verses. John Gill, on the other hand, affirms ISO and provides a verse-by-verse exposition of John 5:17–19. So his commentary on these verses serves as a fitting illustration of this argument.[64]

In this scene from John's Gospel, Jesus heals a paralytic on the Sabbath (John 5:8), incurring persecution from the Jews (v. 16). In response to their abuse, Jesus responds, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working" (v. 17). Gill takes this statement in two halves to explain ISO. On the first half of the verse, "My Father is working until now," Gill establishes that the "working" of the Father is concerned with providence and governing of the universe.[65] Therefore, the Father always works on the Sabbath and has done so since the creation of the universe. This would have been an uncontroversial statement to the Jewish objectors.On the second half of the verse, "and I Myself am working," Gill argues that the Son includes himself in the governing and providential works of the Father. He writes, "[The Son works] in conjunction with [the Father], as

[62] Jamieson and Wittman, "Whenever Scripture mentions only one or two divine persons, understand that all three are equally present and active, undertaking the same actions in ways that imply their relations to one another." Jamieson and Wittman, *Biblical Reasoning*,117.

[63] Vidu writes, "This verse is perhaps the most invoked textual ground for the doctrine of inseparable operations, being routinely deployed in patristic Trinitarian apologetics." As we will see, the frequent appeal to this verse extends far beyond the Fathers. Vidu, *The Same God*, 50.

[64] Gill is also an appropriate exemplar of the argument from explicit statement because of his theological method regarding the Trinity. Muller writes that Gill "stands out as a defender of the doctrine of the Trinity as 'a doctrine of pure revelation' to the setting aside of all but biblical argumentation and patristic usage." Muller, *PRRD*, 4:140.

His emphasis on biblical argumentation should not, however, be seen as an aversion to extra-biblical language in doctrinal formulation. Godet provides an excellent summary of Gill's rationale for using extra-biblical language. Steven Tshombe Godet, "The Trinitarian Theology of John Gill (1697–1771): Context, Sources, and Controversy (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015), 209–10.

[65] John Gill, *Gill's Commentary*, Vol. 5, *Matthew to Acts* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980), 642.

a co-efficient cause in the works of providence, in the governing of the world, in upholding all things in it, in bearing up the pillars of the earth, in holding things together, and sustaining all creatures."[66] Those works which the Father does every Sabbath, the Son also does.

This logically absolves Christ of illegally working on the Sabbath because his work of healing the paralytic (v. 8) was also a work of the Father. Gill paraphrases Christ, "I do but what my Father does, and therefore, as he is not to be blamed for his works on that day, as none will say he is, no more am I."[67] To indict the Son would be to indict the Father, because they do the same works. Noteworthy for ISO is Gill's decision to call Christ a "co-efficient cause" of divine works. He consistently favors this terminology when speaking of the Son's place in divine works.[68] This use of causal language by Gill rules out any possibility of making the Son a secondary or instrumental cause.[69] It also denies the subordination of one divine person to another in divine works—functionally or otherwise.[70]

In John 5:18, John records the Jews' reaction to Christ's statement in verse 17. He writes, "For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God." This verse lists only one reason for the Jews' indictment that Christ was making himself equal to God: Christ's claim of God as his own Father. However, Gill believes there are two reasons. Gill writes that both Christ's claim of God as Father and his claim to do the same works as the Father were equal affirmations of equality with God. He

[66] Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, 5:642. Gill does offer a secondary interpretation of this passage that the Son is simply acting in "imitation" of the Father. However, his exposition of verse 19 undermines that interpretation of verse 17.

[67] Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, 5:642.

[68] On John 1:3, for instance, Gill writes, "The Word, or Son of God, is the efficient cause of all these, not a bare instrument of the formation of them; for the preposition *by* does not always denote an instrument, but sometimes an efficient, as in [1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:1], and so here, though not to the exclusion of the Father, and the Spirit: *and without him was not anything made that was made*; in which may be observed the conjunct operation of the Word, or Son, with the Father, and Spirit, in creation." Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, 5:593–4. See also Gill on Colossians 1:16, *Gill's Commentary*, Vol. 6, *Romans to Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980), 508 and John Gill, *A Complete Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity* (Fort Smith, AR: Baptist Standard Bearer 1987), 260. Turretin makes a similar argument, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 1:287–8.

[69] Gill's use of "co-efficient cause" safeguards against the contemporary notion that the Son is the submissive agent of the Father in creation as seen in Bruce A. Ware, "Unity and Distinction of the Trinitarian Persons" in *Trinitarian Theology: Theological Models and Doctrinal Applications*, ed. Keith S. Whitfield (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2019), 34–6.

[70] As Sammons notes, "One key to properly communicating Trinitarian divine action is to articulate that there is no subordinate agency." Sammons, "When Distinction Becomes Separation," 81.

writes, "this [the Jews] gathered from his calling him my Father, and assuming a co-operation with him in his divine works: making himself to be equal with God; to be of the same nature, and have the same perfections, and *do the same works*."[71] This reaffirms the interpretation of verse 17 which understands Christ's words as an explicit statement that he does the very same works as the Father.

Gill correctly understands that a claim to do the identical works of the Father is a claim to be the same nature as the Father, just as Gregory of Nyssa before him. Gill himself notes on John 5:18, "by ascribing the same operations to himself, as to the Father, they rightly understood him, that he asserted his equality with him." [72] This line of reasoning continues in verse 19, allowing Gill to make even stronger affirmations of ISO. To defend himself against the accusations of the Jews, Jesus responds, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner" (5:19). Gill again addresses the two halves of Christ's statement.

On "the Son can do nothing of himself," Gill writes,

> He neither does, nor will, nor can do any thing alone or separate from his Father, or in which he is not concerned; nor any thing without his knowledge and consent, or contrary to his will: he does every thing in conjunction with him; with the same power, having the same will, being the same nature, and equal to each other: for these words do not design weakness in the Son, or want of power in him to do any thing of himself; that is, by his own power: for he has by his own word spoken all things out of nothing . . . but they express his perfection, that he does nothing, and can do nothing of himself, in opposition to his Father, and in contradiction to his will . . . the Son cannot do so, being of the same nature with God, and therefore never acts separate from him, or contrary to him, but always co-operates and acts with him.[73]

[71] Note that Gill affirms the unity of essence argument here. Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, 5:642. Emphasis added.

[72] Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, 5:642.

[73] Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, 5:643. There is some diversity on this point. Gill interprets this clause to simply deny the possibility of the Son working separately from the Father. Others interpret this phrase to also teach the Son's mode of operation, as one who works not from himself but from the Father. In either case, this clause supports ISO. For those who interpret this clause to teach the Son's mode of operation see Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, 7:133, Perkins, "A Golden Chain," 6:24, Goodwin, *Man's Restoration by Grace*, 7:530, and Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 1:281–2.

In this paragraph, Gill once again affirms the fact that the Father and Son work inseparably because they are the same nature. Their indivisible nature, will, and power necessitates indivisible acts. In Gill's theology, it is impossible that the Son would work separately from the Father unless they had separate natures. As an illustration of his point, he references the act of creation—a divine work consistently used to teach ISO throughout his works.

On Genesis 1:1 he comments, "There is no doubt to be made, that all the three Persons of the Godhead were concerned in the creation of all things."[74] As noted above, he makes the same argument in John 1:1–2.[75] Additionally, on Psalm 33:6 he affirms, "Now though the creation of the heaven is attributed to the Word, and the host of them to the Spirit, yet we are not to suppose that one Person took one part, and another Person another part of the creation; but they were all, Father, Word, and Spirit, jointly concerned in the whole."[76] This consistent application of ISO as a hermeneutical guardrail runs through his commentaries.

After saying, "the Son can do nothing of Himself," Jesus adds, "unless it is something He sees the Father doing." Gill clarifies, "Not that he sees the Father actually do a work, and then he does one after him . . . as if upon observing one done, he did the like."[77] Here Gill explicitly denies that the Son works temporally subsequent to the Father. Augustine interprets this phrase likewise, "He meant us to understand that the Father doeth, not some works which the Son may see, and the Son does other works after He has seen the Father doing; but that both the Father and Son do the *very same works*."[78] This again emphasizes that each individual divine work is performed simultaneously by both the Father and the Son. Instead of communicating a temporal gap between the actions of the Father and Son, the metaphor of "seeing" teaches that the Son works *as Son*. Gill states that the Son "being brought up with [the Father], and lying in his bosom, was privy to the whole plan of his works, and saw in his nature and infinite mind . . . all that he was doing, or would do, and so did the same."[79] This again teaches

[74] John Gill, *Gill's Commentary*, Vol. 1, *Genesis to Joshua* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980), 2.

[75] Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, 5:593–4.

[76] John Gill, *Gill's Commentary*, Vol. 3, *Psalm 23 to Isaiah* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980), 31.

[77] Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, 5:643.

[78] Augustine, *The Works of Aurelius Augustine*, Vol. 10, *Lectures and Tractates on the Gospel According to St. John Vol. 1*, ed. Marcus Dods, trans. John Gibb (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1873), 257. Emphasis added. See also Owen, *A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit*, 3:198.

[79] Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, 5:643. While Gill does not use the language of "receptive mode," Jamieson and Wittman are certainly correct in writing, "God is spirit, not body, and so has no eyes; applied to God, 'seeing' can only be a metaphor. This metaphor conveys that the Son does divine deeds *in a receptive mode*." Jamieson and Wittman, *Biblical Reasoning*, 232. For a survey of interpretations on

the essential unity of the Father and Son "since there was nothing in the Father's mind but was known to the Son, seen, and observed, and acted up to by him."[80]

Gill then concludes his comments on verse 19 by focusing on the words "for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner." By saying, "whatever," Jesus is making a statement of quantity. Gill writes, "The Son does the self-same works as the Father does."[81] This interpretation of "whatever" forbids any understanding of this passage that makes the Son's work simply imitation of or subsequent to the Father's work. Jesus is claiming to do every single work that the Father does, but he does not stop there.

The Son claims to do the exact same works as the Father "in like manner." Whereas the previous clause taught that the Son does the same *quantity* of works as the Father, this phrase teaches that he does the same *quality* of works as the Father. Gill explains, "he does these things in like manner, with the same power, and by the same authority, his Father does, and which proves him to be equal with him."[82] With these words, Gill affirms that the Son does *all* that the Father does (the self-same works) and that he does them *in the same way* (with the same power/authority).

Charnock interprets this phrase in the same way. On Christ's words "in like manner," translated from *homoiós* ("likewise"), he writes,

> In the creation of heaven, earth, sea, and the preservation of all creatures, the Son works with the same will, wisdom, virtue, power, as the Father works: not as two may concur in an action in a different manner, as an agent and an instrument, a carpenter and his tools, but in the same manner of operation, *homoiós*, which we translate likeness, which doth not express so well the emphasis of the word. There is no diversity of action between us; what the Father doth, that I do by the same power, with the same easiness in every respect; the same creative, productive, conservative power in both of us; and that not in one work that is done, *ad extra*, but in all, in whatsoever the Father doth. In the same manner, not by delegated, but natural and essential power, by one undivided operation and manner of

this point, see Lewis Ayres, *Augustine and the Trinity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 230–50.

[80] Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, 5:643.

[81] Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, 5:643. Hilary argues similarly from Christ's words here, saying that it is "impossible that there should be any actions of His that are different from, or outside, the actions of the Father." He continues, "Thus the same things that the Father does are all done by the Son." Hilary of Poitiers, "On the Trinity," 9:125.

[82] Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, 5:643.

working.[83]

In summary, Gill teaches three aspects of ISO in John 5:17–19. First, from verse 17, he teaches that the Son is the co-efficient cause of every divine work, and, therefore, not a subordinate or partial cause of divine works. Second, from verse 18, he affirms that the Son's doing the same works as the Father proves the unity of their nature. Third, in verse 19, he reaffirms that the Son does every single divine work in the same way as the Father, that is, by the same singular power and authority. Much more ought to be said concerning ISO and John 5. Yet, any investigation into the sources listed below will provide ample evidence that this passage is frequently and correctly used to explain ISO.

Conclusion

To conclude, I would like to draw three observations. First, ISO is historically undeniable.[84] It is used in the early church to dispel heresy, both in the East and West. It is taught in influential theological works, such as Lombard's *Sentences* (see the chart below), Turretin's *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, and Mastricht's *Theoretical-Practical Theology*. It is inherent in the Westminster Confession of Faith (2.3) and explicit in the lectures of Ursinus on the Heidelberg Catechism.[85] First- and second-generation Reformers affirmed it, and the Reformed Orthodox defended it. Augustine states, "The catholic faith, confirmed by the Spirit of God in His saints, has this against all heretical perverseness, that the works of the Father and of the Son are inseparable."[86] Far from being controversial, the affirmation of this doctrine has been a mainstay of trinitarian orthodoxy for centuries.

Second, ISO is biblically grounded. Speaking of the Reformed and Reformed Orthodox, Muller writes, "a doctrinal point is considered established when it rests either on the explicit statements of Scripture or on conclusions capable of being drawn from explicit statements of Scripture, often by the collation and comparison of texts."[87] The argument from explicit statement is an example of

[83] Stephen Charnock, *A Discourse on the Existence and Attributes of God*, in *The Works of Stephen Charnock* (repr. 1864: Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2010), 2:164. For Augustine's interpretation of this line, see Ayres, *Augustine and the Trinity*, 240.

[84] Vidu notes "no large-scale exposition and discussion of this rule has so far been attempted." The impetuous reader may take this statement to mean that the doctrine received no serious considerations before Vidu's helpful book. However, the reality is that ISO permeates the trinitarian thought of previous generations. Vidu, *The Same God*, xiii.

[85] See A.A. Hodge, *The Westminster Confession: A Commentary* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2004), 84 and Chad Van Dixhoorn, *Confessing the Faith* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2014), 37–8.

[86] Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, 7:132

[87] Muller, *PRRD*, 4:301. See also Richard A. Muller, *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theo-*

the latter, the argument from multiple attributions is an example of the former, and the unity of essence argument is a mix of the two. ISO is not an artificial construct applied to Scripture, it is both explicitly taught in Scripture and deduced by good and necessary consequence. To claim that this doctrine has no biblical basis would be to ignore a mountain of exegetical arguments from all corners of the Church.

Third, ISO is theologically necessary. This point is true simply because ISO is explicitly taught in Scripture. However, ISO is also necessary because, as Emery says, "To reject this rule would be to destroy the Trinitarian faith."[88] While Emery's claim may seem dramatic, it can be proven very simply. To begin, Barnes provides a syllogism to explain a central piece of Gregory of Nyssa's theology:

> The Father and Son have the same power.
> Whatever has the same power has the same nature.
> Ergo, The Father and Son have the same nature.[89]

The opposite is also true:

> The Father and Son do not have the same power.
> Whatever does not have the same power does not have the same nature.
> Ergo, The Father and Son do not have the same nature.

To separate the works of the divine persons is to separate the will, power, and, therefore, nature of the persons. That is to say, the Trinity becomes irreparably splintered. This is why the Westminster Confession of Faith affirms, "In the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of *one substance, power, and eternity*" (2.3). This reality demonstrates the severity of the topic.[90]

Thus, all believers should approach this doctrine with great care. Thankfully, a wealth of resources has been provided by our spiritual forebears on this topic (see chart below). While none of them categorized their arguments into the headings provided in this article, they all used these arguments in various ways. In the end, we would do well to agree with Melanchthon: "this old rule should be remembered."[91]

logical Tradition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 10–11.

[88] Emery, *The Trinity*, 94.

[89] Barnes, "One Nature," 219.

[90] Ayres argues that it is a central principle of pro-Nicene theology. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 236.

[91] Melanchthon, *Loci Communes 1555*, 16.

Historical Examples of Various Arguments for ISO[92]

	Explicit Statement	Unity of Essence	Multiple Attribution
Athanasius[93]	X	X	
Hilary[94]	X	X	X
Gregory of Nyssa[95]		X	X
Basil of Caesarea[96]	X	X	X
Ambrose[97]	X	X	X
Chrysostom[98]	X	X	
Augustine[99]	X	X	X
Cyril[100]	X	X	
Lombard[101]		X	
Aquinas[102]	X	X	
Beza[103]		X	
Vermigli[104]		X	X
Musculus[105]	X		X
Ursinus[106]	X	X	X
Perkins[107]	X	X	X
Ames[108]	X	X	X
Diodati[109]	X		
Goodwin[110]	X	X	X
Owen[111]	X	X	X
Poole[112]	X		
Manton[113]	X	X	X
Turretin[114]	X	X	
Charnock[115]	X	X	
Mastricht[116]		X	
Brakel[117]		X	
Witsius[118]		X	X
Gill[119]	X	X	X

[92]Three notes on this chart are important. First, it is not extensive. A blank space here does not indicate that a theologian never affirmed that argument, it is just not represented here. Second, for the explicit statement argument, I included sources that reference John 5:17–19 for a prooftext as well as those who expound the passage. Third, the three arguments listed here are rarely made in isolation. So, most of the sources listed will contain two or more of the arguments.

[93]Athanasius, "Four Discourses Against the Arians," in *NPNF, Second Series*, eds. Philip Schaff and

Henry Wace, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 4:359.

[94] Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity*, 9:125 and 171–2.

[95] Gregory of Nyssa, "On 'Not Three Gods,'" 5:333–4.

[96] Basil of Caesarea, "The Book of Saint Basil on the Spirit," 8:13–4 and 231.

[97] Ambrose, *Exposition of the Christian Faith*, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series,* eds. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 10:132, 267, and 270.

[98] John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Gospel of St. John*, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series,* eds. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 14:135.

[99] Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, 7:132–3.

[100] Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John: Volume 1*, Ancient Christian Texts, trans. David R. Maxwell, ed. Joel C. Elowsky (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 143–4.

[101] Peter Lombard, *The Sentences*, Book 1, *The Mystery of the Trinity*, trans. Giulio Silano (Ontario: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2007), 77. It should be noted that, rather than defending or explaining it, ISO is simply inherent in Lombard's reasoning.

[102] Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of St. John*, Part 1, eds. James A. Weisheipl and Fabian R. Larcher (Albany, NY: Magi Books, 1980), 299–301.

[103] Theodore de Beza, *A briefe and pithie summe of the Christian faith, made in forme of a confession, with confutation of all such superstitious errours, as are contrary thereunto*, II.4.

[104] Vermigli, *Life, Letters, and Sermons*, 200 and Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Philosophical Works*, 105.

[105] Musculus, *Common places of Christian religion, gathered by Wolfgang Musculus, for the use of such as desire the knowledge of godly truth*, 13.

[106] Ursinus, *The Commentary of Dr. Zacharius Ursinus on the Heidelberg Catechism*, 133–7.

[107] Perkins, *A Golden Chain*, 6:23–24 and Perkins, *An Exposition of the Creed*, 5:42–3.

[108] Ames, *The Marrow of Theology*, 89–90, 93.

[109] Giovani Diodati, *Pious Annotations upon the Holy Bible: Expounding difficult places thereof Learnedly, and Plainly: With other things of great importance*, (London: Printed by T.B. for Nicholas Fussell: and are to be sold at the Green Dragon, in St. Paul's Church-yard, 1643), 67.

[110] Goodwin, *Man's Restoration by Grace*, 7:530 and Goodwin, "An Exposition," 1:461.

[111] Owen, *A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit*, 3:93, 198.

[112] Matthew Poole, *Annotations upon the Holy Bible* (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 285, Broadway, 1852), 303.

[113] Manton, "Several Sermons," 16:243.

[114] Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 1:281–2.

[115] Charnock, *A Discourse on the Existence and Attributes of God*, 2:164.

[116] Mastricht, *Theoretical-Practical*, 2:505 and Mastricht, *Theoretical-Practical*, 3:110–1.

[117] Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 1:267.

[118] Witsius, *Dissertations on the Apostles' Creed*, 121–4.

[119] Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, 5:642–3.

Book Reviews

Hans Boersma, *Pierced by Love: Divine Reading with the Christian Tradition*. Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2023. 280 pp. Hardcover. $22.99.

Many a Bible college student and seminarian have heard the adage, "The Bible is to be read like any other book." This mantra means well in its intention to highlight that tools of literary analysis *can help* our biblical reading. However, the inherent flaw of the quip is that the Bible is *like* any other book. Hans Boersma, in his latest work *Pierced by Love*, provides a contrast to this incredibly modern motto. Boersma claims rather directly that, while the Bible is a book, it is not to be read like *any* other book. Rather, the Bible is to be read for the sake of forming human hearts, heads, and bodies Godward. Boersma blazes the trail forward by moving backward in the Church's understanding and practice of *lectio divina*, or divine reading.

Keeping in step with his thesis that reading the Bible is a uniquely *spiritual* exercise, Boersma does not offer *Pierced by Love* as a handbook to *lectio*. Instead, each chapter is a historically grounded meditation on how each step of biblical reading draws the individual reading into moments of sacramental transfiguration. Boersma describes this spiritual experience as "words on the page" leading the reader to "flesh on the cross." However, before he begins the journey through each step of *lectio*, Boersma diagnoses the problem of our day: we struggle with a spiritual *acrophobia*, or a fear of heights. Boersma posits the remedy with help from an icon titled *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* and Guigo II's *The Ladder of Monks*. His solution is found by looking at biblical reading as the Christian pilgrim's journey from earth to heaven. Then, as if he knew Reformed Baptist reviewers would engage his book, Boersma notes that we must not think of this adventure of divine ascent as one that should stir pride. In fact, he states that the higher one steps on the ladder, the greater one reaches the depths of humility. Only after he sets the ladder does Boersma provide the four rungs which have been recognized as the classical steps of *lectio divina: Lectio* (Reading), *Meditatio* (Meditation), *Oratio* (Prayer), and *Contemplatio* (Contemplation).

Over the next three chapters, Boersma mulls over the themes of internal vigilance, the necessity of memory, and spiritual nourishment. In "Paying Attention," Boersma writes extensively on the sin of *acedia*—sometimes understood as sloth—as a lack of attention and intention, and reading is the remedy. Boersma explains that reading mortifies *acedia* because it orients our minds away from the temporal present toward the expectation of our heavenly home. Following, in "Swirling Thoughts," he writes on the problem of spiritual dementia the loss of

identity through the lack of true meditation. Boersma ties the act of meditation to repetition—even through reading the text aloud—in order to assemble a "living concordance" or constructing a "mystic ark" which protects the mind from a flood of distracting thoughts. Boersma then ruminates on what it means for the Scriptures to be spiritual food. Drawing from several monastic writers' thoughts, Boersma determined that as the clean animals chewed the cud, those washed clean by Christ similarly ruminate on his words in their minds and hearts. This is the means by which we taste the sweetness of the Lord and *become* that sweetness through communion with the living Christ in biblical reading.

Boersma commences the latter half of *Pierced by Love* with a chapter on trees considering the Gospels, and primarily the sufferings of Christ, as the foremost encounter in biblical reading. When we encounter Christ on the cross, the mind and the will are equally pierced to the tree with him. This experience, Boersma explains, is a painful one. But, he reminds his readers that to die a cruciform death is to be readied for a resurrected life. He then deepens this blessed pain in the following chapter on tears and *compunction*. As the text confronts shortcomings and pierces readers with the nails of the cross, the reader is to feel the pain of sin being driven out of him, an experience which should often be accompanied by tears. However, Boersma presses onto his next chapter considering contemplation as "the better part." Outside of the distraction of one's own thoughts and sins, the day-to-day needs of life also call away from an unbridled pursuit of foretasting the presence of God. For Boersma, the needs of the active life are not a problem; rather these activities remind us of our need to return to the One who is the fullness of life. For Boersma and the tradition, contemplation is not better than fulfilling one's daily duties in a gnostic manner. Rather, in contemplation one is undistracted in his beholding of the beauty of the Lord.

Boersma draws the book to a close with a chapter on silence and a conclusory word on the whole process of *lectio divina*. Boersma describes the pursuit of silence as the purpose of *lectio divina* because in silence the reader is drawn deeper into the life of God himself. As the world, the flesh, and sin seek to fill the mind and body with noise and pride, reading the Scriptures leads the reader to Christ-centered humility which leads first to death, and then Christ rises demonstrating that sin, death, and the grave have no hold on *anything* claimed by him. Boersma concludes with an extended meditation on *lectio divina* as a method of biblical reading with an advent posture. Reading, meditation, and prayer fight against the modern conception that human beings know *merely* through sense perception. Through each step of *lectio divina*, the living Christ encounters, confronts, and wounds the reader, that they may be prepared for

the second advent of the Bridegroom.

Han's Boersma's *Pierced by Love* is a compelling work on the practice of biblical reading. He is rooted in the Christian tradition and ultimately in the Scriptures to see that the Scriptures *themselves* combat the weakness of human frailty to sanctify the mind and the flesh to pierce the reader with the love of God in Christ and finally leads to preparation for and foretastes of the beatific vision. Boersma's writing style is meditative and compelling, and as often as he draws from texts in the Christian tradition he draws from images, particularly from various monastic artists. The "Swirling Thoughts" and "Trees" highlight Hugh of St. Victor's *Mystic Ark* and Bonaguida's *Tree of Life*, respectively, as explanatory windows on the purpose of *lectio divina* as memory preservation and a gospel encounter.

The book is not without issues. Boersma is consciously Anglo-Catholic and utilizes prayers to canonized saints and Mary as examples from the tradition as aids in compunction. The reviewer struggles in understanding the message being communicated in these prayers, because, particularly in an extended quote from Anselm praying to John the Baptist, the content reads more akin to a Puritan journal entry rather than a full-fledged prayer for aid, divine, or ecclesial.

One last point of critique, which the reviewer found actually *enhanced* the reading experience was that Boersma does not use traditional citations. Rather than using footnotes or endnotes, which often distract from the flow of an author's prose, there is a collection of lines which either commence quotes or ideas derived from sources which Boersma then cites. For this reason, the reader seeking to use this book as a springboard into deeper historical waters may struggle. But, as stated above, the present reviewer enjoyed the uninterrupted reading experience, and he believes that this serves Boersma's greater purpose in meditatively writing on meditatively reading. *Pierced by Love* is unique, challenging, and captivating. The charge to read the Scriptures prayerfully, as an encounter with Christ, and as preparation for heaven, is one that cannot be exhausted.

Aaron V. Day
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Matthew Barrett, *Simply Trinity: The Unmanipulated Father, Son, and Spirit*. Grand Rapids, MI: BakerBooks, 2021. 368 pp. Paperback. $24.99

In his treatise on the Trinity, Augustine asserted, "Nowhere else is a mistake more dangerous, or the search more laborious, or discovery more advantageous."

Matthew Barrett, Professor of Christian Theology at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, is a theologian who intimately understands what is at stake, much like Augustine did. Exploring the doctrine of God is the most perilous and rewarding expedition we can embark upon. There are steep cliffs to be avoided, ravenous wolves to be slain, and maps and guideposts to be followed, but there is infinitely valuable treasure to be discovered in the end. Uniquely, this journey requires traversing through ancient chronicles; after all, the Trinity is the God who has revealed himself in history. Furthermore, the way to discovering the biblical, orthodox Trinity is by retracing the ancient steps of our forefathers, who walked the same path for centuries. It is only in modern times that weeds and rocks have obscured the trail. Through the Scriptures and the Great Tradition, Barrett guides us as we trod down it once again, discovering the God who is simply Trinity.

Simply Trinity is a theological retrieval project for the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity. However, that alone would be a deficient explanation, because it is also a polemic against Social Trinitarianism (ST), a diverse movement that "redefined the doctrine of the Trinity as a society of relationships in which each person cooperates by means of his (or her) own center of consciousness and will" (32). Barrett is resolute in aiming to make Nicene Trinitarianism central to the evangelical heritage, precisely because he believes that the doctrine of the Trinity is essential to the gospel itself. *Simply Trinity* is a sort-of sequel to *None Greater: The Undomesticated Attributes of God*, an earlier popular level retrieval project where Barrett introduced an array of classical divine attributes. In both projects, Barrett is highly concerned with evangelical idolatry—that we are "making God" in our own image. Underlying both books is the assumption that we cannot be faithful evangelicals without an orthodox doctrine of God. Building on that earlier work, Barrett focuses on a particular attribute of God in *Simply Trinity*, that is, divine simplicity, and how it is essential to the doctrine of the Trinity. He is swimming against the tide of what he calls "Trinity drift." According to Barrett, in modern times we have gradually drifted away from the doctrine of the Trinity confessed by Christians throughout history. Moreover, this drifting has led to redefinition, and redefinition has licensed manipulation of the Trinity for our own ends. As Barrett puts it, "The Trinity is our social program" (31).

The structure of *Simply Trinity*, much like its tone, is clear and accessible: (1) "How did we drift away?" and (2) "How do we find our way home?" Part one provides the audience with necessary context and information to understand the current state of trinitarian doctrine. Barrett's historical work is brief but intentional. He begins with Orthodox Trinitarianism (OT) at the Council of

Nicaea and then explains the development of ST within modern theology. Part two is the main and constructive portion of the book, where Barrett retrieves key doctrines and brings OT, through the Scriptures and the Great Tradition, to bear on ST.

While there are two *parts* to this book, I observe that there are three central *moves* that Barrett makes. While he does not mention this, these seem to correlate well with the aforementioned words of Augustine: (1) the laborious search, (2) the dangerous mistakes, (3) and the advantageous discovery. Chapter 2 is where Barrett makes this initial move. The laborious search includes a crash-course in "trinitarian grammar," which is the language "that teaches us how to distinguish between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as Scripture does, but without compromising the simplicity (oneness) of our triune God" (38). In this chapter, Barrett introduces us to key terms such as *ousia* (essence) and *homoousios* (same essence), along with the grammar that distinguishes the three persons of the Trinity: unbegotten and paternity, begotten and filiation, spirated and spiration. Barrett emphasizes these modes of subsistence, eternal relations of origin, or personal properties as the only distinguishing marks between the three persons of the one God. Central to Barrett's argument is his stalwart defense of divine simplicity, which necessitates inseparable operations in the Trinity—a doctrine that teaches that the God who is One *ad intra* works inseparably *ad extra*.

The second move Barrett makes is to show the dangerous mistakes that we might make regarding the doctrine of the Trinity, specifically targeting ST. It seems that, for Barrett, in order for us to understand the mistakes, we need to understand the history. The initial mistake happened in the wake of the Enlightenment, which introduced a false dichotomy between absolute truth (located in human reason) and contingent truth (located in history) (71). This created significant problems for Christian doctrines like the Trinity, because "the Bible's claims about the Trinity are rooted in a revelation that was transmitted through historical persons and events" (71). Thus, as the central doctrine of Christianity became "speculative" and "irrelevant," Christianity became less about who God is and more about what God does in society. This created the theological environment necessary for Karl Rahner's Rule, which influenced everything afterwards: "The 'economic' Trinity is the 'immanent' Trinity and the 'immanent' Trinity is the 'economic' Trinity." These terms, "immanent" and "economic," and the relation between the two are central to the entire book. ST (following Rahner's Rule), collapses the immanent into the economic and the economic is said to constitute the immanent. "Who God is in eternity is reduced to his acts in history; indeed, his acts in history even make him who he is as Trinity" (88). For Barrett, this is

the mistake underlying all other mistakes in ST, and this is precisely the problem with the modern evangelical assertion of the Eternal Functional Subordination (EFS) of the Son to the Father.

Barrett's third and final move takes place in chapters 4–10, where he displays the advantages of discovering the God who has revealed himself in history as *Simply Trinity*. The fundamental move here is using the tools discovered by our forefathers to see the unmanipulated Triune God. Barrett begins chapter four with a "Key Point" that underscores the entire project: "The Trinity is revealed in the gospel, but we must not conflate or collapse God in himself, apart from the world (immanent Trinity), with God's actions toward creation and salvation (economic Trinity) or we will manipulate the Trinity" (98). He relentlessly reiterates that missions reveal processions (eternal relations of origin) and the economic does not constitute the immanent. He intentionally begins with the one God (as Scripture does) before properly discussing paternity, filiation, and spiration. While Barrett emphasizes the necessity of each eternal relation, filiation (or eternal generation) is really at the heart of this book. As much as it is a polemic against the broad movement of ST, its narrow focus is the strand of ST that has breached the walls of evangelicalism through the "Eternal Functional Subordination" of the Son.

Chapter 7, "Is Eternal Generation Central to the Gospel?" is a major highlight of the book. It is theological reasoning from the Scriptures; it is biblical reasoning. Barrett is doing biblical exegesis alongside the Great Tradition, not necessarily because the Fathers, Medievals, or Reformers were right about everything, but because they were right about the gospel, and eternal generation is central to the gospel. He surveys the modern *monogenes* controversy, convincingly arguing for the English translation of "Only-Begotten," but he also identifies some of the other key phrases in Scripture that testify to the same reality: Radiance, Image, Wisdom/Word, and Ancient of Days. Barrett concludes that eternal generation is "the warp and woof of the Bible, the doctrine on which the entire story depends" (210). He is emphatic that the doctrine of the Trinity has direct implications for soteriology: "If he is not eternally generated, what hope do we have that we will be regenerated? Unless he is born from the Father from all eternity, we have little confidence we will be born again and enter the kingdom of the Son" (210). This chapter helps the reader understand Barrett's bold claims in the following chapter regarding EFS. If eternal generation truly is central to the gospel, then anyone who essentially (or functionally) dismisses the doctrine, loses the gospel along with it.

Barrett sets out to prove in Chapter 8 that EFS is a strand of ST, manipu-

lating the Trinity to fit their views of hierarchical gender roles. He makes three serious accusations against "EFSers" along the way: Tritheism (227-30), Sabellianism/Modalism (230–32), and Subordinationism (232-38). He does not accuse them of outright heresy, which is important to note. However, he does conclude, "Even if EFS is not an exact match with a historical heresy, we've seen that the *logic* of its position as well as its substitution of orthodox categories for social ones brings EFSers, albeit inadvertently, dangerously close to three heresies" (256). Regardless of whether or not one agrees with each of Barrett's individual accusations, it is evident that Barrett is not "heresy-hunting." Barrett writes as a conservative, complementarian evangelical against other conservative, complementarian evangelicals. This is significant. Barrett's impassioned rebuttal to EFS is precisely because it is so close to home; it is an in-house debate. As much as this is an ardent defense of OT, it is also a winsome call for his evangelical brothers to reconsider the *logic* of their position. Barrett identifies the "central fault line" as their hermeneutics (238). Juxtaposing Rahner's Rule with "Augustine's Rules," he argues that there is a better way to interpret the Scriptures. Rather than collapsing the immanent into the economic, we distinguish between them. For example, some texts speak of the Son in "the form of God," some in the "form of a servant," and others with respect to his being "from the Father" (240). Barrett puts these rules into practice while interpreting 1 Corinthians 15, which is a classic EFS text, to show how these ancient exegetical rules help rather than hinder our hermeneutics.

Any critiques that I have of *Simply Trinity* are marginal compared to the tremendous service that this book has done for the Church. Yet, there are a few things worth mentioning. Overall, Barrett does good work arguing for a distinction between the economic and immanent Trinity. He frequently reminds us that missions "reveal" or "reflect" processions, rather than constituting them (e.g., 111, 118, 241). Sparingly, he employs the Medieval notion of "fittingness" as well. For example, Barrett explains, "it is because the Father *begets* his Son in eternity that it is fitting for the Father to *send* his Son to become incarnate in history. And it is because the Father and the Son together (as one source) *spirate* the Spirit in eternity that it is fitting for the Father and the Son to *send* (give) the Spirit in history" (117). When Barrett discusses *appropriations* in the covenant of redemption, he employs the language once again (309), but these are the only instances where he substantively interacts with the terminology. These two sections are fantastic, but Barrett could have greatly aided the project by widely employing "fittingness." Furthermore, given his numerous helpful excursus, charts, and sidebars defining key terms or identifying premier theologians,

describing the language of fittingness (especially in Anselmic and Thomistic usage) would have been an ample addition to *Simply Trinity*, particularly because it guards the freedom and aseity of God (117), which ST fails to do by making salvation necessary (rather than fitting) for God.

Further, while Barrett assumes a difference between appropriation and mission throughout the book, he is not specific about the distinction. A "Key Word" section on appropriations, where Barrett must be succinct, accentuates this ambiguity. Presupposing divine simplicity and inseparable operations, he claims, "since the one essence has three modes of subsistence (eternal relations of origin), a particular work may be 'appropriated' by a particular person, but always in a way that is consistent with that person's mode of subsistence." This is fundamentally correct, but he continues, "For example, the Son is sent by the Father to become incarnate, which corresponds to his mode of subsistence (eternal relation): begotten" (224). This example seems to align more closely to his definition of mission than appropriation. In the glossary, his definition of appropriations is basically the same, except the example, which is that "the Father is Creator, which conveys he is the origin of the Trinity" (319). This example rightly appropriates an action to one person of the Trinity, but without excluding the others. In other words, the Father, Son, and Spirit are Creator, but creation is appropriated to the Father because he is unoriginate. By contrast, while the three persons inseparably act in the incarnation, only "the Son is sent by the Father to become incarnate." The incarnation is the Son's mission alone. By Barrett's own attestation, mission "refers to the Son and Spirit being sent into the world. Each person's mission reflects each person's eternal relation of origin" (322). Thus, while both missions and appropriations fit eternal relations of origin, they must be distinguished. To be fair, the book's brevity and lay-level audience forces Barrett to be selective with those doctrines he can parse in detail. However, even within the confines of such a project, he could have been clearer about the distinction, given that some readers (especially because of the broad audience) might be tempted to conflate the categories. That withstanding, I am eager to note that Barrett intends to spend time differentiating between the two in his forthcoming *Systematic Theology* with Baker Academic, where he will have more space to elaborate.

Despite these minor criticisms, *Simply Trinity* is an exemplary accomplishment. This is a welcome contribution to the ongoing theological retrieval efforts, especially regarding the doctrine of the Trinity and Nicene orthodoxy. It continues the scholarly discourse on eternal generation and EFS, while dealing a death blow to ST. But Barrett's greatest achievement is *Simply Trinity*'s accessibility for

lay-people in the local church. This is not a mere theological exercise or doctrinal hullabaloo for Matthew Barrett; this is the center of the Christian faith, and this discussion is one that demands attention from professors and youth group volunteers alike. There is no other matter of the Christian faith where a mistake is more dangerous, the search more laborious, or discovery more advantageous. Take up and read!

Noah Senthil
Editor, Credo Magazine

Brandon D. Smith *The Trinity in the Book of Revelation*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2022. 248pp. Paperback. $35.

How should the letter of Revelation be interpreted and rightly understood by the Christian church? This question is one that has baffled theologians throughout history and into our present day. Certainly, it is possible that there are more opinions on Revelation than any other canonical writing. For this reason, scholars are often hesitant when it comes to breaking new ground in the Apocalypse, fearful that their understanding might isolate them from one of the traditional historical camps that have dominated the interpretation of the letter for the last century.

Brandon Smith's *The Trinity in the Book of Revelation* courageously offers us a fresh glimpse into this mysterious letter, exploring Trinitarian theology in both a contemplative yet attentively faithful way to the long history of Christian thought. Smith helps to erase the dichotomy between exegesis and philosophy, striving to show that they can remain in cooperative dialogue with one another to bring profitable comprehension of Christian theology, especially trinitarian theology.

He strives to exegete key passages of Revelation with a view towards their placement within both modern and pro-Nicene trinitarian readings. In this manner, Smith challenges the belief that one can be both exegete and theologian within Revelation, that as we read the text we are faced with a clear and simple depiction of God's revelation of Himself as Father,Son, and Holy Spirit—the undivided Trinity who works cooperatively together to bring history to its promised endpoint.

Smith's work, as part of the SCDS (Studies in Christian Doctrine and Scripture) series, fulfills the aim of providing a fresh contribution to systematic theology through faithful engagement with Scripture, Christian doctrine, and catholic (creedal) heritage. The book proceeds in a simple and well-organized manner.

First, a short introduction is given on doing theology with the Trinity. It is here that Smith helpfully reminds us that "doing theology is a holy act that should not be undertaken by the proud or belligerent," two preeminent warnings that many who research and opine on Revelation fail to heed. As a first-order principle, this introduction seeks to reveal that Revelation is not simply a first-century polemic against the Roman empire, nor is it a murky, eschatological prophecy that requires the proper code to be understood. Instead, Revelation is in Smith's own words, "about the words and deeds of the triune God who is bringing all of history to its culmination."

Chapter one propels the reader toward a trinitarian reading of Revelation, establishing the author's guiding presuppositions and methodology for the remaining chapters. Smith surveys in the chapter several of the tools employed in trinitarian theology and biblical interpretation to guide the reader in building a trinitarian framework for the letter. He begins by raising the recent debates among NT scholars regarding how early Christians understood Jesus, either in a high or low manner, focusing on dispelling the notion of a Father-Son binary distinction that relegates the Spirit to a lesser role. This complicated debate receives a passing glance and at first impression, the reader is left wanting for more details. However, Smith does pick up the discussion later in the work, forcing the reader to remain patient in the resolution of a key issue in the interpretation of the letter.

Smith initially reveals his methodology as guided by what others have recently attempted in trinitarian studies, namely, the merging of canonical interpretation, biblical theology, historical interpretation, and theological exegesis (or TIS). His distinction, and what ultimately sets this work apart from others in his field, is what he refers to as his "pro-Nicene toolkit." This balance between theological readings and robust exegesis is worked out through what Smith calls trinitarian conceptual categories: eternal relations of origin and inseparable operations. One of the most helpful terms he introduces to the reader here is that of redoublement, a Patristic idea that we can speak about the unifying work of the Trinity in specific texts even though their processions or missions differ. The chapter closes with the author's commitment to a close-reading of the text as well as a reminder that Revelation deserves a theological-canonical approach. This latter distinction of the letter as a two-Testament book is encouraging, given the neglect of how the Old Testament and its theology influences John's views on the Trinity.

Chapters two through four comprise the heart of Smith's work with each chapter devoted to one of the distinct persons of the Trinity—Father, Son, and

Holy Spirit. Each chapter is developed with the same outline and goal. First, he presents the Patristic readings on each person of the Trinity. Next, he proceeds to the interpretation of key passages. Finally, the conclusion of each chapter draws these two together with interpretative movements backwards and forwards that show how Patristic theologians inform exegesis and vice-versa. He strives, where possible, to show how the two mirror and complement one another, again showing a major contribution of his work, that Patristic theology and exegesis do not have to be at odds with one another. His chapters on the Father and Son are quite compelling and offer for the reader a deep appreciation of their relationship in unity of substance but difference in economy of missions. Especially compelling is Smith's treatment of Revelation 11:15–19 where the Father hands over the kingdom to the Son—revealing their unity of purpose in creation, salvation, and worship—yet their distinction in bringing these to their fitting culmination.

The chapter on the Holy Spirit is much shorter than that of the Father and Son, however, to be fair, fewer texts exist in Revelation comparatively with that of the first two persons and the ones that do exist are somewhat elusive regarding substance and mission of the Spirit. Smith handles this challenge well, focusing on depictions of the Spirit in the first three chapters of the letter. He admirably wades into the "seven spirits" debate, one that may not be solvable given the paucity of canonical references to this phrase. The most helpful aspect of this chapter is his focus on the speaking by the Spirit to the seven churches, reflected in the oft-repeated phrase "the Spirit says." He rightly points out that the Spirit's speaking to the churches reinforces the words of Jesus as divine oracles. It is this chapter where the reader might find himself wanting a little more, especially given the depth of the previous two chapters. Understandably, given the lack of sufficient supporting texts that mention the Spirit directly, Smith has done well although one might raise their hand in the back of the mental classroom and ask "Dr. Smith, what do you make of Revelation 22:17?"

The concluding chapter discusses the ways that trinitarian reading of Revelation contributes to theology, exegesis, and practice. It is Smith's view that John's doctrine of God is at its core, trinitarian, and so readers of this letter must move beyond the high/low Christology debate as well as binary tendencies that overlook the work of the Holy Spirit. He concludes that Revelation pushes forward our appreciation of the letter as prophetic witness which closely reflects the visions located in the OT prophets. As well, Smith reminds us of the centrality of the Lamb as a fundamental metaphor that describes Jesus' identity. Truly He is the one who has overcome and so conquered sin and death and is making all things new. Finally, the work closes with the significance of a trinitarian reading

of Revelation for the church. This concluding element enables Smith's research to be accessible to not only the modern theologian but to the local church pastor who seeks to remain faithful in his preaching of Revelation.

The Trinity in the Book of Revelation is a welcome and valuable contribution to the field of theological and biblical studies. Smith persuasively demonstrates the importance of trinitarian readings of Revelation anchored in faithful exegesis of the text as well as an approach that honors the long history of its interpretation. His hermeneutical model is one that deserves to be explored and followed by future scholars. One would hope that we may see further work by Smith in this area, applied to other canonical books for a profitable understanding of the undivided Trinity. It is the hope of this reader that his efforts would find a widespread audience, both in the classroom and the local church pew.

ERIC TURNER
Hannibal-LaGrange University

R. B. Jamieson and Tyler Wittman, *Biblical Reasoning: Christological and Trinitarian Rules for Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2022. xxv+289pp. Paperback. $29.99

Delightfully, there are a growing number of excellent books on the Trinity and Christology from Protestant authors. Recovering classical Trinitarian ideas—which modern conceptions of personhood, subordination, will, and other ideas have often obscured—such authors have reconnected modern Protestant theology to catholic Christianity. Yet one gap in this process has been possessing a manual for Bible reading, exegesis, and teaching guided and governed by proper Trinitarian and Christological distinctions. Making the blessed sight of God in heaven (beatific vision) its aim, this outstanding volume goes a long way towards reading the entire Bible well in light of the completed canon of Scripture. Through seven Trinitarian and Christological principles, and ten resultant rules, Jamieson and Wittman give readers a sound path along which to walk as they learn to look for God in Scripture largely through the person and work of Christ.

Bracketed by an introduction and conclusion, this book's ten chapters divide along two lines. Part one establishes a "methodological preamble to the book," paving the way for the remainder of the book in three chapters. Constituting the work's primary focus, chapters four through nine (part two) outline a "four-part structure" in terms of "biblical pressure" towards the Trinity and Christology,

"theological grammar" drawn from Scripture, "the rule or rules" directing us how to read Scripture, and "exegetical application of the rule(s) illustrating what the book's principles look like in practice (xxiv). Among the four chapters establishing exegetical rules, two are Trinitarian and two are Christological (xxv). Chapter ten recapitulates the preceding ones, filtering the material through careful exegesis of John 5:17–30, which is an excellent test case for letting Trinitarian and Christological rules guide readers through an otherwise difficult passage. The authors' two conclusions to chapter ten fittingly bring all the material to a resolution. First, "theology is exegesis, and exegesis is inescapably theological" (233). This means that exegesis must not only grapple with the grammar and settings of texts, but with what those texts teach about God and everything else as related to God, being sensitive to the entire cannon of Scripture. Second, "exegesis requires intellectual ascesis" (233). While sounding obtuse at first glance, the authors mean that interpreting Scripture requires self-denial, humility, and purifying the mind by the Spirit in submission to the text. The bottom line is that "Beholding Christ by faith requires that we hear and obey Christ's teaching" (235). In solid Augustinian fashion, the first chapter presses readers to read Scripture seeking to enjoy God's glory in Christ through faith. As such, the beatific vision, or being blessed by seeing God's glory in heaven, drives the material (4–11). The conclusion ends on the same note, directing readers to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The appendix summarizes seven principles of Trinitarian and Christological exegesis, with ten resultant rules of interpretation, the first three of these grounding the final seven.

The virtues of this book are almost too numerous to note adequately. Using a range of ancient and modern sources, the authors exemplify both responsible and careful exegesis in conversation with catholic Christian theology. Their sound judgment embodies both precise theology, classical Trinitarian and Christological ideas, and sensitivities to biblical texts in their contexts. The scope of the rules aims at comprehensiveness as well, as when they state, "One of the main goals of this book is to provide categories in which everything Scripture says about Christ can find a fitting place" (179). They succeed well in giving readers the conceptual tools that they need to make sense out of the entire canon of Scripture. Summarizing their ten rules for Trinitarian and Christological interpretation perhaps best illustrates the value of the book. Frist, we should read every part of the Bible in light of the whole, using the analogy of faith. Second, we should recognize how the grammar and syntax of Scripture presupposes "a larger theological vision" (239). Third, we should read biblical descriptions about God in a way that is fitting to the entire biblical description of God. Fourth, Scripture

sometimes assigns things common to all three divine persons and at others what is proper to each divine person. Fifth, all three divine persons act in every work of God. Sixth, Scripture sometimes appropriates actions of the whole Trinity to one particular person, reflecting who that person is in eternal divine relations. Seventh, Christ is one person who is a single acting subject, though he has two natures. Eighth, the names and acts of either of Christ's natures are ascribed to his one person (by reason of the so-called "communication of idioms;" 240). Ninth, following Augustine, Scripture assigns things properly divine to Christ ("form of God") and properly human to Christ ("form of a servant"), which requires "partitive exegesis" (241). Tenth, the Son being from the Father and the Spirit being from the Father and the Son points to their eternal "relations of origin" (241). The relevant chapters explain, illustrate, and apply each of the rules (from seven principles) in a theologically robust and biblically satisfying manner. Demonstrating all ten rules through John 5:17-30 brilliantly shows how the authors have given us exactly the tools we need to make sense of what Scripture says about God and Christ.

A couple of things could strengthen this work further. Despite this reviewer's summary above, the relatively long and hard to remember form of the seven principles and ten rules of Trinitarian and Christological exegesis can be a bit cumbersome. Readers will notice that all the principles and rules are placed in long paragraph form, making their memory challenging. The final chapter (and appendix) remedies this to an extent with its subheadings, listing the rules as the analogy of faith, pedagogical pressures (215), God-fittingness (216), common and proper predication (222), inseparable operations (224), appropriations (225), the unity of Christ's person, the communication of idioms in the one person (227), partitive exegesis (respecting Christ's two natures; 228), and the Son and the Spirit being "from another" (231). Even here, however, readers will discern that these headings require a good bit of explaination. While the longer descriptions of the principles and rules are helpful, placing such statements in briefer more digestible ways would enhance the usefulness of the authors' invaluable counsel.

Another area, which would particularly help in reading the Old Testament, relates to appropriations and missions. Appropriations address why one or more divine persons receive emphasis, even though all three persons act in everything God does. This reviewer is increasingly convinced that appropriations is one of the most useful windows into reading and teaching Scripture in light of the divine persons. One reason is that Scripture, in both testaments, stresses the work of each divine person distinctly and commonly. Learning why one person

stands out can serve as a doorway into making broader Trinitarian judgments about biblical texts. Appropriations often lead back to divine missions and order of working, both driving readers back to divine processions, which they reflect. Jamieson and Wittman note succinctly, "appropriations draw our minds toward that which is proper (*ad proprium*) to the persons" (118). Yet they add that this draws our attention to the divine persons in "one small way." However, it appears that in biblical texts appropriations are often the primary way the Spirit directs our attention to the divine persons and their eternal relations. After all, we learn about the Lord, the Servant, and the Spirit in Isaiah's "servant songs" before we arrive at a full-blown New Testament doctrine of the Trinity. Ezekiel highlights the Spirit in his vision of breathing life into the valley of dry bones in chapter 37 because the Spirit, as the third person in the Trinity, perfects and completes God's life giving work. We also read often in the NT of "grace and peace" from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as seemingly off-hand comments such as "your love in the Spirit" (Col. 1:8).

Appropriations start with the work of divine persons, driving us back toward reflection on their order of procession and eternal relations to one another. Appropriations illustrate patterns in Scripture demonstrating that emphases on single divine persons in both testaments are not arbitrary. Additionally, missions, referring primarily to the Son and Spirit's works in redemption, can unintentionally narrow our ability to see the Father working through the Son in the Spirit in the OT. If we restrict knowledge of the eternal relations in God to the missions of the Son and the Spirit in redemption, then we effectively lose the tools we need to identify the divine persons prior to the external missions of the Son and Spirit in the NT. For this reason, Bonaventure enveloped missions under broader category of manifestations to show reasons for the order of God working from the Father, through the Son prior to the incarnation. Thus, while creation does not involve the missions of the Son and the Spirit, it still manifests the order of relations in the Trinity. In fact, the authors introduce missions, but apply the term to creation, which strictly speaking, does not fit the external missions of the Son and the Spirit (198). Most modern Protestant authors have emphasized eternal processions in God, inseparable operations of the divine persons, and the missions of the Son and Spirit in salvation, but few have adequately highlighted the vital importance of appropriations and manifestations, which give us expanded tools to read and preach the divine persons from all of Scripture. In the end, the authors wonderfully give us robust and profound Trinitarian and Christological rules of exegesis. These comments are more supplemental than they are critical.

The church should thank the Lord for authors like Jamieson and Wittman. Among a growing library of excellent books on the Trinity, this one demands a place of priority. It is vital to see how and why Trinitarian and Christological rules for interpreting Scripture rise from Scripture itself. Far from imposing philosophical and theological concepts onto Scripture, the authors show brilliantly how Trinitarian and Christological reasoning resulted from listening to Scripture well. The church has suffered far too long under the pressures of higher-critical exegesis to excise too-theologically sounding interpretations from texts. Jamieson and Wittman rightly remind us that the Bible is inherently and pre-eminently theological in that it aims to reveal to us the glory of the Triune God, through his Son, and to our eternal blessedness.

RYAN M. MCGRAW
Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

R.B. Jamieson, *The Paradox of Sonship: Christology in the Epistle to the Hebrews.* Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2021. 216 pp. Paperback. $30.00

R.B. Jamieson's book, *The Paradox of Sonship: Christology in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, tackles the complex use of the name "Son" in the book of Hebrews. The author puts forth three theses concerning this usage: (1) "Son" designates Jesus' distinct mode of existence, (2) "Son" designates the office of messianic rule to which Jesus is appointed at his enthronement, and (3) Jesus can become the messianic Son only because he is the divine Son incarnate (1-2). The book's title aptly captures its focus on embracing and exploring the paradoxical aspects of the concept rather than attempting to provide simplistic explanations. In examining the scholarly landscape, Jamieson highlights three prevailing approaches to the perplexing use of "Son" in Hebrews. The first approach suggests that the term Son solely pertains to what Jesus became—that is, his messianic sonship. The second approach contends that the two-fold uses of "Son" are fundamentally irreconcilable. The third approach posits that the Son exclusively unveils what he already was—that is, Son by nature of his divinity. Departing from these established perspectives, Jamieson presents a new (yet, historically plausible) thesis that embraces the paradox inherent within Jesus' singular identity and dual natures, seeking to demonstrate the coherence and fittingness of both his pre-existent and merited sonship. According to Jamieson's interpretation, Hebrews exhorts its audience to behold the "the Son who became Son," signifying the divine Son's assumption of humanity and ultimately, messianic sonship, a

role uniquely fulfilled by meeting specific prerequisites.

The strength of the book lies not only in its exegetically persuasive and theologically illuminating arguments, but in the richness and clarity of Jamieson's overall approach. The author implicitly introduces a fourth thesis within the work, and it might be his most significant contribution to the scholarly conversation, not because the contents of the study itself are lacking in any way, but because his methodological insight is so desperately needed. This additional thesis pertains to the relationship between Hebrews and conciliar Christology. Jamieson asserts that Hebrews and the creeds convey essentially the same narrative about Jesus. The soteriological narrative presupposed and expounded upon by Hebrews finds expression in a compact and schematic form within the ecumenical creeds (43). This viewpoint suggests a dynamic relationship between the creeds and the Scriptures. If this thesis is applied broadly, which the author encourages us to do, then Hebrews is only a case study in the type of work that can be accomplished with this holistic approach to New Testament studies. Regarding the specific topic of paradoxical sonship, Jamieson suggests two further avenues of textual exploration in Acts 2:36 and Romans 1:3–4 (156–67).

As the author sets out in the first chapter to prove his thesis that the Son became Son, he employs "A Classical Christological Toolkit," which includes six complementary, heuristic tools to aid the project. The first three tools are answers to basic questions concerning the Son: Who is he? What is he? and When is he?: (1) The Son is a single divine subject, (2) the Son is one person with two natures, and (3) the Son has an eternal divine existence and incarnation in time. The other three tools are reading strategies (or exegetical rules) that seek to account for the "paradoxical fullness" of what Hebrews says about Jesus: (4) Partitive Exegesis, which distinguishes between theology and economy; (5) Twofold or reduplicative predication, which distinguishes between the divine and human natures of Christ; and (6) Paradoxical predication or the communication of idioms, which enables the reader to interpret both divine and human predicates as ascriptions to the one person of the Son.

Jamieson deftly wields these conceptual tools to illuminate Hebrews' twofold use of sonship. However, before each tool is put to use, he establishes the viability of the tool by uncovering the internal pressure embedded within Hebrews, compelling readers to grapple with the paradoxical nature of sonship. In doing so, Jamieson dispels any notion that he seeks to superimpose external frameworks onto the text, a common accusation hurled at theologians by biblical scholars (which is at least partially warranted). Instead of switching teams or leaning into these divisions, Jamieson, as a New Testament scholar, endeavors to demon-

strate how these classical categories and reading strategies serve as aids in our engagement with the text.

To clarify his intentions, Jamieson forthrightly declares, "My ultimate goal in this book is to read Hebrews. What the text says is my chief concern; I will employ these tools in search of a firmer grip on the text in all its peculiar, paradoxical detail" (45). His adherence to this objective is evident throughout the work, exemplifying his skillful execution in accomplishing it. Consequently, discussions surrounding the dichotomy of "low" and "high" Christology appear somewhat incongruous when viewed within the context of Hebrews. Jamieson contends that Hebrews does not set out to offer proof of Christ's divinity; rather, it assumes it as an indispensable prerequisite for his identification as the Christ, the Messiah (144). Only the Son, possessing divinity, can rightfully assume the office of Son. The author of Hebrews perceives the divinity of Christ as "not an inference of theological reasoning but a premise of biblical exegesis" (145), and the present Christology does not suggest "the rough edges of a new breakthrough but the orderly exposition of an achieved synthesis" (145).

If this proposition is valid, then it follows that interpretive approaches such as Partitive Exegesis align harmoniously with the textual fabric. In this manner, Jamieson advocates for an interpretive framework that coheres with the intrinsic nature of the text, eschewing any attempts to impose external perspectives or artificial constructs upon it. These particular ideas build upon the works of Kavin Rowe, David Yeago, and Wesley Hill in crucial ways. Jamieson further substantiates the arguments of Rowe and Yeago regarding the connection between the Scriptures and the creeds, while incorporating Hill's methodological approach, originally applied to the exploration of the Trinitarian doctrine in Pauline studies, into the ongoing academic discourse surrounding Christology in Hebrews. Consequently, he concludes that Hebrews, in a profound sense, is not merely an intermediary stage leading toward Nicaea and Chalcedon, but rather has already achieved that definitive synthesis that was more formally articulated at the ecumenical councils (146).

This book is an incredible achievement for both biblical and theological studies, especially as it serves as a precursor to R.B. Jamieson and Tyler R. Wittman's more recent, compressive treatment of this topic, *Biblical Reasoning: Christological and Trinitarian Rules for Exegesis*. However, despite the grandeur of this later work, *The Paradox of Sonship* stands out as a masterclass in how to apply those rules to a specific topic and book of Scripture, beckoning us further up and further in to the text. Jamieson deserves wide-recognition for his audacious proposal and his ability to demonstrate its effectiveness. I suspect, and greatly hope, that both

works will be of monumental influence in the academy and the Church going forward.

Noah Senthil
Editor, Credo Magazine

Richard C. Barcellos, *Trinity & Creation: A Scriptural and Confessional Account*. Eugene, OR: Resource Publications, 2020. 117 pp. Paperback.$15.00

Richard C. Barcellos is Pastor of Grace Reformed Baptist Church in Palmdale, California. *Trinity and Creation,* had its genesis in lectures he delivered at the Southern California Reformed Baptist Pastors' Conference 2017 in La Mirada California.

Why pen another book on the doctrine of Trinity and Creation? As stated above, it was really a conference that led to this book, but why have such a conference? Consider the following questions: "Does creation change God or does God change God in order for God to relate with creation?" These questions imply change in God and lend themselves to Open Theism or Process Theology. Thus, when the spirit of the age blows novelty near the foundation and pillars of the Church's long standing and orthodox teaching on the doctrine of God, it is crucial that we pay attention and take every novel thought captive. Novelty in theology often leads to heresy and heresy that enters and stays, like leaven, infiltrates, spreads, and corrupts biblical teaching.

Among other Reformed confessions, one finds the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (WCF, 1646), *The Savoy Declaration* (SD, 1658), and the *Second London Baptist Confession* (2LCF, 1689). Barcellos will allude to the three, but for the purposes of his book he will primarily deal with the 2LCF and secondarily the WCF. Why these two confessions? Both of these are Reformed Confessions and they are similar, but as it relates to the doctrine of creation, the wording is slightly different. Being that Barcellos is a Reformed Baptist pastor and theologian, he will utilize the 2LCF 4.1, but he mentions the WCF given that the two contemporary theologians who have introduced novelty subscribe to the WCF.

Barcellos' book is divided into seven chapters: In the introduction, he situates the context and ground work for what will follow in latter chapters. What does Trinity and creation mean? Barcellos states that it means "God and everything not God" or God and His creation (1). He discusses how the book will unfold using the 2LCF 4.1 as an outline to account for the confessional doctrine of creation by the Triune God. The general statement on the 2LCF 4.1 reads: "In the

beginning it pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, to create or make the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good." Barcellos' aim is to introduce readers to the confessional era of the seventeenth century and their treatment of Trinitarian creation so that we may learn from the past (5).

In chapter two, Barcellos notes that the issue is method, that is, how does one account for how the Bible speaks of God in relation to His creation (19). He focuses on hermeneutical principles and theological method using the 2LCF as an outline to properly speak about Trinitarian creation. Moreover, Barcellos helps the reader understand what a confession of faith is and the context of the 2LCF 4.1. Barcellos states that the "confessional doctrine of trinitarian creation" is a doctrinal formulation (1). Barcellos observes that a confession of faith is essentially a summary form of what the Bible teaches on a given subject. In other words, they are the doctrinal conclusions of the subjects that are being addressed in the Scriptures. Barcellos is quick to note, however, that confessions and their use of Scripture citations are not an example of proof texting, but the product of exegesis which led to doctrinal formulation (7). Barcellos rightly concludes that the study of God or theology proper is the basis for the study of the *oikonomia* (God's external works). While we learn about God as Trinity via the *oikonomia*, it is the Trinity via the *oikonomia*, particularly in Scripture, Who illuminates the *oikonomia* (16). Additionally, in treating *theologia* (theology proper) we must also have a robust doctrine of Scripture which speaks about itself as the authoritative and inspired word of God which reveals to us the God "Who" is and "what" God does (20). In this way, we can arrive at a proper interpretation of Scripture because Scripture interprets Scripture; God inspires his Word and it is he who interprets his Word (23). Barcellos offers 3 ways to retrieve a theological method that will serve the church: First, "Respect the theological grammar of the Christian tradition." By this Barcellos means that we need not change the meaning of old words used in the confessions. Second, "We must understand the difference between biblical theology and systematic Theology" (24). The framework for biblical theology is the progressive nature of salvation-history unfolding in Scripture. The latter builds upon the fruit of biblical theology and is distinguished by the focus on what the Bible teaches on any given topic. Third, "We need help." This is an honest assessment of the state of affairs. Many lack the historical and theological training required to develop a sound theological method and ability to identify heresy.

In Chapter three, he explores the outline and progressive nature of the 2LCF

4.1, its strategic placement in the confession, and its purpose as it relates to Trinitarian creation. The general statement found in 2LCF 4.1 is divided into eight points. This chapter will provide commentary on the eight points. Those points are: Inception (4.1a), ground (4.1b), author (4.1c), its goal (4.1d), its essence (4.1e), its scope (4.1f), its duration (4.1g), and its, nature (4.1h).

In chapter four, Barcellos provides a definition of creation and resources four seventeenth-century theologians and their understanding of God and creation. Before answering what creation is, having some conception of God is necessary to having a proper understanding of creation (40). It is vital that one understand that God is separate, distinct, and different from his creation. Given that God creates, it must be reiterated that there is no change in God when he creates, rather the change occurs in creation. The four seventeenth-century theologians have the Reformed grammar in common that aligns itself with the 2LCF. Having this understanding of the Creator-creature distinction enables one to compare the two contemporary Reformed theologian's novel proposal concerning the Creator-creature distinction (40).

In chapter five, he analyzes two contemporary Reformed theologians, namely, John M. Frame and K. Scott Oliphint, whose novel treatment of God and creation are found to be problematic. Hence the two questions noted earlier, "Does creation change God or does God change God in order for God to relate with creation?" Frame proposes two modes of existence in God. Oliphint suggested that God took upon some attributes, characteristics and properties that were not his before creation (53). Why do they make such proposals? Barcellos offers two reasons. One, is the desire to make sense of divine immanence in relation to God's creation and God's divine transcendence (70). Given this desire, they propose a type of change in God so that he can relate to and with His creatures. But as Barcellos rightly posits, "Frame and Oliphint (though unintentionally) end up compromising *both* divine simplicity and divine immutability, as well as divine infinity and divine eternity" (70–1). Two, is to make sense of the metaphorical and analogical language used in Scripture. To say that God has two modes of existence because of creation is to treat God as creation. God does not come to exist at any point, nor does he change himself, for he is immutable. There is danger in speaking in the way that Frame and Oliphint do as it opens the door to process Theology. Barcellos contends that they have departed from the Classic, historic and Reformed tradition as it relates to Trinitarian creation.

In chapter six, Barcellos returns to the doctrine of the Trinity and creation. There he considers the doctrine of appropriations in John Owen's "*Peculiar Works of the Holy Spirit in the First or Old Creation*." Here Barcellos highlights the theological

method and hermeneutics classically employed when making sense of Trinitarian creation. A discussion on the doctrine of appropriations would not be complete if the doctrine of the relation of origins *ad intra* and the doctrine of inseparable operations were not interwoven into the discussion.

Lastly, he concludes with a summary of the book and provides some brief suggestions for students of theology and pastors. *Trinity & Creation* as it is understood in the confession, "takes us from the inception of creation to the ground of creation, the author of creation, the goal of creation, the essence of creation, the scope of creation, the duration of creation and the nature of creation" (100). Having understood this, Barcellos exhorts his readers to allow this orthodoxy to turn into orthopraxy.

Does Barcellos accomplish what he set out to accomplish? He does so. Barcellos effectively demonstrates that the confession is simply a reformulation of what Scripture already teaches in summarized form. In speaking of Trinitarian creation, in the 2LCF 4.1, Barcellos shows that there is justified reason for the confession's strategic chapter placement. 2LCF 4.1 is preceded by God's decree which is then preceded by God and the Holy Trinity and then by the Holy Scriptures. Here we see the proper order of *Theologia* preceding *oikonomia*.

An interesting thing to note is that in the book, Barcellos stated that the Holy Scriptures are part of the *oikonomia* and as such point to God (11–3), but why do Confessions start with the Holy Scriptures and not with *theologia* if the proper order is theologia before *oikonomia*? There is a clue, in the fact that the Enlightenment took place during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Thus, the starting point is man's reason making sense of revelation. But before the enlightenment, one would see that *Theologia* preceded the Holy Scriptures. One look at Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* will demonstrate that his starting point is God, not Scripture. Another theologian to consider would be Francis Turretin and his *Institutes of Elenctic Theology.* He, like Aquinas, begins with theology and then moves on to Scripture. Barcellos is aware of this when he writes, "Without allowing first place to theology proper, we cannot make sense of the cosmological assertions of Scripture…" (13). Nevertheless, the confession gets it right when *theologia* precedes *oikonomia*.

Why discuss the doctrine of the Trinity and Creation? Both of these doctrines are distributive doctrines, that is, they form the center from which other doctrines spring forth. The Triune God is the necessary being without whom nothing that has begun to exist can exist. God is Creator and not creation. God is eternal, infinite, immutable, and simple. Similarly, creation is the *ad extra* or external work of God and therefore temporal, finite, and mutable, but neverthe-

less foundational for other doctrines. In other words, 'who' God is, determines 'what' God does. The proper order, then, is *theologia* precedes *oikonomia*. To say that *oikonomia* precedes *theologia* is to open the door to all sorts of theological errors as Barcellos demonstrates in chapter five. As has been rightly stated by many theologians, "To get the doctrine of God wrong is to get everything else wrong" (14).

The errors spoken of previously relate to having a purely *oikonomia* driven understanding of God, and we run the risk of Rahner's rule: the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity, and the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity. This sounds as if we are speaking of two trinities. Barcellos observes that having and oikonomia driven understanding of God and creation is the root of "all forms of process theism and that of older Socinians" (17). He is absolutely right. There are three things to consider when reading this book. First, if someone is not acquainted with how confessions function, then one might question why such emphasis is given to the Confession rather than to the Bible as the singular source of authority. Nevertheless, Barcellos provides the helpful insight and guidance concerning the function and nature of confessions. Second, there are times in which Barcellos gives many examples to make his point. This can feel a bit much, but nevertheless he is attempting to make the point that what is enshrined in the confession is a doctrine that arises from exegesis and not a superimposed theology with various scriptural citations as proof texts.

Third, if one is not familiar with classical theology and discussions of the Trinity, then this book may be a difficult read, but needless to say, pick up Richard Muller's second edition of *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms* and/or Fred Sanders', *The Deep Things of God* to help along the way. That being said, it is a book that was written specifically for pastors and students of theology, but serious Christians will likewise benefit from its content. This book will help pastors and seminary students to employ hermeneutical principles coupled with a sound and robust theological method for accounting for doctrinal formulations found in Confessional accounts.

Trinity & Creation is a great resource for anyone wanting to learn more about the relationship between God and his creation from Scripture and the 2LCF. Barcellos beautifully accomplishes the task that he set out to accomplish. I highly recommend *Trinity & Creation: A Scriptural and Confession Account* to anyone who wants to understand Trinitarian creation and what is at stake if we depart from classical and historic theology for novelty.

Carlos Pamplona
Gateway Seminary

Journal of Classical Theology