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The Revelation of the Triune God in the Theologies of John Calvin and Karl Barth

A Study of the Formative Influence of the Revelation of
the Triune God in Calvin's 1559 *Institutes*
and Barth's *Church Dogmatics*

by

Sang Hwan Lee, B.A. (Hons)

**A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
the University of Durham**

April 1995

2 6 JUN 1995

Declaration

I confirm that no part of the material offered previously been submitted by me for a degree in this or in any other university.

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Preface

The controversial debate between K. Barth and E. Brunner drew our attention to Calvin's theology. Each one claims that his theology is more faithful to Calvin's theology than the other. The originality of this thesis is that it advocates the trinitarian orientation of Calvin's theology. This surpasses the framework of the Barthian and Brunnerian interpretations of his theology, and offers a perspective for critical evaluation of their interpretation. Barth's theology is viewed from Calvin's theology in the light of their basis in revelation. There is a persistent rejection of uncritical analysis of Barth's theology within the framework of the Hegelian philosophical thought. This thesis spells out the precise nature of the relationship between the theologies of Calvin and Barth. This challenges conventional understanding of their relation (e.g. by H. U. von Balthasar and T. F. Torrance). Their treatment of the relation is inadequate as well as inaccurate, mainly because it fails to see Calvin's basis in the trinitarian revelation of God and his trinitarian theology.

I would like to thank the Revd. Dr. Taeg-Hyun Kang, Se-Jin Chang, Peter Williams and Timothy Bradshaw for their encouragement at the commencement of my research, and the Revd. Dr. John Stott and the Revd. Geoffrey Gardner for their prayers for its progress. I am grateful to the Revd. Michael Wilcock who corrected some of my English. My particular gratitude goes to my supervisor, Prof. Daniel W. Hardy, who is now Director of the Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton, New Jersey. The final form of this thesis would not be possible without his dedicated teaching and guidance. I value Prof. David Brown's critical comment on my earlier work which helped me to clarify my argument. I would like to record my thanks to Prof. Colin E. Gunton (King's College, University of London) and to Dr. Ann Loades (University of Durham) who examined and corrected my thesis, and made valuable comments on the direction of my future work. Scholarships from the Langham Trust and the Department of Theology, University of Durham, were indispensable for the completion of this thesis. My special thanks go to my parents for their moral and financial support for the long years of my study in England. I sincerely appreciate the constant encouragement from my wife, Eun-Kyung. We thank God for our two sons, Hun-Eui and Jung-Eui, who have given us so much joy during our time in Durham.

Abbreviations

Inst—John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. J. T. McNeill, trans. F. L. Battles, SCM Press, London, 1960. The book, chapter and section number are mentioned after the initial reference (e.g. Inst. I.i.1.).

CD—Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. I.1-IV.4, E.T. ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1956-74. The volume number is mentioned after the initial reference (e.g. CD I, 1.).

Introduction

This thesis analyses and interprets the theologies of Calvin's 1559 *Institutes* and Barth's *Church Dogmatics*. Its principal purpose is to demonstrate their conceptual basis in the revelation of the triune God to which the Bible and the Church attest, and the implications of this basis. The living truth of God in revelation and faith is indispensable as the basis for the theological formation found in these works. The thesis therefore highlights the relationship which Calvin and Barth find between the ontology of the living God in revelation and its noetic and conceptual possibility in faith. Their dogmatic freedom and autonomy in faith derive from the free and objective revelation of the triune God. This dependence underlines and preserves their dogmatic objectivity and dynamism in faith; it is decisive in avoiding a rigid rational systematisation of biblical or dogmatic or philosophical principles. It is, however, the determinative role of the triune God which is the basis of their ontology of God. For this reason, it is necessary to inquire into the hermeneutical relevance of their concept of God (i.e. in their doctrines of the Trinity and election) for the structure of their theology. The thesis offers a critical assessment of the tenability of the oneness and the threeness of God in their theologies. Old and new insights into their theologies and their relationship are examined and a fresh discussion of them provided.

The first part of the thesis is a fresh reading of the *Institutes* in the light of the relevance of the revelation of the triune God for faith. The major argument of this part concerns the trinitarian orientation of the *Institutes*. The *Institutes* focuses on presenting the one true God as the Trinity from the revelation in creation, redemption and sanctification. The argument in this part rests on an elaboration of Calvin's insistence on the indispensability of faith (piety) for the noetic and conceptual possibility of the trinitarian revelation. Faith identifies the revelation of God as Creator in creation with the Father in Book I, as Redeemer in the redemption of Jesus Christ with the Son in Book II, and as Sanctifier in the

sanctification of the elect with the Holy Spirit in Book III-IV. The thesis traces the exact nature of Calvin's trinitarian theology from the triune nature of God in revelation (i.e. in his doctrine of the Trinity). A particular inquiry is made into the tenability of the oneness of God in his trinitarian orientation. Such a critical inquiry is virtually absent in the usual discussions of his theology.

The significance of the trinitarian interpretation of the 1559 *Institutes* advanced in this thesis is this. It demonstrates the trinitarian revelation of God as the determinative source of the *Institutes*, and thereby its trinitarian orientation, or centre, consistency and unity. A constructive interpretation of the whole *Institutes* (i.e. including its treatment of natural knowledge of God in Book I.iii-v) is possible in this. Trinitarian interpretation here opposes any formalistic interpretation that regards the *Institutes* merely as a formalistic exposition of diverse and contradictory biblical[1] or dogmatic principles,[2] and rejects its systematic centre,[3] consistency and unity. A formalistic interpretation overlooks Calvin's dogmatic freedom and autonomy, and the dynamism and objectivism in faith. His perspective of faith derives from the living Word of the triune God in the biblical revelation,[4] and assigns the objectivity of this dynamic Word as the de-

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[1] K. Barth (CD I, 1. p. 300. cf. I, 2. p. 460) and H. J. Forstman (*Word and Spirit*, Stanford Univ. Press, California, 1962, pp. 22-36) claim diverse biblical principles as the determinative factors of the *Institutes*, and reject its systematic character from revelation. W. J. Bouwsma endorses Barth's claim, and stresses the unsuitable historical circumstances for the systematic nature of the *Institutes* (*John Calvin*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1988, pp. 4-5).

[2] F. Wendel stresses Calvin's lack of originality (*Calvin: The Origins and Development of his Religious Thought*, trans Philip Mairet, Harper and Row, New York, 1963, pp. 123-44 and 359), for he does not create new doctrinal concepts and ideas, but arranges traditional ones (i.e. of Augustine, Melanchthon, Bucer). "It would be better, we think, to confess that Calvin is not a closed system elaborated around a central idea, but that it draws together, one after another, a whole series of Biblical ideas, some of which can only with difficulty be logically reconciled. As he developed them in turn, the author of the *Institutes* was doubtless striving to bring them into harmony by some sort of application of the formal method taught in the school; that is, by expounding the opposed conceptions one after the other and showing that they are joined together in a higher principle... But they cannot do away with the dialectical opposites themselves. What have been called with the 'paradoxes' of Calvin remain." Ibid. p. 358.

[3] S. W. Sykes endorses Wendel's claim of Calvin's paradoxical character, and asserts that Calvin, unlike Barth, does not have a primary theological orientation or centre (*Karl Barth: Studies of his Theological Method*,, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1979, pp. 17-54).

[4] The treatment of Calvin's doctrines of Scripture and faith will make this point plain.

terminative source of his *Institutes*. It emancipates him from a rigid fidelity to biblical and dogmatic views of the creator-God and creation, and enables him to interpret and conceptualise them in accordance with his own hearing of God's Word in revelation.

The thesis spells out the exact nature of Calvin's trinitarian orientation, which has been either ignored or misunderstood by Brunnerian and Barthian interpreters. It surpasses their hermeneutical framework for the *Institutes*, and offers a perspective in which they may be critically evaluated. The Brunnerian interpreters[5] (e.g. G. Gloede,[6] E. A. Dowey[7]) assert that Calvin's 1559 *Institutes* is based in the *duplex* (general and special or nontrinitarian and trinitarian) revelation of God. They uphold its natural theology and systematic inconsistency and discontinuity. They dismiss the trinitarian revelation of God as its determinative source and its trinitarian orientation, consistency and relatedness. The Barthian interpreters[8] (e.g. W. Niesel[9] and T. H. L. Parker[10]) attempt to oppose any suggestion of Calvin's natural theology. They suggest that Calvin's treatment of natural knowledge of God is not integral to his view of doctrine, marginalising it from the rest of his theology. They argue that his central purpose is to witness to the truth exclusively in the revelation (action) of the Word (Son) of God in Jesus Christ.[11] Their christocentric interpretation of the ontic and noetic reality of the revelation of God gives rise to a christocentric interpretation of his theology.

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[5] J. T. McNeil, "Natural Law in the Theology of the Reformers," *Journal of Religion*, XXVI, 1946, 168-82. D. Cairns, *The Image of God in Man*, SCM Press, London, 1953, pp. 128-80.

[6] *Theologia Naturalis bei Calvin*, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, 1935.

[7] *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1952.

[8] P. Barth, "Das Problem der naturlichen Theologie bei Calvin," *Theologische Existenz Heute*, Heft 18, Kaiser Verlag, Munchen, 1935, pp. 12ff and 38-53. T. F. Torrance, *Calvin's Doctrine of Man*, Lutterworth, London, 1949. R. Wallace, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1953.

[9] *The Theology of Calvin*, trans. H. Knight, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1956.

[10] *Calvin's Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 2nd ed. W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1959. Parker claims that Calvin, unlike Barth, lacks consistency, i.e. in applying the relevance of faith to his systematic theology (*Karl Barth*, W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1970).

[11] Niesel, op. cit., pp. 22-30. Cf. Torrance, op. cit., pp. 13-42.

They distort his well balanced trinitarian account; they overlook the fact that the attestation of the revelation (action) of God the Father (Creator) in creation and the Holy Spirit in sanctification are also the central goal of the *Institutes* (i.e. its Book I and III-IV).[12]

The second part of the thesis interprets Barth's *Church Dogmatics* in the light of its basis in the revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ. Barth's theological freedom and autonomy in faith stems from his basis in this revelation. His christocentric theology derives from his christocentric understanding of the ontic and noetic reality of the revelation of the triune God. The merit of the hermeneutical method of this thesis[13] is this. While it corresponds well to Barth's intention to stress the indispensability of God's revelation and faith for theology, it opposes any explanation of his theology merely from rational philosophical principles,[14] which overlooks the indispensability of faith in his theological formation. Moreover, it sharply distances itself from a thematic interpretation that claims a particular theological theme or principle (e.g. of victorious grace[15] or analogy[16] or

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[12] Ibid. pp. 46-50 and 39.

[13] This method follows T. H. L. Parker's advice: "I do not think we can do justice to Barth by trying to explain his whole theology by one principle. The very fact that all these elements can be singled out as primary or comprehensive hints at his breath and suggests that we shall do better not to be too selective in expounding his theology. It is, moreover, of the utmost importance that we should know where to begin. If theology is to give a correct account of the knowledge of God received through His revelation it must, in procedure, follow the same lines. And that means that it must begin with revelation, continue with revelation, and end with revelation. Hence, when we set out to give an account of the main lines of Barth's theology, our starting point is the fact that in Jesus Christ God has revealed and reveals Himself to man. In this we shall find the main lines themselves; and conversely, it contains the denial of natural theology in all its forms." This quotation comes from Parker's short essay on "Barth on Revelation" (in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 13, ed. T. F. Torrance and J. K. S. Reid, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1960, pp. 368-9), which was originally presented at the meeting of the Lightfoot Society, Durham, on October 17, 1958.

[14] Van Til interprets Barth's theology in the light of Kantian phenomenalism and Heideggerian existentialism (*The New Modernism*, James Clarke, London, 1946, pp. 143-5, 146-7 and 157-8), and claims it as "the new modernism" (pp. 371-9), for it is determined by these philosophical principles. The tenability of Van Til's claim will be discussed in due course.

[15] G. C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, ed. H. R. Boer, Paternoster Press, London, 1956, pp. 22 and 52. Barth criticises Berkouwer's thematic interpretation of his theology (CD IV, 3. pp. 173-80).

[16] H. U. von Balthasar, *Theology of Karl Barth*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1971, p. 94.

revelation[17]) as the central focus of the *Church Dogmatics.* Barth's central aim is to unfold the diverse contents of the revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ to which scripture and Church attest.[18] His central focus rests on the living truth of God in this revelation. It is this which preserves his dogmatic dynamism and objectivism in faith, and prevents him from falling into a rigid dogmatic formalism, rationalism and subjectivism.

The major originality of the second part of the thesis stems from a coherent exposition of the relationship between the theologies of J. Calvin and Barth. The remarks of Calvinist Barthian scholars (e.g. T. H. L. Parker and T. F. Torrance) on their relationship have been very fragmentary, sketchy and inaccurate. They, like Barth, fail to grasp the basis of Calvin's 1559 *Institutes* in the revelation of the triune God, and its trinitarian orientation. The thesis demonstrates Barth's association with Calvin's theology in order to stress his sharp disassociation from idealistic (i.e. Hegelian) philosophy. It protests against any uncritical claim of Barth's affinity with the idealistic philosophy in methods[19] or contents.[20] Their objects (the biblical God and absolute spirit) are ontologically incompatible. Their relationship with temporal creatures, the world and man, is respectively those of relation and identity. Their ontological incompatibility entails their incompatible way of actions, as well as their incompatible episte-

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[17] H. Ott, *Reality and Faith: The Theological Legacy of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, Lutterworth, London, 1971, pp. 121ff. J. Bowden, *Karl Barth*, SCM Press, London, 1971, p. 110.

[18] CD I, 2. pp. 856ff.

[19] H. U. von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, pp. 51 and 58. W. Hill, *The Three-Personed God*, Catholic Univ. Press, Washington, 1982, pp. 113-4. C. Gunton, "Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition," in *Theology Beyond Christendom*, ed. J. Thompson, Pickwick Press, Pittsburgh, 1986, pp. 293ff. R. H. Roberts, *A Theology On Its Way*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1991. T. Bradshaw, *Trinity and Ontology*, Rutherford House Books, Edinburgh, 1988. R. Ahlers, *The Community of Freedom*, Peter Lang, New York, 1989, pp. 35ff. J. Macken, *The Autonomy Theme in the Church Dogmatics: Karl Barth and His Critics*, Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge, 1990, pp. 124ff.

[20] Van Til, *The New Modernism*, James Clarke, London, 1946. W. Pannenberg, *Grundfragen Systematischer Theologie*, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Gesammelt Aufsatze Band 2, Göttingen, 1967, pp. 101ff. *Jesus—God and Man*, trans. L. L. Wilkins and D. A. Priebe, SCM Press, London, 1968, pp. 127ff. J. Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, SCM Press, London, 1981, pp. 139ff.

mologies. The method of Hegel's philosophy is incompatible with that of Barth's theology. Faith is indispensable and surpassable, respectively, for the noetic and conceptual possibility of the biblical God and for absolute spirit coming to man's consciousness. Barth and Calvin interpret all the ways and actions of the triune God in himself and his relation to the world and mankind in the light of his free will (i.e. in the doctrine of election). Hegel's pantheistic notion of absolute spirit makes its relationship with its objects, the world and man, an inevitable necessity.

The thesis regards discrepancies between the theologies of Calvin and Barth as a matter of emphasis. They present the way and nature of the revelation of the same biblical God as trinitarian and christocentric, respectively. The trinitarian and christological orientation of their theologies derives from their basis in a trinitarian and christocentric understanding of God's revelation. They are respectively committed to defending the distinction of "three" and the unity of the "one" God. Their concepts of the inner relationship of the triune God (i.e. in their doctrines of the Trinity) are responsible for their differing emphases on the threeness and oneness of God. A critical inquiry[21] is made into the tenability of the threefold distinctiveness of God in Barth's strong emphasis on the single unity of God.

The procedure of this thesis follows the procedure of the theologies of Calvin's 1559 *Institutes* and Barth's *Church Dogmatics.* This appears to be appropriate for demonstrating their distinctive characteristics in their relation. We consider Calvin's doctrine of creation and his soteriology in christology and pneumatology, and Barth's doctrine of God *in se* and *ad extra*, and assess their trinitarian theology in the light of their basis in the revelation of the triune God.

[21] C. Welch (*The Trinity in Contemporary Theology*, SCM Press, London, 1953, pp. 161-232), E. Jüngel (*The Doctrine of the Trinity*, trans. H. Harris, Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1976), and T. F. Torrance (*Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1990) accept Barth's claim about distinctiveness in God without critical assessment.

Part I The Revelation of the Triune God in the 1559 *Institutes*

Introduction

The 1559 *Institutes* alludes to a theology of revelation. Its primary inquiry is not concerned with the absolute reality of God *in se*, but with the revelation of his relative reality *ad extra* to us and for us. The question of *quale sit* rather than of *quid sit* is at stake here.[1] This methodological determination[2] is designed to depart from mediaeval Thomistic speculation on the inner essence of God.[3] The essence of God is the absolute reality of God *in se*, and is transcendent and incomprehensible to our cognition.[4] Calvin's theology relies on actual trinitarian knowledge of God in faith which occurs through his self-revelation. It rejects the Thomistic doctrine of the *analogia entis* which claims knowledge of God from the similarity of his essence to the being of man. There is a qualitative distinction and discontinuity between the essence of God and his creature, man.[5]

The basis in the revelation of the one true God elicits Calvin's sole commitment to the doctrine of the *analogia fidei*.[6] The perspective of faith (piety) enables him to define the revelation of the one true God as trinitarian. It identifies God's

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[1] Inst. I.ii.2 and v.1, 9 and 10.

[2] T. F. Torrance, *God and Rationality*, Oxford Univ. Press, London, 1971, pp. 33ff.

[3] T. Aquinas discusses the essence of God (e.g. his simplicity, eternity and his oneness) in terms of its similarity with the inner being of man, namely the *analogia entis*, in *Summa Theologica*, I, *qu.* 3, 8 and 9-11. E. Gilson explains this as Aristotelianism (*The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. E. Bullough, W. Heffer and Sons, Cambridge, 1924, pp. 12-3. cf. *Christianity and Philosophy*, Sheed and Ward, New York, 1939, pp. 93ff, 446ff, and 461). Calvin categorises eternal oneness, simplicity, immensity and spirituality as the essence of God, but opposes any philosophical speculation upon these (I.v.9-10 and xiii.2).

[4] Inst. I.v.1.

[5] Ibid. cf. I.xiii.2.

[6] "Each of them [Schleiermacher and Calvin] in his own way was determined (if we dare to adapt the famous title of one of Kant's works) to do theology within the limits of piety alone." B. A. Gerrish, *The Old Protestantism and the New : Essays on the Reformation Heritage*, Chicago Univ. Press, 1982, p. 197. The bracket is mine. Gerrish's comparison of Calvin with Schleiermacher does not seem to be valid. Their notion of faith is incompatible. Calvin regards faith as a super-natural gift of God which occurs through his miraculous revelation by the internal witness of the Holy Spirit. Schleiermacher, however, denies the super-natural or miraculous revelation of God, and regards faith as the religious consciousness of the natural man (*The Christian Faith*, trans. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1928, pp. 71ff, 178ff and 448ff).

revelation as Creator in creation with the triune God the Father, as Redeemer in Jesus Christ with the Son and as Sanctifier in regeneration with the Holy Spirit. It is crucial for Calvin's conceptual basis in the revelation of the triune God and his trinitarian theology; the latter stems from the former. His basis in this revelation not only elicits his theological objectivism[7] and dynamism,[8] but also emancipates him from formal scriptural and dogmatic principles of the church, and gives him freedom and autonomy in faith[9] to systematise her scriptural and dogmatic principles in accordance with the verdict of God in revelation. Their systematisation has a practical purpose, to stimulate the believer's (worshiping, praising, loving and obedient) faith in the rich goodness and glory of the triune God.[10] The *Institutes* (including its treatment of natural knowledge of God) is claimed as a Christian theology; it is shaped from the perspective of the living faith of the believer[11] for the practical benefits of their faith.

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[7] Torrance articulates the determinative role of the objective revelation of God in Calvin's theology by claiming its decisiveness for scientific method. For modern science also takes the intrinsic objective intelligibility of a thing as the determinative factor of its true investigation and knowledge (*Theological Science*, Oxford Univ. Press, London, 1969, pp. 306ff). Calvin's scientific inquiry, argues Torrance, has been lost by the imposition of Kantian subjective interpretation of things rather than their intrinsic objective intelligibility as the determinative factor of their true investigation and knowledge (*God and Rationality*, pp. 41-2).

[8] D. W. Hardy and D. F. Ford stress the discrepancy between Calvin and Schleiermacher. Their concept of God depends respectively on God's own (supernatural) objective revelation, and on man's own (natural) subjective religious consciousness. Schleiermacher loses Calvin's real and dynamic knowledge of God, falling into a kind of formalism that detaches it from real and dynamic knowledge of God (*Jubilate*, Darton Longman and Todd, London, 1984, pp. 191-4).

[9] E. Brunner characterises Reformed dogmatics (including Calvin's theology) as confessional, and differentiates them from the Catholic dogma. The latter (e.g. the Church's magisterium) as a fixed system of *dogma* has *final or absolute* authority, whilst the former as the Confessions of faith has a *particular* relative authority or dignity. For they are not the ultimate truth, the *object* of faith, the revelation of the living God, but the confession of its object (*The Christian Doctrine of God*, Vol. I, trans. Olive Wyon, Lutterworth, London, 1949, pp. 50-59). Brunner does not take seriously the role of faith in Calvin's doctrine of the creator-God (i.e. in Book I.iii-v of the 1559 *Institutes*.

[10] Inst. I.ii.1 and 2, v.1 and 9, and x.2. E. Doumergue highlights the practical character of Calvin's theology by asserting it as "une doctrine de pratique". *Jean Calvin, les hommes et les choses de son temps*, Vol. IV, Librairie Fischbacher, Paris, 1910, p. 23. cf. pp. 14-28.

[11] J. A. Rossall stresses the vital role of Calvin's Christian experience in his theological formation (*God's Activity and the Believer's Experience in the Theology of John Calvin*, Ph. D. Thesis, Durham University, 1991). She attempts to improve "the only major study" of this area which has been undertaken by the Korean, Sou-Young Lee (*'La Notion d'Experiênce chez Calvin, d'apres son Institution de la Religion Chretienne*, Doctoral Thesis, Universitè des Sciences Humaine de Strasbourg. Faculte de Theologie Protestante, 1984). For he treats the concept of experience

The thesis argues for the trinitarian orientation or balance and unity in the 1559 *Institutes* given the dogmatic role of faith. This enables Calvin to discuss each distinctive person and work of the Trinity in terms of his own relationship with the two others. He rejects any noetic and thus dogmatic subordination of each person of the Trinity to the others. For their distinctive persons are always viewed from their revelation in their distinctive works in the light of faith. Creation, redemption and sanctification are the self-revelation of God in the Father, in the Son and in the Holy Spirit. Our creatureliness, redemption and sanctification are the means of the revelation of the one true God in the Trinity.

The trinitarian knowledge of God, for Calvin, does not necessarily depend solely on the revelation (action) of the Word (Son) of God in Jesus Christ. It is also gained in faith from the revelation of the creator-God as the Father in his distinctive work of creation.[12] Calvin understands the creator-God the Father as the Father of the Son (Word in the man Jesus Christ) and the Holy Spirit, and presupposes their relation in their unity from the perspective of God the Father. Old and new interpreters of the *Institutes* have not explicitly appreciated its trinitarian consistency and unity. They fail to understand Calvin's trinitarian presentation of the true Creator as God the Father of the Son and the Holy Spirit in faith, and judge the consistency and unity of the *Institutes* from a christocentric perspective, namely from the perspective of the relationship of the Son, Jesus Christ with God the Father and the Holy Spirit.

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from a doctrinal perspective rather than from the notion of experience itself, and also fails to examine the historical context of Calvin's argument on this subject. The major weakness of her work is that it is indifferent to the triune nature of God whom Calvin as believer encounters.

[12] "Indeed, we shall not say that, properly speaking, God is known where there is no religion or piety." Inst. I.ii.1. "For, to begin with, the pious mind does not dream up for itself any god it pleases, but contemplates the one and only true God. And it does not attach to him whatever it pleases, but is content to hold him to be as he manifests himself; furthermore, the mind always exercises the utmost diligence and care not to wander astray, or rashly and boldly to go beyond his will. It thus recognizes God because it knows that he governs all things; and trusts that he is its guide and protector, therefore giving itself over completely to trust in him. Because it understands him to be the Author of every good... Because it is persuaded that he is good and merciful... Because it acknowledges him as Lord and Father... Besides, this mind restrains itself from sinning, not out of dread of punishment alone; but, because it loves and reveres God as Father, it worships and adores him as Lord." Inst. I.ii.2.

An attempt is made to highlight the trinitarian emphasis of Calvin's theology rather than the oneness of God for reasons of clarification. The emphasis is not the outcome of logical priority, but of epistemological actualism. For Calvin, we always encounter and perceive the individual persons of the Trinity, rather than their common unity or essence, from their revelation in the distinctive works of creation, redemption and sanctification. He regards the one essence of God as incomprehensible and transcendent to our cognition.[13] This epistemological actualism determines the conception of the ontology of God, while being controlled by the actual being of God in revelation.[14] It gives rise to the attribution of the threeness to the active subject and person of God rather than the oneness of God. The implication of this attribution is evaluated later in the light of the tenability of the oneness and the threeness of God.

The chief intention of this trinitarian interpretation is not to deny the fourfold division of the Apostles' Creed as the formal structure of the *Institutes.* Nor does it disregard the vital influence of Calvin's own psychology,[15] and his philosophical[16] and dogmatic[17] knowledge, and his French formal rationalism and

[13] Inst. I.xiii.1.

[14] T. F. Torrance claims that Calvin's admission of the controlled relation of the human subject to God's objective revelation was learned from "Duns Scotus who stresses the notion of the active agent and came to think of the subject in this sense as a 'voluntary object' of thought." (*Theological Science*, p. 306) "This goes back to the concept of the person developed, in opposition to Boethius, by Richard of St. Victor which he derived *ontologically* from the doctrine of the Trinity" (Ibid.), and "has the effect of restoring theological knowledge to the field of direct intuitive knowledge of God" (Ibid. p. 307) that was explicit in the language of John Major (*Theology In Reconstruction*, SCM Press, London, 1965, p. 87).

[15] Hermann Weber claims that the formation of Calvin's theology derives from his reinterpretation of things about God and his creatures according to the measure of his own psyche, that is, the honour of God (*Die Theologie Calvins. Ihre innere Systematik im Lichte structurpsychologischer Forschungsmethode*, Elsner, Berlin, 1930, pp. 18-25). E. Fromm regards Calvin as a representative of an authoritarian rather than humanistic religion. His authoritarian psychology gives rise to an authoritarian concept of God that entails a pessimistic concept of man (*Psychoanalysis and Religion*, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1950, pp. 34-6. *Escape From Freedom*, Rinehart and Company, New York, 1941, pp. 87-8). The tenability of Fromm's view will be discussed in the treatment of Calvin's doctrine of man.

[16] Karl Barth considers Calvin as a classical Platonist from a philosophical viewpoint (CD I, 2. p. 728). Charles Partee meanwhile admits some Platonic influence in Calvin's theology, but he rejects its determinative role (*Calvin and Classical Philosophy*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1977, pp. 37 and 46-7).

[17] F. Wendel, *Calvin*, p. 359.

humanistic biblicalism[18] in his theological formation. Rather, it rejects them as the final determinative source of his theology. None of these can be the basis of a systematic exposition. Their attestation is not the central and focal purpose of the *Institutes.* Neither Calvin's entire *Institutes* nor his other theological works ever indicate a rational systematisation of Christian truth from a single or various biblical or dogmatic principles. They do not focus on attesting themselves for themselves, but refer beyond themselves to the objective revelation of the living triune God's will, word, truth, and characteristics in his various actions. This thesis is intended to advocate the diverse content of this revelation which the Bible and the Church attest as the final determinative source of the 1559 *Institutes.* It analyses and interprets the diverse content of the *Institutes* in the light of its relation to the revelation of the triune God; it affirms this revelation as the valid basis of a coherent and systematic exposition of the *Institutes.* Not only is the *Institutes* based on the revelation, but its central and focal purpose is the witness to the diverse content of this revelation.

The insistence on the living reality of God (e.g. his glory,[19] his sovereignty or majesty[20]) as the unifying reality of the *Institutes*, and the possibility of its systematic exposition or unity[21] is not new. W. Niesel follows this line of approach

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[18] Hermann Bauke claims his French formal rationalism as the key to the true understanding of Calvin's theology, for it is something that enables Calvin to put together diverse and even contradictory views about God and his creatures (man) arising from his humanistic biblicalism in a dialectical manner (*Die Probleme der Theologie Calvins,* J. C. Hinrichs, Leipzig, 1922, pp. 14-31). The contradictory views here are, for example, the simultaneous claim of man's own fault and God's unchangeable eternal will as responsible for man's damnation, of completed justification and commencing sanctification, and of Satan's instrumental function and its just condemnation (Ibid. pp. 16ff). The observation of the *complexio oppositorum* here led him to conclude that Calvin is "a dialectician rather than a systematic thinker, or at best a dialectical systematizer" (Ibid. p. 16), rejecting any attempt to understand Calvin's theology from any single principle or doctrine (Ibid. pp. 11ff). E. D. Willis seems to oppose Bauke's claim of Calvin's dialectical rationalism or formalism in the *Institutes* that brings about "the unresolved conflicts, the complex of opposites, the sharply disjunctive qualities, in his thought", and proposes that "Calvin's thought is not primarily characterised by dialectical diastasis but by rhetorical correlation." "Rhetoric and Responsibility in Calvin's Theology", in *The Context of Contemporary Theology*, ed. A. J. McKelway and E. D. Willis, John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1974, pp. 43-4. cf. pp. 45-63.

[19] Alfred de Quervain, *Calvin, Sein, Lehren und Kampfen*, Furche, Berline, 1962, p. 6.

[20] H. J. Forstman, op. cit., p. 10.

[21] "When Calvin's theology is looked at as a logical system, he is seen to have developed the doctrine

in appreciating Peter Brunner's work.[22] He renounces H. Bauke's formalistic interpretation that stresses a unsystematic and inconsistent nature of Calvin's theology,[23] and produces a Barthian christocentric interpretation. He declares, like Barth,[24] that the witness of the revelation of the living God's truth in Christ, attested in the Bible, is the central focus as well as the governing purpose of the *Institutes*.[25] This revelation remains the basis for his systematic exposition. E. A. Dowey and T. H. L. Parker also propose the possibility of a systematic exposition of the *Institutes* from its epistemology, based on the revelation of God's living being. Their proposal is made within the hermeneutical framework of the Barth-Brunner debate, and highlights Calvin's emphasis on the integral place of the human subject, in particular, in the formation of the 1559 *Institutes*.[26]

Dowey, like E. Brunner,[27] advocates the *duplex cognitio Domini*, the knowledge of God as Creator and as Redeemer from his revelation in creation and in Christ, as the central theme and thus the really significant ordering principle of the 1559 *Institutes*.[28] Parker, like Barth,[29] insists that Calvin only talks about

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of the omnipotence of God into a complete determinism, while at the same time maintaining with equal vigour a contradictory doctrine of the responsibility of the individual." E. A. Dowey, op. cit., pp. 37-8.

[22] *Vom Glauben bei Calvin*, Mohr, Tubingen, 1925.

[23] *The Theology of Calvin*, pp. 10ff.

[24] E. Brunner and K. Barth, *Natural Theology*, trans. P. Fraenkel, Centenary Press, London, 1946, pp. 108ff.

[25] Ibid. pp. 29-30.

[26] T. F. Torrance interprets this emphasis as the essential characteristic of modern theology (*Theological Science*, pp. 307ff).

[27] *Man in Revolt*, trans. O. Wyon, Lutterworth, London, 1939, pp. 155-63. and *Natural Theology*, pp. 36ff.

[28] *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's theology*, pp. 41-2. Dowey follows the work of J. Kostlin ("Calvin Institutio nach Form und Inhalt, in ihrer geschlischtlichen Entwicklung." *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, 1868, pp. 6-62 and 410-468. Cf. O. Ritschl, *Dogmengeschichte des Protestantismus*, Vol. III., Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1926, pp. 161ff) in reordering the *Institutes*' four divisions of the Apostle's Creed into two divisions (Book I-II.i-v and Book II.vi-IV.xx), and stresses their respective dogmatic purposes, that is, to deal with knowledge of God's self-revelation as creator in creation and redeemer in the Son Jesus Christ, respectively, from natural reason and faith. This Brunnerian emphasis which Dowey advocates (Op. cit., 247ff) leads him to claim systematic and theological disunity and inconsistency in the *Institutes* (Ibid. pp. 238 and 241). Calvin discusses knowledge and revelation of God both with and without reference to Christ. This conclusion stems from a christocentric perspective.

[29] *Natural Theology*, pp. 108ff.

the one knowledge and revelation of the one God which the Bible attests.[30] He asserts the *duplex cognitio Dei*, the knowledge of God and of ourselves, as the central and focal theme of the *Institutes*.[31] The common feature of these Barthian and Brunnerian interpreters is this; they do not recognise the trinitarian orientation (and consistency and relatedness) of the 1559 *Institutes* from its basis in the revelation of the triune God. This is because they do not take the formative influence of faith in the *Institutes* fully seriously.

A remarkable proposal of the trinitarian orientation of the *Institutes* has appeared in English from E. D. Willis.[32] This attempts to elaborate Parker's implication of Calvin's trinitarian thought[33] in the light of Dowey's suggestion of the bond between his doctrine of the Trinity and his Christology.[34] It is intended to initiate "a new stage of inquiry" beyond the Barth-Brunner hermeneutical framework for Calvin's theology by exploring a relatedness of their positions.[35] Willis,

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[30] Op. cit., p. 9.

[31] Ibid. pp. 7-8. There has been serious doubt about the tenability of the two parts analysis (knowledge of God and of ourselves) as the basis for the *Institutes* (E. A. Dowey, op. cit., pp. 19-20). The opening statement of these two parts of knowledge is Calvin's basic epistemological proposition, and is geared to stress their correlatedness, and the indispensability of our actual experience of God for his noetic and conceptual possibility in order to resist any abstract speculation about him *in se*. Knowledge of ourselves is certainly not a valid basis of a systematic exposition. The central concern of the *Institutes* is our knowledge of God's being and act in revelation. The final function of the discussion of creation, redemption and sanctification (of ourselves) is to demonstrate the revelation of the creative, redemptive and sanctifying action of the triune God.

[32] "Even if it be decided that the *duplex cognitio* scheme and not the three articles of the Creed provides the primary instrument for structuring the final edition of the *Institutes*, still the subject of Books III and IV is generally the work of the Holy Spirit, as the subject of Book I is generally God the Creator and of Book II generally the Redeemer. The Holy Spirit is not for Calvin only the means of our knowledge of God: he is also the subject of our knowledge of God, along with the Father and the Son. Books III and IV should be seen as serving in part to elaborate the content of our knowledge of the Holy Spirit from a consideration of his offices." *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1966, p. 123.

[33] Ibid. p. 103. n. 4.

[34] Ibid. p. 121.

[35] "It is a vain hope to want to elude entirely the framework of the Barth-Brunner debate. The issues there raised cannot ultimately be reduced to semantics, nor have they been fully digested or resolved by contemporary theology. Calvin's answers to the questions put to him in that cadre may after all have had a salutary effect on the present-day Church. However, because his thought is inevitably colored when it is required to respond precisely to question asked in any epoch, an endeavor must be made to enter a new stage of inquiry... Part of such a movement beyond the Barth-Brunner framework is to admit that the question is no longer: 'Does Calvin teach a natural

like Brunner (and also Dowey), admits Calvin's teaching of God's self-revelation in creation,[36] but goes through a christocentric interpretation of the ontic and noetic reality of this revelation in order to accommodate the position of Barth (as presupposed also by Niesel and Torrance). Willis characterises Calvin's knowledge of God as christological on the basis of Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity.[37] This indicates that God reveals himself only through his eternal Word or Son, Christ; we therefore know him only through this eternal Word, Christ. This christocentric interpretation, he argues, relies on the doctrinal function of the *extra Calvinisticum*. It not only recognises the pre-historical life of the eternal Word or Son, Christ, outside (*extra*) of the historical man Jesus, it also identifies them, and them with the creator-God, the Father. Their ontological identification and unity are considered as the ground for the involvement of the eternal Word or Son, Jesus Christ, in the actions (e.g. creation and revelation) of the creator-God the Father.[38]

Willis' interpretation falls into the Barthian christocentric framework, as he indicates.[39] He argues for Calvin's trinitarian knowledge from his christological knowledge of God.[40] The triune nature of God is suggested in terms of the rela-

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revelation and hold that there is a natural knowledge of God?'; it is rather: 'In what senses does Calvin speak of the knowledge of God and what kind of natural revelation does he teach?' For it is clear that Calvin teaches a natural revelation in a certain sense, and it is equally clear that in another sense he teaches that our knowledge of God is limited to what we have through Christ. This chapter undertakes to discern the variety of ways in which Calvin expounds both positions, and to see how, if at all, the diverse teachings are systematically related in his thought." Ibid. pp. 103-4.

[36] Ibid. p. 120.

[37] Inst. xiii.7.

[38] Op. cit., pp. 104-31.

[39] "Since Karl Barth shook the theological world with what was then the startling news that theology must be Christological, an intense search has taken historical theology into the writings of the Reformers for clues to the nature of the Christology which will allow theology to remain Trinitarian and anthropological." Ibid. Preface.

[40] "The Christological content of the knowledge of God the Creator is the revelation of God through the Word in the *opera Dei*." Ibid. p. 126. "The *extra Calvinisticum* functions in Calvin's doctrine of the knowledge of God to bind closely together the two aspects of the *duplex cognitio Dei* (*cognitio Dei creatoris et redemptoris*), to emphasize the basic unity of the act of knowledge in this twofold fashion, and above all to emphasise the unity of the God thus known. More briefly put, it marks the Trinitarian character of our knowledge of God. It does so by helping Calvin to insist on the Christological character of our knowledge of God without either making the Father

tionship of the Word of God (Jesus Christ) with the Father and the Holy Spirit. He proposes that the basis of Calvin's trinitarian and christological theology is in the ontological unity of the Word or Son Jesus Christ with the Father and the Spirit. This attempts to offer a theoretical ground for the relatedness of God the Creator in Book I to the Redeemer in Book II, and thus for Barth's and Parker's insistence on the one knowledge and revelation of the one God of the *Institutes.*[41] Willis rejects the claim of Brunner and Dowey that Calvin's subject of inquiry is two qualitatively different kinds of knowledge of God (general and special) as Creator and as Redeemer, respectively, from his revelation in creation and in Christ.

The serious problem with Willis' Barthian christocentric interpretation is this. It fails to grasp Calvin's own methodological procedure. The 1559 *Institutes* presents the one true God as the Trinity from revelation in the distinctive actions of creation, redemption and sanctification. The activities of God are attributed to the individual member of the Trinity rather than to their common essence and unity. Willis does not recognise that Calvin's understanding of the nature of God's revelation is fundamentally trinitarian rather than christocentric. Calvin does not consider the Word (the Son) of God in Jesus Christ as his only revelation. He is committed to defend the distinctive persons of the Trinity in their distinctive actions and revelations. His trinitarian knowledge of the creator-God does not necessarily depend solely on the ontological unity and relationship of the Word (Christ or Son) with God the Father and the Holy Spirit. Each distinctive person and work of the Trinity is discussed in the light of his own relationship with the two others from the perspective of faith. The Word (Christ) defines the nature

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and the Spirit subordinate in revelation or sacrificing the decisive role which the revelation of God in the flesh has for Christian theology." Ibid. p. 104. H. P. Jansma (*The Prophetic Office in John Calvin's Theology*, Ph. D. Thesis, Durham University, 1991, pp. 129-36 and 293) and P. J. Wilcox (*God, The Word of God, and Scripture: The Mediation of the Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology*, M.A. Thesis, Durham University, 1991, pp. 12ff) apparently follow Willis' christocentric interpretation of revelation and knowledge of God for the assertion of their trinitarian character without critical assessment of its validity.

[41] Ibid. pp. 121 and 128.

of Creator as the triune God the Father in the event of his own revelation in creation.

Calvin presupposes the christological nature of the creator-God in his trinitarian nature as the Father of the Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit (in Book I). Christological knowledge is assumed in his trinitarian knowledge of God, not the other way around as Willis proposes. He fails to understand the nature of Calvin's trinitarian theology. It is based not on the ontological unity and essence of the Trinity, as he affirms, but on their distinctive persons and actions (revelations). The major reason for Willis' failure is that he fails to observe the exact influence of Calvin's concept of the triune nature of God (i.e. in his doctrine of the Trinity) in the formation of the *Institutes.*

The first chapter of this thesis deals with the revelation of Creator in creation and in Scripture (in Book I of the 1559 *Institutes*) in such a way as to stress the trinitarian character of his revelation and knowledge. Chapters Two and Three concern themselves christology (in Book II) and peneumatology (in III-IV) to consolidate the trinitarian orientation of the *Institutes.* The exposition of Book IV (about the Church) will be inserted in the discussion of the Christian life (e.g. faith and sanctification). The revelation of the triune God is thereby shown as the basis for the trinitarian interpretation and analysis of the *Institutes.*

Chapter I The Doctrine of Creation

The subject of inquiry in Book I of the 1559 *Institutes* is the revelation of the creative being and action of God in creation and in Scripture. Calvin here deals with God's primal and universal relationship with creation, and formulates Christian doctrines of creation and Creator from the revelation. This chapter explores these doctrines in the light of their relevance to God's revelation in creation and then to his revelation in Scripture. Its focus rests on the ontology and the epistemology of Creator and creation, and their relationship. It demonstrates the trinitarian character of the being and action of the Creator from his conceptual basis in the revelation of the triune God the Father. This relies on an elaboration of Calvin's insistence on the indispensability of faith for the noetic and conceptual possibility of this trinitarian revelation.

I.1. The Revelation of God the Father in Creation

Introduction

Calvin's treatment of God's revelation in creation, and its knowability and knowledge, is the major concern of Book I.iii-v. My constant dialogue with commentators is designed to clarify complicated issues in this. The precise nature of the *sensus divinitatis* and the revelation of Creator in creation are unravelled in the light of the hermeneutical relevance of faith and predestination to them. This leads us not only to illustrate the determinative source of Book I.iii-v, but also to examine the relevance of God's revelation to natural reason and to faith, and their dogmatic purposes and relationship. Their purpose is discussed, and a brief evaluation is made to point out their distinctive character.

1.i. The *Sensus Divinitatis* from Revelation

i.1. The *sensus divinitatis* as a Divine Origin

A sense of Deity (*divinitatis sensus*) is a natural[1] awareness of God as Creator from his revelation in creation (i.e. in our natural intellect[2] and world[3]). It generates a sense or seed of religion (*religionis semen*), and has an actual content[4] of intellectual knowledge of God as Creator, and of intellectual *conscientia* to obey his will.[5] The explicit use of "self-revelation" is absent in the *Institutes.* It is, however, vital to notice the total dependence of the reality of the *sensus divinitatis* on the grace of God's self-revelation in creation.[6] Its significance is this: it not only demonstrates the grace of God's miraculous and super-natural action as the origination of man's *sensus divinitatis* and *sensus religionis*, but it also opposes man's autonomous possession of them and man's sharing of merit with God for them. Man is utterly passive to them; they occur only by God's illumination of man's mind to respond to the grace of his self-revelation.[7]

The self-revelation of God in creation entails God's accommodation and communication of himself and of his will to us, and our feeling, hearing and under-

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[1] Inst. I.iii.1.

[2] Inst. I.iii-iv

[3] Inst. I.v.

[4] B. B. Warfield, *Calvin and Augustine*, Presbyterian and Reformed, Pennsylvania, 1956, pp. 37ff. E. A. Dowey (Op. cit., pp. 51 and 56 n.35) rejects the attempt that is made by R. Seeberg (*Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, 2d ed. Vol. IV.2, A. Deicherische Verlagsbuchhandlung Werner Scholl, Erlangen, 1920, p. 571) and H. Engelland (*Gott und Mensch bei Calvin*, Kaiser Verlag, Munich, 1934, pp. 16, 7-23) to regard the *sensus divinitatis* as a formal possibility or a precondition of knowledge of God rather than as actual knowledge of him.

[5] "There is within the human mind, and indeed by natural instinct, an awareness of divinity. This we take to be beyond controversy... Since, therefore, men one and all perceive that there is a God and that he is their Maker, they are condemned by their own testimony because they have failed to honor him and to consecrate their lives to his will." Inst. I.iii.1.

[6] T. H. L. Parker, op. cit., pp. 24ff.

[7] "Certain philosophers, accordingly, long ago not ineptly called man a microcosm because he is a rare example of God's power, goodness, and wisdom, and contains within himself enough miracles to occupy our minds, if only we are not irked at paying attention to them. Paul, having stated that the blind can find God by feeling after him, immediately adds that he ought not to be sought afar off (Acts 17:27). For each one undoubtedly feels within the heavenly grace that quickens him." Inst. I.v.3. cf. v.4.

standing of his communication.[8] In knowledge of God from his revelation in the creation of our conscious subjectivity the intuition is predominant, likewise, in knowledge of God from his revelation in the creation of our external world, visual observation and ratiocination are predominant in this knowledge. For God also reveals himself through our external world to us and for us in the process of our rational observation and ratiocination.[9] T. F. Torrance does not seem to be fully just to the nature of Calvin's knowledge of God from his revelation in creation, as he argues for the genuineness of his auditive and intuitive knowledge of God solely from the revelation of his Word in the Bible.[10]

Calvin contradicts the rejection of the occurrence of God's self-revelation in and through creation, and man's actual knowledge of it. Barth claims that Calvin treats them merely as a hypothetical possibility after the Fall.[11] His claim stems from his false interpretation of Calvin's emphasis on the effect of the Fall. For

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[8] "And here again we ought to observe that we are called to a knowledge of God; not that knowledge which, content with empty speculation, merely flits in the brain, but that which will be sound and fruitful if we duly perceive it, and if it takes root in the heart. For the Lord manifests himself by his powers, the force of which we feel within ourselves and the benefits of which we enjoy. We must therefore be much more profoundly affected by this knowledge than if we were to imagine a God of whom no perception came through to us. Consequently, we know the most perfect way of seeking God, and the most suitable order, is not for us to attempt with bold curiosity to penetrate to the investigation of his essence, which we ought more to adore than meticulously to search out, but for us to contemplate him in his works whereby he renders himself near and familiar to us, and in some manner communicates himself." Inst. I.v.9.

[9] "Lest anyone, then, be excluded from access to happiness, he not only showed in men's minds that seed of religion of which we have spoken but revealed himself and daily discloses himself in the whole workmanship of the universe. As a consequence, men cannot open eyes without being compelled to see him... You cannot in one glance survey this most vast and beautiful system of the universe, in its wide expanse, without being completely overwhelmed by the boundless force of its brightness." Inst. I.v.1.

[10] "Now what is so distinctive in Calvin's doctrine of our intuitive knowledge of God is that it is in and through his *Word*. In the language of John Major, it is *intuitiva auditio*, intuitive *auditive* knowledge of God. Major himself failed to think this out to the end, for in the last analysis he tended to lapse back into the Augustine notion of vision through the lack of the biblical doctrine of the Word that gripped the Reformers... Even Major insisted on thinking through the problems of perfection in our natural knowledge in terms of hearing as well as seeing - this means, as Calvin must have realized through Major's teaching, that the place of vision in our knowledge has but a limited range and that perceptibility cannot be taken as the final criterion of intuitive evidence knowledge. There is no point, of course, in rejecting the proper place of vision in theological knowledge, but it cannot be allowed to dissolve away the auditive element which is basic and essential." *Theology In Reconstruction*, p. 87.

[11] *Natural Theology*, pp. 106-9.

Calvin, the Fall negates neither God's objective revelation in creation from the grace of God, nor its actual knowledge by man. Rather, it turns the original salvific knowledge of God from natural reason before the Fall into a unsalvific one, and nullifies its utility and effectiveness for true (salvific) knowledge and the religion.[12] That is to say, the Fall brings about a drastic change of the nature of man and his action, but not of the nature of God and his action (revelation); the latter was already determined by his eternal will (decree) before the foundation of the world.[13] Calvin stresses the relevance of man's created nature to the knowability and knowledge of God's revelation in creation (and in Scripture); it is the persistent concern of Book I of the 1559 *Institutes.*

> Here I do not yet touch upon the sort of knowledge with which men, in themselves lost and accursed, apprehend God the Redeemer in Christ the Mediator; but I speak only of the primal and simple knowledge to which the very order of nature would have led us if Adam had remained upright. In this ruin of mankind no one now experiences God either as Father or as Author of salvation, or favorable in any way, until Christ the Mediator comes forward to reconcile him to us. Nevertheless, it is one thing to feel that God as our Maker supports us by his power, governs us by his providence, nourishes us by his goodness, and attends us with all sorts of blessings—and another thing to embrace the grace of reconciliation offered to us in Christ. First, in the fashioning of the universe and in the general teaching of Scripture the Lord shows himself to be the Creator. Then in the face of Christ (cf. II Cor. 4:6) he shows himself to be the Redeemer. Of the resulting twofold knowledge of God we shall now discuss the first aspect; the second will be dealt with in its proper place.[14]

i.2. The *sensus divinitatis* as a dynamic event

The total dependence of the *sensus divinitatis* on revelation provides its noetic and conceptual dynamism, realism, existentialism,[15] and objectivism. The ever-new objective revelation (presence) of God determines its reality as a living (dynamic, existential and objective) event that constantly occurs in the conscious

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[12] B. B. Warfield, op. cit., p. 150.

[13] The relationship between the being and action of the triune God and his eternal will (decree) will be spelled out in greater detail in the treatment of Calvin's doctrine of election.

[14] Inst. I.ii.1. cf. vi.1 and 2, x.1, xiii.9, 11, 23 and 24, xiv.20, II.vi.1.

[15] Dowey, op. cit., pp. 24-31.

subjectivity of man.

> Therefore, it is utterly vain for some men to say that religion was invented by the subtlety and craft of a few to hold the simple folk in thrall by this device and that those very persons who believe that any God existed... But they would never have achieved this if men's minds had not already been imbued with a firm conviction about God, from which the inclination towards religion springs as from a seed. And indeed it is not credible that those who craftily imposed upon the ruder folk under pretense of religion were entirely devoid of the knowledge of God. Indeed, they seek out every subterfuge to hide themselves from the Lord's presence, and to efface it again from their minds. But in spite of themselves they are always entrapped. Although it may sometimes seem to vanish for a moment, it returns at once and rushes in with new force... therefore exemplify the fact that some conception of God is ever alive in all men's minds.[16]

Calvin's dynamic and realistic concept of the religious consciousness of God is lost in Schleiermacher's. The basis of Schleiermacher's concept of religious consciousness of God depends not on God's own supernatural objective action (revelation), but on the awareness of deity in the natural conscious subjectivity of man. This, think D. W. Hardy and D. F. Ford,[17] ends in a kind of formalism that detaches the concept of God from its constituent element, and causes it to lose its realism and dynamic.

The dynamic expression of the *sensus divinitatis* is not consistently explicit. Calvin often expresses it as an implanted or engraved (or inscribed or shown) reality of God in the internal heart and mind of man[18] and in the external world.[19] This expression portrays the *sensus divinitatis* as a static thing given once and for all and therefore inherent in human nature. It is nonetheless vitally important to stress that Calvin never intends to advocate its actual identification with inherent human nature. He explicitly renounces this kind of identification,[20] and

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[16] Inst. I.iii.2.

[17] Op. cit., pp. 191-4.

[18] Inst. I.iii.1 and 3. cf. iv.4.

[19] Inst. I.v.1.

[20] "Even today the earth sustains many monstrous spirits who, to destroy God's name, do not

affirms God's constant revelation as the origination of the *sensus divinitatis.* His static expression is used to accentuate the undeniable existence of the *sensus divinitatis* in man and the inexcusability of his dismissal of God's revealing glory and goodness[21] in creation.

> The final goal of the blessed life, moreover, rests in the knowledge of God (cf. John 17:3). Lest anyone, then be excluded from access to happiness, he not only sowed in men's minds that seed of religion of which we have spoken but revealed himself and daily discloses himself in the whole workmanship of the universe. As a consequence, men cannot open their eyes without being compelled to see him. Indeed, his essence is incomprehensible; hence, his divineness far escapes all human perception. But upon his individual works he has engraved unmistakable marks of his glory, so clear and so prominent that even unlettered and stupid folk cannot plead the excuse of ignorance.[22]

1.ii. The Conceptual Confinement of Revelation to Faith

ii.1. The Creator as the Triune God the Father

Calvin confines the noetic and conceptual possibility of the revelation of Creator in creation to the living faith (piety) of a believer.

> It is therefore in vain that so many burning lamps shine for us in the workmanship of the universe to show forth the glory of its Author. Although they bathe us wholly in their radiance, yet they can of themselves in no way lead us into the right path. Surely they strike some sparks, but before their fuller light shines forth these are smothered. For this reason, the apostle, in that very passage where he calls the worlds the images of things invisible, adds that through faith we understand that they have been fashioned by God's word (Heb. 11:3). He means by this that the invisible divinity is made manifest in such spectacles, but that we have not the eyes to see this unless they be illuminated by the inner revelation of God through faith.[23]

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hesitate to misdirect all the seed of divinity spread abroad in human nature. How detestable, I ask you, is this madness: that man, finding God in his body and soul a hundred times, on this very pretense of excellence denies that there is a God?" Inst. I.v.4. cf. v.5.

[21] Inst. I.v.15.

[22] Inst. I.v.1. "There is within the human mind, and indeed by natural instinct, an awareness of divinity. This we take to be beyond controversy. To prevent anyone from taking refuge in the pretense of ignorance of his divine majesty. Ever renewing its memory, he repeatedly sheds fresh drops." Inst. I.iii.1.

[23] Inst. I.v.14.

The dogmatic outcome of this confinement is highly significant. It enables Calvin to characterise the revelation (action) of the Creator in creation as that of the triune God the Father.

> For, to begin with, the pious mind does not dream up for itself any god it pleases, but contemplates the one and only true God. And it does not attach to him whatever it pleases, but is content to hold him to be as he manifests himself; furthermore, the mind always exercises the utmost diligence and care not to wander astray, or rashly and boldly to go beyond his will. It thus recognizes God because it knows that he governs all things; and trusts that he is its guide and protector, therefore giving itself over completely to trust in him. Because it understands him to be the Author of every good... waiting for help from him. Because it is persuaded that he is good and merciful, it reposes in him with perfect trust, and doubts not that in his loving-kindness a remedy will be provided for all its ills. Because it acknowledges him as Lord and Father, the pious mind also deems it meet and right to observe his authority in all things, reverence his majesty, take care to advance his glory, and obey his commandments... Besides, this mind restrains itself from sinning, not out of dread of punishment alone; but, because it loves and reveres God as Father, it worships and adores him as Lord... Here indeed is pure and real religion: faith so joined with an earnest fear of God that this fear also embraces willing reverence, and carries with it such legitimate worship as is prescribed in the law.[24]

For Calvin, faith (piety) derives from the internal witness of the Word[25] of God in Scripture by the Holy Spirit.[26] This internal witness is therefore indispensable for the noetic and conceptual possibility of the revelation of Creator in creation[27]

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[24] Inst. I.ii.2.

[25] "First, we must be reminded that there is a permanent relationship between faith and the Word. He could not separate one from the other any more than we could not separate the rays from the sun from which they come... The same Word is the basis whereby faith is supported and sustained; if it turns away from the Word, it falls. Therefore, take away the Word and no faith will then remain." Inst. III.ii.6. cf. ii.35.

[26] "But I reply: the testimony of the Spirit is more excellent than all reason. For as God alone is a fit witness of himself in his Word, so also the Word will not find acceptance in men's hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit." Inst. I.vii.4. Let us, then know that the only true faith is that which the Spirit of God seals in our hearts." Inst. I.vii.5. cf. III.i.4.

[27] K. Barth, *Natural Theology*, pp. 107-8. P. Barth, "Das Problem der naturlichen Theologie bei Calvin," *Theologische Existenz Heute,* Heft 18, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, Munchen, 1935, pp. 25-6. Pierre Maury, "La Théologie naturelle chez Calvin," *Bulletin de la Societé de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Francais*, LXXXIV 1935 (Avril-Juin), pp. 267-79. They do not believe that Calvin claims the actual occurrence of the trinitarian revelation of the creator-God as the Father in creation since Adam's Fall.

as the triune God the Father's.

The perspective of faith determines the actual occurrence of the revelation and knowledge of the triune God the Father as the conceptual and dogmatic criterion of Creator. Barth is inaccurate to propose that Calvin merely follows *a priori* biblical or dogmatic ideas and teachings of God's revelation in creation and its knowledge for their treatment.[28] The perspective of faith allows him dogmatic freedom and autonomy to view them from their actual and dynamic occurrence to which the Bible and the Church attest. It enables him to avoid a rigid rational systematisation of them; it offers their *a posteriori* and actual and dynamic knowledge as the final criterion of their treatment.

Dowey is seriously misleading to claim that Calvin does not regard God's revelation in creation as "a positive contribution to faith, a foundation for it or a base under it".[29] Dowey provides evidence[30] of his claim from Calvin's remark:

> I am not yet speaking of the proper doctrine of faith whereby they had been illuminated unto the hope of eternal life. For, that they might pass from death to life, it was necessary to recognize God not only as Creator but also as Redeemer, for undoubtedly they arrived at both from the Word. First in order came that kind of knowledge by which one is permitted to grasp who that God is who founded and governs the universe. Then that other inner knowledge was added, which alone quickens dead souls, whereby God is known not only as the Founder of the universe and the sole Author and Ruler of all that is made, but also in the person of the Mediator as the Redeemer. But because we have not yet come to the fall of the world and the corruption of nature, I shall now forgo discussion of the remedy.[31]

Calvin's remark that "I am not yet speaking of the proper doctrine of faith"[32] in the doctrine of Creator (in Book I) cannot be interpreted, as Dowey does, to indicate that he renounces any theological and systematic link between the

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[28] CD I, 2. p. 460.

[29] Op. cit., p. 85.

[30] Ibid. pp. 43-5.

[31] Inst. I.vi.1. cf. vi.2, x.1, xiii.9 and 11.

[32] Inst. I.vi.1.

doctrine of Creator and faith. His remark must mean that he would explore the particular nature of faith in a proper place (in Book III). His major concern in Book I is the doctrine of Creator that is designed to illustrate the one true God as the Creator, the Father, the Lord and Governor of all things.

ii.2. Twofold Knowledge of the One Revelation of God the Father

The remarkable outcome of Dowey's neglect of the decisive role of faith in the doctrine of Creator is this. He,[33] like Brunner,[34] ascribes the subject of this doctrine solely to natural or general (unsoteriological and untrinitarian) revelation and knowledge of God as Creator. For Calvin, however, the trinitarian knowledge and revelation of God the Father is the only dogmatic source and criterion of the true Creator from the perspective of faith.[35] Dowey's confinement of the dogmatic relevance of God's revelation in creation to "natural and philosophical quality of the process"[36] for Calvin is untenable. He thereby undermines Calvin's dogmatic delight and freedom to demonstrate the relevance of this revelation also to a living faith (piety) of the believer.

> Let us therefore remember, whenever each of us contemplates his own nature, that there is one God who so governs all natures that he would have us look unto him, direct our faith to him, and worship and call upon him. For nothing is more preposterous than to enjoy the very remarkable gifts that attest the divine nature within us, yet to overlook the Author who gives them to us at our asking. With what manifestations his might draws us to contemplate him!... Now I have only wanted to touch upon the fact that this way of seeking God is common both to strangers and to those of his household, if they trace the

[33] "From the point of view of the knowledge of God, which is the foundation of Calvin's theological writings, Calvin's *Institutes* of 1559 contains two, not four, divisions... This division corresponds to what Calvin conceived of as the two kinds of revelation: the revelation of God as Creator, and as Redeemer." Op. cit., p. 41. "Clearly, the entire soteriological revelation is purposely put off to a later chapter because it is a different kind of thing from the present subject." Ibid. p. 47. "In the *Institutes* (I.v.) Calvin purposely omits the special Biblical revelation of creation and speaks exclusively of such knowledge as comes from the general revelation... This clear-remaining general revelation is a norm for both Christian and pagan. What we are now about to point to is the philosophical and rational quality of the process by which man derives the content of the objective revelation from his experience of the world." Ibid. p. 74. cf. p. 239.

[34] *Natural Theology*, pp. 26 and 39.

[35] Inst. I.v.14. cf. iii.3.

[36] Op. cit., p. 74.

outlines that above and below sketch a living likeness of him.[37]

The practical purpose of this is to show the true Creator as the triune God the Father. We cannot freely and willingly love, worship, praise and serve the one true creator-God unless we know the revelation of his fatherly goodness and love (mercy, and so on) in and through creation.

> This [God is the fountain of every good] I take to mean that not only does he sustain this universe (as he once founded it) by his boundless might, regulate it by his wisdom, preserve it by his goodness, and especially rule mankind by his righteousness and judgment, bear with it in his mercy, watch over it by his protection; but also that no drop will be found either of wisdom and light, or of righteousness or power or rectitude, or of genuine truth, which does not flow from him, and of which he is not the cause. Thus we may learn to await and seek all these things from him, and thankful to ascribe them, once received to him. For this sense of the powers of God is for us a fit teacher of piety, from which religion is born. I call "piety" that reverence joined with love of God which the knowledge of his benefits induces. For until men recognize that they owe everything to God, that they are nourished by his fatherly care, that he is the Author of their every good, that they should seek nothing beyond him—they will never yield him willing service.[38]

Calvin never explicitly admits a general (untrinitarian and unsaving) nature to God's revelation in creation. The Fall, for him, never alters the trinitarian nature of the revelation of the creator-God the Father in creation. The assertion of the actual occurrence of this revelation is increasingly clear in the treatment of the revelation of the creator-God the Father in Scripture.[39] Rather, the Fall destroys our natural ability to be saved by it and to perceive the fatherly characteristics of the Creator from his revelation in creation and so to declare him as the triune God the Father.[40] The aid of faith, which derives from the internal witness of the

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[37] Inst. I.v.6.

[38] Inst. Inst. I.ii.1. The bracket is mine. cf. I.v.3, 7 and 8.

[39] "There are other reasons, neither few nor weak, for which the dignity and majesty of Scripture are not only affirmed in godly hearts, but brilliantly vindicated against the wiles of its disparagers; yet of themselves these are not strong enough to provide a firm faith, until our heavenly Father, revealing his majesty there, lifts reverence for Scripture beyond the realm of controversy." Inst. I.viii.13.

[40] Inst. I.v.3.

Word of God in the Bible by the Holy Spirit, is indispensable for this perception. Calvin advocates two qualitatively different forms of knowability and knowledge of this one revelation after the Fall. Their untrinitarian and trinitarian, and unsaving and saving qualities are ascribed, respectively, to the unbeliever and the believer.

> Therefore, since we have fallen from life into death, the whole knowledge of God the Creator that we have discussed would be useless unless faith also followed, setting forth for us God our Father in Christ. The natural order was that the frame of the universe should be the school in which we were to learn piety, and from it pass over to eternal life and perfect felicity. But after man's rebellion, our eyes—wherever they turn—encounter God's curse... For even if God wills to manifest his fatherly favor to us in many ways, yet we cannot by contemplating the universe infer that he is Father.[41]

Commentators[42] (including Brunner and Dowey) upon Calvin's theology correctly stress general and universal awareness and the availability of God's revelation in creation. Sufficient attention has not been paid, however, to its particularity. Calvin links this revelation and its knowledge (from natural reason and super-natural faith) with the eternal double predestination of God.

> By setting forth examples of this sort, the prophet shows that what are thought to be chance occurrences are just so many proofs of heavenly providence, especially of fatherly kindness. And hence ground for rejoicing is given to the godly, while as for the wicked and the reprobate, their mouths are stopped... But because most people, immersed in their errors, are struck blind in such a dazzling theater... profit nothing. And certainly however much the glory of God shines forth, scarcely one man in a hundred is a true spectator of it![43]

Their link resists any characterisation of the occurrence of the revelation and its knowledge merely as a general, universal, mechanical and unintentional event.

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[41] Inst. II.vi.1. "But although the Lord represents both himself and his ever-lasting Kingdom in the mirror of his work with very great clarity, such is our stupidity that we grow increasingly dull toward so manifest testimonies, and they flow away without profiting us." Inst. I.v.11. "In this ruin of mankind no one now experiences God either as Father or as Author of salvation, or favorable in any way, until Christ the Mediator comes forward to reconcile him to us." Inst. I.ii.1.

[42] B. B. Warfield, op. cit., p. 34. T. H. L. Parker, op. cit., p. 50.

[43] Inst. I.v.8.

They have a special, individual and almost intentional nature which is determined by God's eternal will. The individual person's untrinitarian or trinitarian, and unsaving[44] or saving[45] knowability and knowledge of God's one revelation in creation depend solely on God's special and determinative will.

1.iii. The Purpose of revelation in Creation

iii.1. The Rejection of Natural Theology

Barth and Brunner, and others, have paid particular attention to the purpose and relationship of twofold knowledge of God from natural reason and faith in Calvin's doctrine of Creator. They have either undermined or mispresented Calvin's dogmatic delight and enthusiasm in God's revelation in creation as a source of confirming knowledge of the true creator-God, the Father. This is because they overlook either the crucial dogmatic role of faith or its precise relationship with natural reason.

Brunner attempts to recover the dogmatic importance of natural knowledge of God in Calvin's theology.[46] He differentiates unbelievers' natural knowledge

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[44] "Yet that seed remains which can be in no wise be uprooted: that there is some sort of divinity; but this seed is so corrupted that by itself it produces only the worst fruits. From this, my present contention is brought out with greater certainty, that a sense of divinity is by nature engraven on human hearts. For necessity forces from the reprobate themselves a confession of it." Inst. I.iv.4.

[45] "In the second kind of work, which are outside the ordinary course of nature also, proofs of his powers just as clear are set forth. For in administering human society he so tempers his providence that, although kindly and beneficent towards all in numberless ways, he still by open and daily indications declares his clemency to the godly and his severity to the wicked and criminal. For there are no doubts about what sort of vengeance he takes on wicked deeds. Thus he clearly shows himself the life of good men with his blessing, relieves their need, soothes and mitigates their pain, and alleviates their calamities; and in all thee things he provides for their salvation... Similarly, what great occasion he gives us to contemplate his mercy when he often pursues miserable sinners with unwearied kindness, until he shatters their wickedness by imparting benefits and by recalling them to him with more than fatherly kindness!" Inst. I.v.7.

[46] "The theological importance of the concept of nature is shown by the fact that God can be known from nature. And this is not confused knowledge, which can hardly be of interest for the Christian, who knows the Word of God. On the contrary, it is something highly important and necessary for the Christian as well. God demands of us that we should know and honour him in his works... God can be known from nature other than man, but also from man himself. Indeed, he is to be known especially from the latter. But above all from *experientia*, *i.e.* from the experience of his preserving and providential grace. This *experientia*=knowledge of God is

of God from believers', and admits the declaration of inexcusability before God as the only dogmatic function of the first. He claims a dogmatic function and effect for the believer's natural knowledge of God as a necessary precondition or point of contact for redemptive knowledge of God's Word.[47] Dowey endorses Brunner by proposing a teaching value of this natural knowledge, for it, like the law of the Old Testament, "highlights the conviction of sin" as "bringing to consciousness the state of inexcusability."[48] J. Barr has recently declared the refutation of atheism as the central purpose and effect of the treatment of the *sensus divinitatis* (i.e. in Book I.iii.v).[49] The advocacy of the utility of natural knowledge of God leads to the assertion of a natural theology in Calvin—that confirms the existence and character of God from natural reason—within faith, namely redemptive theology.[50]

Dowey and Barr overlook the fact that Calvin rejects man's ability to discern and comprehend his sin or God's existence from natural knowledge of God (the *sensus divinitatis*).[51] This is because Dowey, as Parker criticises, "fails to connect inexcusability with its New Testament origin and instead links it with Brunner's doctrine of responsibility or answerability".[52] Brunner does not seem to take

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not made superfluous by faith in the Word of God, but on the contrary remains an important complement of the knowledge of God derived from Scripture." Op. cit., p. 38.

[47] Ibid. pp. 32ff and 42ff. cf. *Man in Revolt*, pp. 62-3.

[48] Op. cit., p. 83. cf. pp. 84-5.

[49] "Even for Calvin himself, much as he liked the theme of human inexcusability, he did not think that this was the 'only' effect: there was the other effect on which he dwelt very heavily, the impossibility of atheism, central to the first chapters of the *Institutes*." *Biblical Faith and Natural Theology*, Clarendon, Oxford, 1993, n. p. 42. cf. p. 153.

[50] Brunner, op. cit., p. 48. Dowey, op. cit., p. 81. Barr, op. cit., 40ff. cf. J. T. McNeil, "Natural Law in the Theology of the Reformers," *Journal of Religion*, XXVI, 1946, 168-82. G. Gloede, *Theologia Naturalis bei Calvin*, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, 1935, pp. 103-33.

[51] "For this reason, the apostle, in that very passage where he calls the worlds the images of things invisible, adds that through faith we understand that they have been fashioned by God's word (Heb. 11:3). He means by this that the invisible divinity is made manifest in such spectacles, but that we have not the eyes to see this unless they be illuminated by the inner revelation of God through faith. And where Paul teaches that what is to be known of God is made plain from the creation of the universe (Rom. 1:19), he does not signify such a manifestation as men's discernment can comprehend: but, rather, shows it not to go farther than to render them inexcusable." Inst. I.v.14.

[52] Op. cit., p. 55.

seriously Calvin's insistence on the false, rebellious and idolatrous quality of all natural knowledge of God for unbeliever as well as believers.

> Yet after we rashly grasp a conception of some sort of divinity, straightway we fall back into the ravings or evil imaginings of our flesh, and corrupt by our vanity the pure truth of God. In one respect we are indeed unalike, because each one of us privately forges his own particular error; yet we are very much alike in that, one and all, we forsake the one true God for prodigious trifles. Not only the common flock and dull-witted men, but also the most excellent and those otherwise endowed with keen discernment, are infected with this disease. In this regard how volubly has the whole tribe of philosophers shown their stupidity and silliness! For even though we may excuse the others (who act like utter fools), Plato, the most religious of all and the most circumspect, also vanishes in his round globe. And what might not happen to others when the leading minds, whose task it is to light the pathway for the rest, wander and stumble![53]

His claim is not cogent; it is hard to believe how false (rebellious and idolatrous) knowledge of God can be a necessary condition for true knowledge in faith, as Barth argues.[54] The exponents of Calvin's natural theology do not take seriously the dogmatic role of living faith in Calvin which rejects any use of natural reasoning and knowledge of God as a conceptual and dogmatic source of God, because men are sinful and rebellious and can really develop an idolatrous understanding of God.[55]

The relationship between knowledge of God from natural reason and from super-natural faith (piety) for Calvin is one of mutual exclusion and irreconciliation. F. L. Battles confirms that there is an antithetical structure between false (philosophical or natural) and true (biblical, super-natural) knowledge of God in the *Institutes.*[56] Calvin persistently rejects the former in order to affirm the latter.

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[53] Inst. I.v.11.

[54] Op. cit., pp. 105-9.

[55] Inst. I.v.13-4.

[56] ***Analysis of the Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin***, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1980, pp. 18-23. Battles ignores the trinitarian orientation of the 1559 *Institutes*, and the discussion of the true Creator as the triune God the Father in Book I.

> Meanwhile they [who are of a mind alien to God's righteousness] do not desist from polluting themselves with every sort of vice, and from joining wickedness to wickedness, until in every respect they violate the holy law of the Lord and dissipate all his righteousness... This, however, is but a vain and false shadow of religion, scarcely even worth being called a shadow. From it one may easily grasp anew how much this confused knowledge of God differs from the piety from which religion takes its source, which is instilled in the breasts of believers only.[57]

> Now we must also hold that all who corrupt pure religion—and this is sure to happen when each is given to his own opinion—separate themselves from the one and only God... For this reason, Paul declares that the Ephesians were without God until they learned from the gospel what it was to worship the true God (Eph. 2:12-13)... Therefore, since either the custom of the city or the agreement of tradition is too weak and frail a bond of piety to follow in worshiping God, it remains for God himself to give witness of himself from heaven.[58]

Their mutual exclusion and irreconcilability conflicts with Brunner's suggestion of their reconcilability, namely his presentation of the value of knowledge of God's revelation in creation for Calvin. Moreover, it contradicts Barth's inclusion of natural knowledge of God in knowledge in faith in such a way as to negate the actual occurrence of the former.[59] Their mutual exclusion and irreconcilability maintains the possibility of their distinctive existence, however.

Barth admits Calvin's discussion of God's revelation in creation and its natural knowability and knowledge merely in principle.[60] He and others (e.g. Niesel,[61] Parker[62]) confine the effect and purpose of God's revelation in creation to the declaration of human beings' inexcusability before God. Calvin, they think, confines

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[57] Inst. I.iv.4. The bracket is mine.

[58] Inst. I.v.13.

[59] "It is true that, according to Calvin, the knowledge of God in Christ includes a real knowledge of the true God in creation. Includes! This means that it does not, as Brunner seems to think, bring forth a second, relatively independent kind of knowledge, so that the circle would become an ellipsis after all—as if our reason, once it had been illuminated, had of itself (*per se*) gained the power of sight (*Instit.*, II, ii, 25)!" *Natural Theology*, p. 109.

[60] *Natural Theology*, pp. 102 and 107-8.

[61] Op. cit., p. 49.

[62] Op. cit., pp. 53ff.

the relevance of this revelation solely to natural knowledge of God, the *sensus divinitatis* which is false, rebellious and idolatrous. They oppose Calvin's support for a natural theology[63]—that proposes the utility of the *sensus divinitatis* as a dogmatic and conceptual source of God—within and without faith. The discussion of the *sensus divinitatis* in Book I.iii-v is consequently not considered as an essential part of Calvin's Christian theology[64] and is marginalised from the rest of his theology. This is because the Barthian interpreters do not take faith seriously as the basis of this discussion. They fail to consider a positive and constructive aspect of this basis.

iii.2. Book I.iii-v as a Christian Doctrine of Creation

The treatment of knowledge of God's revelation in creation in Book I.iii-v is an essential part of a Christian doctrine of creation. Its intention is never to propose natural knowledge of God as a conceptual and dogmatic source of Creator, as Brunner claims. The treatment is geared to demonstrate all knowledge of God from natural reason and faith as the fact of creation, the creative gift of God the Father.

> Let us therefore remember, whenever each of us contemplates his own nature, that there is God who governs all natures that he would have us look unto him, direct our faith to him, and worship and call upon him. For nothing is more preposterous than to enjoy the very remarkable gifts that attest the divine nature within us, yet to overlook the Author who gives them to us at our asking. With what manifestations his might draws us to contemplate him!... Now I have only wanted to touch upon the fact that this way of seeking God is common both to strangers and to those of his household, if they trace the outlines that above and below sketch a living likeness of him. This very might leads us to ponder his eternity; for he from whom all things draw their origin

[63] Barth does not consider natural theology as real theology–"not even for the sake of being rejected." *Natural Theology*, p. 75.

[64] "For Calvin assigns to this religious disposition of man no importance whatsoever as a link with the proclamation of the Christian verities. He does not regard it as a foundation on which the edifice of Christian theology might be erected. What we have just been citing concerning the natural religious endowment of men is for Calvin, as it were, only the first clause of a theological sentence—a clause which taken by itself has no meaning and which in any event does not express Calvin's essential doctrine. This is plain from a purely external linguistic feature." Niesel, op. cit., p. 46.

> must be eternal and have beginning from himself. Furthermore, if the cause is sought by which he was led once to create all these things, and is now moved to preserve them, we shall find that it is his goodness alone.[65]

Calvin regards knowledge of God as constitutive of the very nature of all human beings in the order or law of creation.[66] The knowability and knowledge of God by them are, for him, the decisive factor that differentiates them from animals. The implication of the inclusion of God's knowledge in their constitution is this; it determines them as dynamic and existential beings dependent on the grace of their creator-God. The nature of their knowledge is a dynamic knowing of God in a specific time and space. Its actual existence depends totally on the grace of God's revelation. Calvin here hammers out the primal and universal or inclusive relationship of God with all mankind (unbelievers and believers) not *in abstracto*, but *in concreto*. Their relationship rests not on the mere fact of their creature-creator relationship, but on a concrete, dynamic and existential encounter and communication.

The doctrine of creation in Book iii-v deals not with its absolute reality in and for itself, but with God's revelation of its reality to and for the believer's living faith. The relationship between creation and God's revelation is communicative rather than ontological. Revelation, for, Calvin, neither identifies itself with, nor represents, the ontology of creation, but it communicates its true reality to us and for us. T. H. L. Parker's proposal of knowledge of ourselves (and God) as the central concern and theme of Calvin's *Institutes* and thus its doctrine of creation[67] is not cogent. The subject of inquiry of this doctrine (and the whole *Institutes*) is not knowledge of creation (ourselves) itself, but the miraculous creative action of the creator-God the Father. Its final and central goal is to glorify and praise the fatherly characteristics (e.g. goodness, love, wisdom and power, and so on)

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[65] Inst. I.v.6. cf. v.4.

[66] Inst. I.iii.3.

[67] Op. cit., pp. 8ff.

of the one true God.

Calvin's doctrine of creation upholds aestheticism by admiring the glory, beauty and excellence of creation (including ourselves, the world, liberal arts, natural science). The ultimate goal of their admiration is to exalt and praise the glorious creative work of God and his fatherly goodness and love and wisdom.[68] Calvin here offers a basis for a Christian and trinitarian aestheticism. He discusses the excellent reality of creation in terms of the creative action of the triune God the Father from the perspective of the believer's living faith. The particular characteristics of the creator-God, for him, have a hermeneutical relevance for the definition of the character of creation (including outselves). The definition of creation as temporal by stressing its beginning out of nothing[69] is made in contrast to, as well as in order to attest, the eternity of the creator-God the Father as its origin, as well as his self-existence.[70]

The beauty of Calvin's doctrine of creation is that it succeeds in maintaining the qualitative distinction between creation and Creator without relinquishing their relationship. It opposes any pantheism that presupposes either an essential inherence of the eternal divinity of God in creation, or the autonomous existence and sustenance of creation,[71] and upholds the inseparable relationship between creation and Creator by claiming the total dependence of the existence and sustenance of creation on God's power and providence.[72] This claim is made from the believer's living faith by the internal witness of God the Holy Spirit.[73] It results not only in an effective emphasis on the sovereign lordship of the creator-God the Father over all creation, but also in the definition of creation and its relationship with the Creator not as a static and fixed reality, but as a dynamic and existential

[68] Inst. I.v.1-4.

[69] Inst. I.xiv.20.

[70] Inst. I.v.6. cf. v.2, 4 and 8.

[71] Inst. I.v.5.

[72] Inst. I.v.5-8.

[73] Inst. I.v.13-4.

reality.

Calvin's positive and constructive treatment of natural knowledge of God's revelation in creation stems from its basis in a living faith. The perspective of faith is the basis for his delight and freedom in treating all knowledge of this revelation under the category of a Christian doctrine of creation. For Calvin, without a living faith which relies on the internal witness of God's Word by the Holy Spirit,[74] neither is God's revelation in creation noetically and conceptually possible, nor can all things (including human nature and its capacity to know God) be realistically confessed as the creation of God the Father. The positive and central purpose and function of Calvin's doctrine of creation rests on the believer's teaching and learning (praise[75] and glorification) of the revelation of the fatherly goodness and love of the creator-God in his miraculous creation.[76] Its negative purpose and function is to declare unbelievers' inexcusability before God for their ungratefulness for the conspicuous revelation of this God's overflowing goodness and love in creation.

The decisive reason for the interpretation and conceptualisation of the creator-God as the Father is this. We cannot freely and willingly worship, praise, love and serve this God unless we perceive the revelation of his fatherly goodness and love in creation, and know him as the Father in faith (piety).[77] They are based

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[74] Inst. I.v.13-4.

[75] D. W. Hardy and D. F. Ford propose "man's living relationship to God in praise" as the controlling 'principle' of Calvin's *Institutes* and commentaries (op. cit., pp. 188-9).

[76] Calvin apparently illustrates his Christian perspective for practical benefit for his Christian followers as the primary and central concern of his theological formation. "Now, the knowledge of God, as I understand it, is that by which we not only conceive that there is a God but also grasp what befits us and is proper to his glory, in fine, what is to our advantage to know of him. Indeed, we shall not say that, properly speaking, God is known where there is no religion or piety." Inst. I.ii.1. "What help is it, in short, to know a God with whom we have nothing to do? Rather, our knowledge should serve first to teach us fear and reverence; secondly, with it as our guide and teacher, we should learn to seek every good from him, and having received it, to credit it to his account." Inst. I.ii.2.

[77] "Thus we may learn to await and seek all these things from him, and thankful to ascribe them, once received to him. For this sense of the powers of God is for us a fit teacher of piety, from which religion is born. I call "piety" that reverence joined with love of God which the knowledge of his benefits induces. For until men recognize that they owe everything to God, that they are

on the biblical witness. Calvin recognises the possibility of unbelievers' actual experience of God as Creator and Father of all men.

> Paul, having stated that the blind can find God by feeling after him, immediately adds that he ought not to be sought afar off (Acts 17:27). For each one undoubtedly feels within the heavenly grace that quickens him. Indeed, if there is no need to go outside ourselves to comprehend God, what pardon will the indolence of that man deserve who is loath to descend within himself to find God?... Consequently, too, there comes in that which Paul quotes from Aratus, that we are God's offspring (Acts 17:28), because by adorning us with such great excellence he testifies that he is our Father. In the same way the secular poets, out of a common feeling and, as it were, at the dictation of experience, called him "the Father of men." Indeed, no one gives himself freely and willingly to God's service unless, having tasted his fatherly love, he is drawn to love and worship him in return.[78]

The intention of this recognition is not to claim that the unbelievers by their nature can perceive and understand Creator as the triune God the Father of the Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. For Calvin, the aid of faith (piety) which derives from the internal witness of God's Word in Scripture by the Holy Spirit is indispensable for the trinitarian interpretation and conceptualisation of the creator-God as the Father from his revelation in creation. The intention here appears to be to stress the strong impression of the fatherly goodness and love of the creator-God upon everyone in the event of his revelation.

iii.3. Book I.iii-v as the Christian Doctrine of the Creator

The doctrine of creation in Book I including its chapters iii-v coheres with the major part of the doctrine of the creator-God the Father.[79] It deals with the question of who God is (his being) in terms of what he does (his action and reve-

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nourished by his fatherly care, that he is the Author of their every good, that they should seek nothing beyond him—they will never yield him willing service" Inst. Inst. I.ii.1.

[78] Inst. I.v.3. cf. ii.1, v.7 and 8.

[79] B. B. Warfield, op. cit., pp. 133-300. His exposition of Calvin's doctrine of God is based on Book I of the *Institutes*, and consequently fails to take into account the conceptualisation of the being of God from the revelation of his characteristics in his works of redemption in Book II and sanctification in Book III-IV. A similar criticism is made by E. A. Dowey (Op. cit., Preface) and B. A. Gerrish (Op. cit., p. 200).

lation). The conceptual link[80] between the name of God with his characteristics (e.g. his power) and his action in history is the basis for Calvin's appreciation of the concept of God in the Old Testament.[81] The derivation of understanding of the creator-God from his revelation enables Calvin not only to talk about him from actual knowledge of him, but also to conceptualise the intrinsic being of God not as a static and solitary unmoved being in and for itself, but to us and for us as a dynamic and relational being. This is not revolutionary; it follows the teaching of the Bible and traditional (e.g. Augustinian) dogmatics. The crucial role of these teachings in the formulation of Calvin's theology, stressed by F. Wendel,[82] appears to be undermined by W. J. Bouwsma's emphasis on immediate and critical historical circumstances as the determinative factors of its formation.[83]

Both Wendel and Bouwsma overlook that Calvin regards the ever-new objective revelation of the creator-God, rather than the deposit of biblical and dogmatic ideas in the subjectivity of faith, as the determinative factor for epistemology and the conceptualisation of this God. As a result, they fail to see the systematic character of Calvin's theology including his doctrine of creation

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[80] Inst. I.v.1-3.

[81] E. A. Dowey, op. cit., pp. 10-1.

[82] "If meditation upon the Scriptures was the origin of the ideas that Calvin expressed in his theological writings, as it was also the foundation upon which Luther and Zwingli had built, it is no less true that neither Calvin nor the reformers who went before him could have spun their works out of their personal reflections alone. For all the power and originality of his mind, Calvin could not but draw largely upon previous theologians. The history of philosophical, moral and theological doctrines demonstrates that what appear to have been the most novel and even revolutionary ideas owe their originality much more to the new arrangement of conceptions known long ago, than to the creative power of those who are regarded as their inventors. Calvin is no exception to that general rule, all the less so because, although rightly counted among the reformers, he was a whole generation younger than Luther, Zwingli, Melanchthon and Bucer, and could not have done what he did without reference to the writings and the deeds of those forerunners." *Calvin: The Origins and Development of his Religious Thought*, p. 122. cf. 123-44 and 359.

[83] "The approach by way of tension and contradiction makes it clear that I cannot accept the received version of Calvin as a systematic thinker... Beyond this, the intellectual and cultural resources available to thinkers of the sixteenth century made the production of 'systematic thought' almost inconceivable, a circumstance that students of Calvin's thought have not always kept in mind. A systematic Calvin would be an anachronism; there are no 'systematic' thinkers of any significance in the sixteenth century." *John Calvin: A Sixteenth-Century Portrait*, p. 5.

as based on the living reality of this revelation. Not only are the views of the creator-God and of creation and of their relationship derived from it, but they are also designed to attest it. The deposit of biblical and dogmatic knowledge of God functions for Calvin to consolidate the direct and dynamic and existential knowledge of him which occurs through his self-accommodating and communicative revelation.

> And here again we ought to observe that we are called to a knowledge of God; not that knowledge which, content with empty speculation, merely flits in the brain, but that which will be sound and fruitful if we duly perceive it, and if it takes root in the heart. For the Lord manifests himself by his powers, the force of which we feel within ourselves and the benefits of which we enjoy. We must therefore be much more profoundly affected by this knowledge than if we were to imagine a God of whom no perception came through to us. Consequently, we know the most perfect way of seeking God, and the most suitable order, is not for us to attempt with bold curiosity to penetrate to the investigation of his essence, which we ought more to adore than meticulously to search out, but for us to contemplate him in his works whereby he renders himself near and familiar to us, and in some manner communicates himself. The apostle was referring to this when he said that we need not seek him far away, seeing that he dwells by his very present power in each of us (Acts 17:27-8). For this reason, David, having first confessed his unspeakable greatness (Ps. 145:3), afterward proceeds to mention his works and professes that he will declare his greatness (Ps. 145-5-6; cf. Ps. 40:5)... And as Augustine teaches elsewhere, because, disheartened by his greatness, we cannot grasp him, we ought to gaze upon his works, that we may be restored by his goodness.[84]

In Book I.iii-v, Calvin does not view the one true creator-God as the Father from his relationship and unity with the Son (or Word in Jesus Christ) in the Holy Spirit. Rather, he demonstrates the relevance of the revelation of the creator-God the Father in creation to natural reason and faith for everyone (believer and unbeliever). The perspective of faith in Christ enables him to suggest the possible identification of the Creator with the triune God the Father of the Son or Word Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit from his revelation in creation, and the way for the positive and constructive use of this revelation as the source of the Christian

[84] Inst. I.v.9.

doctrine of the creator-God the Father.[85] The emphasis of the doctrine of God in Book I.iii-v rests on the distinctive being and action of the creator-God the Father rather than on his being and action in common with the Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. It is congruous with the emphasis of the doctrine of the Trinity (in Book I.xiii) on the the distinctive action and being of each member of the Trinity in the one God.[86] There is a theological link and consistency between Calvin's doctrines of Creator or creation and the Trinity.

The doctrine of the creator-God (in Book I.ii-v) focuses on presenting creation and Creator as the principal action and being of God in the Father. It lacks consideration of the ontological unity of the Son and the Holy Spirit with the creator-God the Father, and of their involvement in his revelation and creative work. E. D. Willis does not take this seriously; he proposes Calvin's trinitarian concept of the creator-God on the basis of the ontological unity of the eternal Word or Son, Christ, with the creator-God the Father, and on his involvement in the Father's action of creation and revelation.[87] This is a Barthian christocentric interpretation of God's revelation and knowledge.[88] He, like Barth,[89] asserts that the eternal Word, Christ, for Calvin, is the only means of God's revelation and knowledge in all circumstances (e.g. in creation and the man Jesus Christ).[90] Calvin's trinitarian concept of the creator-God the Father (of the Son) is argued from a christological concept of God in the eternal Word or Son, Christ, of the

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[85] "In this ruin of mankind no one now experiences God either as Father or as Author of salvation, or favorable in any way, until Christ the Mediator comes forward to reconcile him to us." Inst. I.ii.1. "Therefore, since we have fallen from life into death, the whole knowledge of God the Creator that we have discussed would be useless unless faith also followed, setting forth for us God our Father in Christ." Inst. II.i.6.

[86] This point will be mentioned again in due course.

[87] Ibid, pp. 104, 121 and 125.

[88] See the Preface of his book, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*. Willis admits his Barthian christocentric interpretation of Calvin's theology.

[89] *Natural Theology*, pp. 106ff.

[90] "That God is known only through Christ in this sense applies not only to the Church of the New Covenant but to all men since the Fall... Christ was always the means of knowing God. He was exhibited to the Fathers under the Law as the object towards which they should direct their faith." Op. cit., p 106-7. cf. pp. 126ff.

Father. Willis claims it not in the context of the Father's own relationship with the Son, but of the Son's relationship with the Father.

Willis does not seem to appreciate Calvin's own methodological procedure in Book I.iii-v. Calvin here regards creation (rather than the eternal Word or Christ) from the perspective of faith as the means of the self-revelation of the creator-God the Father. The dogmatic relationship between the creator-God the Father and his eternal Word is dealt with in the exposition of his revelation and knowledge in and through Scripture in I.vi-xviii.[91] Willis does not grasp the precise nature of Calvin's trinitarian theology; he is indifferent to its weakness and strength. Calvin's trinitarian concept of the Creator is based not on the ontological unity of the Word of God with the Father and the Holy Spirit, as Willis suggests, but on the distinctive being and work of his Trinity, the Father. Calvin presupposes the ontological unity of the triune God as the unity of the creator-God the Father with the Son in the Holy Spirit rather than as the unity of the Word or Son Jesus Christ with the Father and the Holy Spirit, as Willis proposes.[92] Willis overlooks the dogmatic function of faith that enables Calvin to speak of the creator-God the Father in terms of his own relationship with the Son Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.

Calvin's trinitarian concept of the creator-God stems from the trinitarian understanding of his revelation as the Father (of the Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit) in creation. Willis is wrong to propose it from a christocentric interpretation of God's revelation. Calvin, unlike Barth, does not regard the eternal Word in Christ as the only revelation of the triune God. The Holy Spirit's internal witness of God's Word in faith, for him, functions to identify the Creator with the triune God the Father in the event of his revelation in creation. The nature of God's revelation which Calvin advocates is not christocentric, as the

[91] Inst. I.v.6.

[92] Op. cit., pp. 104, 121 and 125.

Barthian interpreters (T. F. Torrance,[93] W. Niesel,[94] T. H. L. Parker,[95] and E. D. Willis[96]) suppose, but fundamentally trinitarian. He recognises the revelation of each person of the Trinity and its distinctive means.[97] The one true God is viewed as the Trinity in the Father (Creator) from his own revelation in his distinctive work of creation. Creation is the self-revelation of the one true God in the Father. Our creatureliness is the means of this revelation.

The conceptual basis of the creator-God the Father in his self-revelation is crucial for the determination of his ontology. It gives rise to the attribution of the acting subject of God to each individual person of the Trinity, in this case the Father, rather to his one essence (the whole Trinity) in his work of creation and revelation. This attribution is not the outcome of a logical priority of the Trinity over their unity. It stems from an epistemological actualism in faith. For Calvin, we encounter the one true God and know him as the Creator and the Father in his revelation in the distinctive work of his creation.[98] He opposes any discussion of God's being and action in terms of his one essence; it is the reality of God *in se*, incomprehensible and transcendent to our cognition.[99] The epistemological fact here is the basis for proposing the attribution of the acting subject of God in creation to the distinctive being of God in the Father in Book I.ii-v. An explicit expression of this attribution, which is not found in Book I.ii-v, is noticeable in the doctrine of the Trinity in Book I.xiii.

The strength of Calvin's doctrine of the creator-God is that it provides a successful basis for a trinitarian theology, i.e. for defending the distinctive person

[93] *The Doctrine of Man*, Lutterworth Press, London, 1949, pp. 36-7.

[94] Op. cit., p. 27.

[95] Op. cit., pp. 36-7.

[96] Op. cit, p. 126. cf. p. 124.

[97] God the Father (Creator), the Son or Word (Redeemer) and the Holy Spirit (Sanctifier) are revealed in creation, in the redemption of Jesus Christ and in the sanctification of man and church, respectively. Their revelations are treated through their distinctive actions in Book I, II and III-IV of the 1559 *Institutes*.

[98] Inst. I.ii.2.

[99] Inst. I.v.9.

(conscious being and subject) and work of the triune God the Father. It is hard for a modern rational man to accept the distinctive work of God the Father without proposing his own personal self-conscious being and subject.[100] The doctrine maintains an inextricable relationship between the being and action of the creator-God the Father; they (the question of who God is and of what he does) are interdependent. On the other hand, the doctrine neglects the precise role of the one eternal essence (conscious being and subject) of God in the historical work of his creation. This neglect appears to be the major weakness of Calvin's trinitarian doctrine of the creator-God in Book I.iii-v. This is because he does not take seriously the one and eternal conscious will of God (i.e. in his doctrine of predestination) in his doctrine of creation and Creator.[101]

Conclusion

Calvin regards the *sensus divinitatis* as a natural and thus universal awareness of God as Creator from his revelation in creation. The dynamic realistic and existential occurrence of this awareness stems from its total dependence on God's revelation in a specific time and space. The confinement of the noetic and conceptual possibility of the *sensus divinitatis* to the believer's living faith is highly significant. It establishes the revelation of the triune God the Father as the conceptual source of the true Creator. Calvin systematises and explains various biblical and dogmatic ideas of the creative being and action of God as the Father's. His freedom to do so rests on the free and objective revelation of the creator-God the Father, which gives rise to a dynamic and objective concept of the creator-God the Father. The particularity of God's revelation in creation and its knowledge from natural reason and faith is argued from their link with God's double predestination.

[100] The treatment of Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity provides an illustration and evaluation of his concept of God's oneness and threeness.

[101] This point will be brought out later for discussion.

Calvin discusses the one revelation of the creator-God the Father in the context of its twofold knowability from natural reason and faith, which he sees as mutually exclusive and irreconcilable–their relationship is dialectical. The purpose of this discussion is not to claim natural knowledge of God as a source for true understanding of the true Creator. Rather, it is to declare that all knowledge, and the knowability of God, are the creative gifts of the triune God the Father. Calvin here demonstrates the primal and inclusive relationship of the creator-God the Father with all mankind not *in abstracto*, but *in concreto*. The constructive interpretation of the discussion of natural knowledge of God (*sensus divinitatis*) in Book I.iii-v is made by advocating it as the essential part of the Christian doctrine of creation. It relies on an elaboration of Calvin's insistence on the indispensability of faith for the discussion. All things (including our knowability and knowledge of God), for him, cannot be realistically known and confessed as the creation of God the Father. The practical reason of the doctrine is to instruct the believer for their worshiping, praising and obedient faith in this God. This is the positive function of the doctrine in Book I.111-v. Its negative function is to declare human beings' inexcusability before God for their ungratefulness towards the overflowing goodness and love of God in creation.

The subject of inquiry of the doctrine of creation in Book I.iii-v is not creation itself, but the creative act of God the Father. Its intention is to demonstrate the fatherly characteristics of the one true God from his creative work. We cannot worship, praise and serve this one God without knowing his fatherly goodness and love in creation to us and for us. The doctrine of creation coheres with the doctrine of Creator. The emphasis of these doctrine rests on the distinctive being and action of the creator-God the Father. For Calvin presents the one true God as the Trinity, the Father (Creator), from his revelation in his distinctive work of creation. The conceptual basis of the one true God in the revelation of the individual person of the Trinity, the Father (Creator), is highly significant. It

gives rise to the attribution of the active subject of God in creation and revelation in it to the individual person of the Trinity, the Father (Creator) rather than to their unity (or essence). Calvin's trinitarian concept of the Creator is based on the revelation of the distinctive being and action of God the Father. The perspective of faith is the basis for him to claim the trinitarian nature of the creator-God from the Father's own relationship with the Son in the Holy Spirit. This remains the successful basis for defending the distinctive person (subject) of God the Father. It is, however, the direct reason for neglecting the precise role of his one conscious will (and subject and being) in his work of creation.

I.2. The Revelation of God the Father in Scripture

Calvin's treatment of the way in which God reveals himself in Scripture is the chief concern of Book I.vi-xviii of the 1559 *Institutes*. It deals with various issues such as Scripture, the Trinity, creation, man, providence and Satan. These discussions are based in revelation. They are geared to demonstrate from his revelation in Scripture the one true God as Creator, Governor and Provider of all things. The being and action of the Creator is the subject of inquiry of Book I.vi-xviii. This chapter examines Calvin's doctrines of Scripture, the Trinity and man. An exposition of the doctrine of Scripture concerns the possibility of these doctrines in the biblical Word of God in faith. That leads to discussion of the doctrine of the Trinity, which is concerned with the precise nature of the one true creator-God. His distinctive work and his relationship with man as creature is considered in the exposition of the doctrine of man. A persistent effort is made to advocate the trinitarian orientation of these doctrines in the light of the inevitable relevance of faith to the revelation of the triune God as the Father.

2.i. Scripture and Revelation

Introduction

Calvin's doctrine of Scripture establishes God's Word in faith as the noetic and conceptual possibility of the revelation of the creative action and being of God the Father in Scripture. The exposition of the doctrine involves investigating the precise relationship between Scripture and revelation; it spells out in what sense Calvin regards Scripture as the revelation and provider of God's Word. This leads to the assertion that the revelation of God's Word is the central concern of the doctrine of Scripture, and to examination of the systematic purpose and context of the Word of God in revelation. Finally, there will be a discussion of the systematic link between the revelation of the creator-God in Scripture and in creation.

i.1. A View of Scripture as God's Word

The different views of Calvin's doctrine of Scripture derive largely from different interpretations of its notions of divine revelation and dictation and inspiration. B. B. Warfield[1] and many others[2] claim that Calvin treats the human words of Scripture themselves as the revelation of God's dictated or inspired Word. They interpret his doctrine of Scripture in the light of the static notion of the divine revelation, dictation, and inspiration. Not only were original words of Scripture dictated and inspired by the revelation of God's Word, but the objectivity of this divine revelation and dictation (inspiration) is also invested in original words of Scripture once and for all. Hence the work of the Holy Spirit for Calvin is not a proposition of a new revelation and fresh dictation of God's Word. Rather, it confirms the antecedently and objectively deposited revelation and dictation in Scripture to the subjectivity of our faith.[3]

To be certain, Calvin insists on the dictation (inspiration and guidance) of God the Holy Spirit in the process of receiving and preaching the direct oracles of his Word as well as in the process of studying and writing their verbal tradition.

> Let this be a firm principle: No other word is to be held as the Word of God, and given place as such in the church, than what is contained first in the Law and the Prophets, then in the writings of the apostles... They were to expound the ancient Scripture and to show that what is taught there has been fulfilled in Christ. Yet they were not to do this except from the Lord, that is, with Christ's Spirit as precursor in a certain measure dictating the words. For by this condition Christ limited their embassy when he ordered them to go and teach not what they had thoughtlessly fabricated, but all that he had commanded them... And because, on account of their ignorance, they could not grasp what they had heard and learned from the Master's lips, the Spirit

[1] *Calvin and Augustine*, pp. 70ff.

[2] R. Seeberg, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, 2d ed. Vol. IV.2, A. Deicherishe Verlagsbuchhandlung Werner Scholl, 1920, 566ff. O. Ritschl, *Dogmengeschichte des Protestantismus*, Vol. III, Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1926, pp. 63ff. A. M. Hunter, *The Teaching of Calvin*, Maclehose and Jackson, Glasgow, 1920, pp. 68ff. H. J. Forstman, *Word and Spirit*, Stanford Univ. Press, California, 1962, pp. 57ff. J. Murray, *Calvin on Scripture and Divine Sovereignty*, Evangelical Press, Welwyn, 1979, pp. 28ff. B. A. Gerrish, *The Old Protestantism and the New: Essays on the Reformation Heritage,* Chicago Univ. Press, Chicago, 1982, pp. 63-4.

[3] B. B. Warfield, op. cit., pp. 80-9.

> of truth is promised to them, to guide them into a true understanding of all things... For that restriction must be carefully noted in which he assigned to the Holy Spirit the task of bringing to mind all that he has previously taught by mouth (John 14:26).[4]

There is, however, no detailed discussion of the precise mode of the divine operation in giving the Scriptures. "The term 'dictation' was no doubt in current use at the time to express rather the effects than the mode of inspiration."[5] Both the rejection and recognition of the involvement of human elements in the divine inspiration and dictation are apparent.[6] The chief concern is to defend both the divine authorship of the original words of Scripture and their infallibility and their faithfulness to the divine Word.[7] Calvin as a humanistic scholar, however, admits errors in the current words of Scripture such as scribal errors,[8] but he stresses their unimportance for the original doctrinal principles and subjects in Scripture.[9] These principles and subjects are infallible and indispensable for the foundation of true religion.[10] "Here we find Calvin the theologian and Calvin the humanist scholar side by side, co-operating, but unreconciled in principle."[11]

Calvin often talks about the revelation of God's Word and Scripture in a

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[4] Inst. IV.viii.8. cf. I.viii.7, 8 and 11.

[5] B. B. Warfield, op. cit., pp. 64.

[6] Calvin considers the writers of Scripture as notaries (Inst. I.viii.9), and rejects human elements in their writings by stressing the absolute dictation and inspiration of God in their writing process (Inst. IV.viii.6. cf. Com. Gen. 17:4 and Jer. 36:4-6. II Tim. iii: 16). His recognition of their active involvement (e.g. of their emotional and intellectual states) is apparent in the recognition of their different styles (Inst. I.viii.1, 2 and 11).

[7] Inst. I.vi.3. cf. I.viii.1, 9, 11 and 12.

[8] Com. Matt. 27:9, Acts 7:14-6, and Heb. 11:21.

[9] "But our hearts are more firmly grounded when we reflect that we are captivated with admiration for Scripture more by grandeur of subjects than by grace of language." Inst. I.viii.1. "But what about Moses? Proclaiming that he and his brother Aaron are nothing but only following what God has laid down (Ex. 16:7), he sufficiently wipes away every mark of reproach... God allows his servant so to be tested by many severe proofs that the wicked may now have no success in clamoring against him... And the outcome plainly bears out that in this way his doctrine was sanctioned for all time." Inst. I.viii.6.

[10] "Now, in order that true religion may shine upon us, we ought to hold that it must take its beginning from heavenly doctrine and no one can get even the slightest taste of right and sound doctrine unless he be a pupil of Scripture." Inst. I.vi.2.

[11] E. A. Dowey, op. cit., p. 103.

indiscriminate manner.[12] J. Forstman's view that Calvin accepts the static traditional notion of divine dictation and revelation in Scripture[13] is untenable, however. This is not only because theological environment or tradition does not always and necessarily determine one's actual theological ideas, but also because Calvin does not actually endorse a static notion of divine revelation and dictation. As O. Weber suggests, the new development in Calvin's doctrine of Scripture is to argue for its basis in our new encounter with the revelation of God's Word in Scripture by the Holy Spirit.

> The doctrine of the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit in both its detailed form and in the central position which Calvin ascribed to it is the only really new development which Reformation theology produced in regard to the establishment of the authority of Scripture. For his explication, Calvin does not appeal to the Church Fathers (contrary to his general custom). The doctrine of the testimony of the Spirit makes clear that the Reformation doctrine of Scripture has its ultimate roots in a new encounter with the Scriptures, with God in the Scriptures. From a certain point of view, David Friedrich Strauss is certainly right when he terms the doctrine of the testimony of the Holy Spirit the "Achilles' heel of the Protestant system."[14]

The serious problem with those who advocate that Calvin maintained a static traditional notion of the divine revelation and dictation is this. They[15] presuppose that Calvin accepted the static and inherent giveness of the divinity of God's Word in the human words of Scripture. None of them naturally suggests that Calvin identifies the living and spiritual ontology of Christ (the revelation of

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[12] Inst. I.vii.1, 2 and 10. cf. III.viii.12. IV.viii.9.

[13] "Recognition of this [the Reformers lived in a time when the dictation theory of inspiration went unchallenged in principle], one should expect from Calvin adherence to the dictation theory, especially when one considers that he did not explicitly develop a theory to the contrary." Op. cit., p. 50. The bracket is mine.

[14] *Foundations of Dogmatics*, Vol. I, trans D. L. Guder, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1981, pp. 242-3. "The Reformers arrived at the principle of *sola scriptura* (Scripture alone) from a completely different perspective than that of the theologians of the late Middle Ages, not from the point of view of formal authority, but rather of Scripture's contents.... Based upon its contents... for Luther it is based upon the concept of law and Gospel, for Calvin upon the aspect of threats and promises." Ibid. p. 231. cf. F. Wendel, *Calvin*, p. 359.

[15] "There is the sustained insistence on Calvin's part upon the intrinsic character of Scripture and of the evidence which Scripture contains of its intrinsic divinity." J. Murray, *Calvin on Scripture and Divine Sovereignty*, p. 49. "This divinity inheres in the Scripture and it therefore exhibits the plainest evidence that it is God's Word." p. 50. cf. p. 40.

God's Word itself)[16] with Scripture. Rather, they argue for Calvin's assertion of the self-authentication, credibility and authority of Scripture as the revelation and dictation of God's Word. Their argument, however, directly contradicts Calvin's persistent renunciation of the inherence of God's spiritual and eternal divinity in created things[17] (including Scripture).

i.2. Scripture as a Witness of God's Word

Their opponents (e.g. E. Doumergue[18] and others[19]) appear to be much more faithful to the general character of his theology and his doctrine of Scripture They stress the qualitative distinction between the divine revelation and inspiration, and Scripture itself. Calvin views divine inspiration in terms of the living act of God. It is the heavenly instruction and (majesty and mystery) of God the Spirit. The very being of God is involved in this heavenly instruction. It is qualitatively different from the earthly words (language) of Scripture. Scripture is its written witness.

> Next, if one comes to the New Testament, with what solid props its truth is supported! Three Evangelists recount their history in a humble and lowly style; from many proud folk this simplicity arouses contempt. This is because they do not pay attention to the chief divisions of doctrine from which it would be easy to infer that the Evangelists are discussing heavenly mysteries above human capacity... Although most men are blind to their writings, yet the very heavenly majesty therein holds all men closely attached and as it were bound to itself. But this one fact raises their doctrine more than enough above the world: Matthew, previously tied to the gain of his table, Peter and John going about in their boats—all of them rude, uneducated men—had learned nothing in the school of men that they could pass on to others... Let these dogs deny that the

[16] Inst. I.xiii.7.

[17] Inst. I.v.5. I.x-xii and xiii.1.

[18] *Jean Calvin, les hommes et les choses de son temps*, Vol. IV, G. Bridel, Lausanne, 1910, pp. 76ff.

[19] P. Brunner, *Vom Glauben bei Calvin*, Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tubingen, 1925, pp. 93ff. W. Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, pp. 31ff. T. H. L. Parker, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, pp. 72ff. E. A. Dowey, Op. cit., pp. 104ff. R. S. Wallace, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1953, pp. 8ff. W. Krusche, *Das Wirken des Heiligen Geistes nach Calvin*, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1957, pp. 16-84. J. K. S. Reid, *The Authority of Scripture*, Camelot Press, London, 1957, pp. 41ff and 53ff. J. T. McNeill, "The Significance of the Word of God for Calvin," *Church History*, Vol. XXVIII, 1959, pp. 140-5.

> Holy Spirit came down upon the apostles; or even let them discredit history. Yet the truth cries out openly that these men, who, previously contemptible among common folk, suddenly began to discourse so gloriously of the heavenly mysteries must have been instructed by the Spirit.[20]

The heavenly revelation (being) of God's Word, for Calvin, also qualitatively differs from the earthly words (language) of Scripture. The revelation is God's direct verbal oracle and vision to the patriarchs (e.g. Adam, Noah and Abraham),[21] the prophets and to the apostles.[22] Scripture is the written human words and witness of these oracles and vision of God. The possibility of redemptive knowledge of God in faith relies solely on the revelation of God's Word, but never on written human words of Scripture.[23]

Calvin advocates a dynamic notion of the divine revelation and inspiration as God's living act and speaking, and opposes their materialistic and static fixation in Scripture. His analogical description of Scripture as a mirror and revelation as a thing reveal in it[24] highlights well their ontological distinction and discontinuity. Their relationship, for him, is fundamentally dynamic. It occurs only when God the Spirit reveals and inspires his Word to the subjectivity of faith in and through Scripture. Calvin proposes the dynamic becoming of the human words of Scripture as heavenly doctrine. Their becoming takes place in the subjectivity of faith by the internal witness of the Holy Spirit. Scripture itself does not have its self-authentication (credibility, certainty and authority) as the revelation and inspiration of God's Word. This occurs only in the subjectivity of faith by the internal witness of the Holy Spirit.

> Let this point therefore stand: that those whom the Holy Spirit has inwardly taught truly rest upon Scripture, and that Scripture indeed is self-authenticated; hence, it is not right to subject it to proof and reasoning. And the certainty it

[20] Inst. I.viii.11.

[21] Inst. I.vi.1 and 2.

[22] Inst. IV.viii.8 and 9.

[23] Inst. I.vi.1 and 2. cf. I.viii.13.

[24] Inst. I.viii.7. cf. III.2.6.

deserves with us, it attains by the testimony of the Spirit. For even if it wins reverence for itself by its own majesty, it seriously affects us only when it is sealed upon our hearts through the Spirit. Therefore, illuminated by his power, we believe neither by our own nor by anyone else's judgement that Scripture is from God; but above human judgement we affirm with utter certainty (just as if we were gazing upon the majesty of God himself) that it has flowed to us from the very mouth of God by the ministry of men... Such, then, is a conviction that requires no reason; such, a knowledge with which the best reason agrees—in which the mind truly responses more securely and constantly than in any reason; such, finally, a feeling that can be born only of heavenly revelation.[25]

We ought to remember what I said a bit ago: credibility of doctrine is not established until we are persuaded beyond doubt that God is its Author. Thus, the highest proof of Scripture derives in general from the fact that God in person speaks in it... we ought to seek our conviction in a higher place than human reasons, judgements, or conjectures, that is, in the secret testimony of the Spirit... But if anyone clears God's Sacred Word from man's evil speaking, he will not at once imprint upon their hearts that certainty which piety requires. Since for unbelieving men religion seems to stand by opinion alone, they, in order not to believe anything foolish or lightly, both wish and demand rational proof that Moses and the prophets spoke divinely. But I reply: the testimony of the Spirit is more excellent than all reason. For as God alone is a fit witness of himself in his Word, so also the Word will not find acceptance in men's hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. The same Spirit, therefore, who has spoken through the mouths of the prophets must penetrate into our heart to persuade us that they faithfully proclaimed what had been divinely commanded.[26]

The testimony of the Holy Spirit is not a mere confirmation of the revelation and inspiration of God's Word that is already vested in Scripture. Rather, it is a new and actual proposition of its ontology and epistemology, attested in Scripture. Calvin's decisive reason for the new proposition of the revelation and inspiration of God's Word by the Holy Spirit is this. God's Word in revelation

[25] Inst. I.vii.5. "Before I go any farther, it is worth-while to say something about the authority of Scripture, not only to prepare our hearts to reverence it, but to banish all doubt. When that which it set forth is acknowledged to be the Word of God, there is no one so deplorably insolent—unless devoid also both of common sense and of humanity itself—as to dare impugn the credibility of Him who speaks... Hence the Scriptures obtain full authority among believers only when men regard them as having sprung from heaven, as if there the living words of God were heard." Inst. I.vii.1.

[26] Inst. I.vii.4.

is his living act and speaking. Its ontology and epistemology are newly affirmed in the subjectivity of our faith by the new act and speaking of God the Holy Spirit. Calvin's doctrine of divine dictation and inspiration of Scripture is made *a posteriori* to the internal testimony of his Holy Spirit in the subjectivity of faith. Doumergue[27] regards this *a posteriori* affirmation as the basis for a figurative interpretation of Calvin's discussion of the divine dictation of Scripture, and dismisses his actual claim of divine dictation of the original words of Scripture. He overlooks the fact that Calvin treats the divine dictation of its original words as a different matter and event altogether from its verification now.[28]

i.3. God's Word in Faith as the Dogmatic Possibility

The doctrine of Scripture (in Book I.vi-ix) does not propose *scriptura sola* as the determinative source and criterion of Christian theology. As W. J. Bouwsma comments:

> The Reformation slogan *scriptura sola* was intrinsically naive; and Calvin's claim that Scripture was his "only guide," and acquiescence in its "plain doctrines" as his "constant rule of wisdom," could never have been more than an aspiration... Like other first-generation Protestants, he has acquired in the old church both his spiritual need and his criteria for pure instruction in the faith.[29]

It follows the biblical writers' direct intention to refer their ultimate truth beyond their language to the objective being of God's Word. "It was by developing this view of the relation of language to being that Calvin became the father of modern biblical interpretation."[30] He demonstrates God's Word (in faith) as the noetic and conceptual possibility of the revelation of the action and being of God in Scripture.[31] The basis of his theology in this biblical revelation makes God's

[27] Op. cit., pp. 76-8 and 456-8.

[28] E. A. Dowey, op. cit., p. 103.

[29] *John Calvin*, p. 98.

[30] T. F. Torrance, *God and Rationality*, p. 37.

[31] Inst. I.vi.1-3.

Word in faith indispensable for its possibility. It is decisive for the rejection of mere intellectual knowledge of Scripture as the ultimate source and criterion of his theology.

Having said this, it must be now admitted that Calvin never aims to degrade the importance of Scripture, or of rational argument of its authority and credibility. Rather, he gives a positive evaluation of Scripture and reason[32] by establishing their proper relationship with revelation and faith. He opposes the self-authority and credibility of Scripture and the natural reason of individual man or church. Its validity depends solely on God's verdict on Scripture as his Word in the subjectivity of our faith by the Spirit.[33] The insistence on this dependence is designed to remove the ultimate criterion of God's truth from individual man and church. Its decisive reason is that "God alone is a fit witness of himself in his Word".[34] Calvin apparently shares this reason with Hilary of Poitiers.[35]

The importance of Scripture is assigned by the special providence of God[36] as the only written witness and instrument of the Word of God in revelation.[37] Calvin proposes a cohesion of the supernatural and natural rationality of revelation and Scripture, faith and reason for true knowledge of God. It is vital to stress the subjection of the latter to the former. The possibility of their cohesive convergence rests on God's free act in speaking his Word in the subjectivity of our faith by the Spirit. The remarkable achievement of their cohesive convergence is this; it prevents Calvin from falling either unto scriptural formalism and rational intellectualism, or into irrational and supernatural spiritualism and mysticism.

Their cohesive convergence has a systematic character and purpose. Bouwsma

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[32] C. Partee, *Calvin and Classical Philosophy*, pp. 29-41.

[33] Inst. I.viii.13. cf. I.viii.1.

[34] Inst. I.vii.4.

[35] "Let us then willingly leave to God the knowledge of himself. For, as Hilary says, he is the one fit witness to himself, and is not known except through himself." Inst. I.xiii.21.

[36] Inst. I.vi.2.

[37] Inst. I.ix.3.

is naive to regard Calvin as "a biblical theologian in the humanist mode",[38] because he merely arranges various biblical teachings in faith for an effective pedagogy without their systematic and logical purpose and coherence.[39] The systematic purpose of Calvin's doctrine of Scripture in I.vi-ix is this. It establishes God's Word in faith as the noetic, hermeneutical and conceptual possibility of the revelation of the creative action and being of God the Father in Scripture.[40] Calvin systematises various biblical teachings of the Creator as the triune God the Father in accordance with God's Word in faith. This systematic freedom and autonomy in faith stems from its conceptual basis in the revelation. Arbitrariness is inevitable in this. There is a tendency to disregard the original and historical meaning and intention of Scripture. Its primal concern is, however, not to accommodate logical coherence of preconceived dogmatic principles, as F. Wendel claims,[41] but to demonstrate God's spiritual Word in faith from Scripture for dogmatic formulation.[42]

It is vitally important to stress the total dependence of Calvin's dogmatic freedom and autonomy on the sovereign freedom of God in his revealing and acting Word. This dependence, claim D. W. Hardy and D. F. Ford,[43] not only prevents Calvin from falling into a subjective formalism (which is noticeable

[38] Ibid. p. 160.

[39] "He [Calvin] sought, like other humanists, to develop as effective a pedagogy as possible, and this meant arranging what he had to communicate in the most readily apprehensible and effective manner; the urgency of the crisis of his time required it. Beyond this, the intellectual and cultural resources available to thinkers of the sixteenth century made the production of 'systematic thought' almost inconceivable, a circumstance that students of Calvin thought have not always kept in mind. A systematic Calvin would be an anachronism; there are no 'systematic' thinkers of any significance in the sixteenth century." Op. cit., p. 5. The bracket is mine. "The *Institutes* is not logically ordered; it consists of a series of overlapping topics generally following the order of the Apostles' Creed." Ibid. p. 125. "At any rate, Calvin's tendency to humanize theology shaped much of his discourse. It is apparent in his rejection of systematic theology, in the traditional sense of scientific discourse." Ibid. p. 160.

[40] Inst. I.vi.1-3.

[41] "But sometimes, for the sake of logical coherence or out of attachment to pre-established dogmatic positions, he also did violence to the Biblical text. His principle of Scripture authority then led him to search the Scriptures for illusory support, by means of purely arbitrary interpretations." *Calvin*, p. 359.

[42] Inst. I.vi.1-3.

[43] *Jubilate*, pp. 191-4.

in Schleiermacher's theology), but it also maintains his theological dynamism, actualism and objectivism. It presupposes the dynamic and actual derivation of subjective theological statements from the objectivity of God's Word. T. F. Torrance argues for the similarity of Calvin's theological method with modern scientific method, in that both take the intrinsic intelligibility of an actual object as the determinative factor for its true investigation and knowledge.[44] They sharply differ from medieval and ancient scientific method, which "started off with the abstract questions as to the quiddities and possibilities of things."[45]

i.4. The Systematic Context of God's Word

W. Niesel finds a systematic character in Calvin's doctrine of Scripture, and argues that its systematic purpose is the recognition of God in Jesus Christ.[46] Jesus Christ is the revelation of God's Word itself, and the heart, the soul[47] and the end of Scripture. Niesel's argument is rooted in his Barthian christocentric interpretation of the ontic and noetic reality of God's revelation. It is untenable. Calvin does not discuss God's Word in the context of the revelation (action) of God in the Son Jesus Christ; its systematic purpose is therefore not to recognise God in terms of his revelation (action) in the man Jesus Christ, as Niesel proposes. Calvin discusses the revelation (action) of the Word or Son of God in Jesus Christ in the context of his redemptive act in Book II. This deals with God's exclusive covenantal relationship with the believer. The specific doctrines of Christian faith and life are viewed under the revelation (action) of God in the Holy Spirit in III-IV of the *Institutes.*

> I am not yet speaking of the proper doctrine of faith whereby that had been illumined unto the hope of eternal life. For, that they might pass from death

[44] *Theological Science*, pp. 306ff.

[45] *God and Rationality*, pp. 33-4.

[46] "But what is the end of the Bible study?... since the end, the fulfilling of the law, calling us to the fear of God is Jesus Christ and the theme of the gospel inviting us to trust is also Jesus Christ, the aim of all our attention to the Bible should be the recognition of Jesus Christ." Op. cit., pp. 27.

[47] Ibid. p. 52.

> to life, it was necessary to recognise God not only as Creator but also as Redeemer, for undoubtedly they arrived at both from the Word... My readers therefore should remember that I am not going to discuss that covenant by which God adopted to himself the sons of Abraham, or that part of doctrine which has always separated believers from unbelieving folk, for it was founded in Christ. But here I shall discuss only how we should learn from Scripture that God, the Creator of the universe, can by sure marks be distinguished from all the throng of feigned gods. Then, in due order, that series will lead us to the redemption. Nevertheless, all things will tend to this end, that God, the Artificer of the universe, is made manifest to us in Scripture, and that what we ought to think of him is set forth there, lest we seek some uncertain deity by devious paths.[48]

The systematic context of the doctrine of Scripture in I.vi-ix is the creative action and being of God the Father and his primal and inclusive relationship with all men (the unbeliever and the believer). The doctrine treats God's Word in the context of the revelation of the creative action and being of God the Father in Scripture. It does not suggest God's Word in the man Jesus Christ as the only means and content of God's revelation. Calvin does not identify God's Word with his revelation, as Niesel and Barth do. He proposes God's Word in faith as the noetic, conceptual and hermeneutical possibility of the revelation of the creative action and being of God the Father in Scripture.

> Then we may perceive how necessary was such written proof of the heavenly doctrine, that it should neither perish through forgetfulness nor vanish through error nor be corrupted by the audacity of men. It is therefore clear that God has provided the assistance of the Word for the sake of all those to whom he has been pleased to give useful instruction because he foresaw that his likeness imprinted upon the most beautiful form of the universe would be insufficiently effective. Hence, we must strive onward by this straight path if we seriously aspire to the pure contemplation of God. We must come, I say, to the Word, where God is truly and vividly described to us from his works, while these very

[48] Inst. I.vi.1. "I do not yet touch upon the special covenant by which he distinguished the race of Abraham from the rest of the nations (cf. Gen. 17:4). For, even then in receiving by free adoption as sons those who were enemies, he showed himself to be their Redeemer. We, however, are still concerned with that knowledge which stops at the creation of the world, and does not mount up to Christ the Mediator... at present let it be enough to grasp how God, the Maker of heaven and earth, governs the universe founded by him. Indeed, both his fatherly goodness and his beneficently inclined will are repeatedly extolled; and examples of his severity are given, which show him to be the righteous avenger of evil deeds, especially where his forbearance toward the obstinate is of no effect." Inst. I.x.1.

> works are appraised not by our depraved judgment but by the rule of eternal truth. If we turn aside from the Word, as I have just now said, though we may strive with strenuous haste, yet, since we have got off the track, we shall never reach the goal.[49]

The allocation of the specific treatment of the doctrine of faith to Book III does not nullify its systematic link with the doctrine of Scripture. Faith by the Holy Spirit is indispensable for the true authority of Scripture as the Word of the creator-God the Father from his self-revelation in there.

> There are other reasons, neither few nor weak, for which the dignity and majesty of Scripture are not only affirmed in godly hearts, but brilliantly vindicated against the wiles of its disparagers; yet of themselves these are not strong enough to provide a firm faith, until our heavenly Father, revealing his majesty there, lifts reverence for Scripture beyond the realm of controversy. Therefore Scripture will ultimately suffice for a saving knowledge of God only when when its certainty is founded upon the inward persuasion of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, these human testimonies which exist to confirm it will not be vain if, as secondary aids to our feebleness, they follow that chief and highest testimony. But those who wish to prove to unbelievers that Scripture is the Word of God are acting foolishly, for only by faith can this be known.[50]

This is crucial for a systematic link between the Word or Son and the creator-God the Father in the Holy Spirit. This link enables Calvin's trinitarian interpretation and conceptualisation of the Creator as the triune God the Father of the Word or Son and the Holy Spirit from his revelation in Scripture. Calvin does not advocate this trinitarian concept in terms of the ontological unity of the Word in Jesus Christ with the creator-God the Father and the Holy Spirit. Rather, he claims it in terms of the ontological unity of the creator-God the Father with the

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[49] Inst. I.vi.3. "For even though the use of the law was manifold, as will be seen more clearly in its place, it was especially committed to Moses and all the prophets to teach the way of reconciliation between God and men, whence also Paul calls "Christ the end of the law" (Rom. 10:4). Yet I repeat once more; beside the specific doctrine of faith and repentance that sets forth Christ as Mediator, Scripture adorns with unmistakable marks and tokens the one true God, in that he has created and governs the universe, in order that he may not be mixed up with the throng of false gods. Therefore, however fitting it may be for man seriously to turn his eyes to contemplate God's works, since he has been placed in this most glorious theater to be a spectator of them, it is fitting that he prick up his ears to the Word, the better to profit." Inst. I.vi.2.

[50] Inst. I.viii.13. cf. I.viii.1.

Word in the Spirit. This is the basis for the practical benefits for the believer's obedient and worshiping faith in him. True knowledge of God in faith from Scripture entails actual exercise of obedient and worshiping faith.[51]

i.5. The Revelation of the Creator in Scripture and in Creation

Calvin insists on the one revelation of the creator-God in Scripture and in creation, and on different kinds of knowledge of him from the different ways. We can gain a more direct and certain knowledge of the creator-God from his revelation in Scripture than from creation.[52] E. A. Dowey's interpretation of the quality of this revelation, respectively, as special (redemptive or trinitarian) and as general (unredemptive or untrinitarian) is seriously misleading. Calvin never explicitly admits such kinds, which imply the existence of two qualitatively different revelations of God. Rather, he advocates two (general and special, unredemptive and redemptive or trinitarian and untrinitarian) qualitatively different forms of knowability and knowledge of the one revelation of God the Father from the perspective of faith. The Fall, for him, never nullifies the triune and redemptive nature of this revelation in creation.[53] Dowey violates Calvin's categorical distinction between God's sovereign revelation and man's different kinds of knowledge of it; he argues for these two qualities of God's revelation from two forms of knowledge—general and special or unredemptive and redemptive or trinitarian and untrinitarian.[54]

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[51] "Therefore, however fitting it may be for man seriously to turn his eyes to contemplate God's works, since he has been placed in this most glorious theatre to be a spectator of them, it is fitting that he prick up his ears to the Word, the better to profit. Now, in order that true religion may shine upon us, we ought to hold that it must take its beginning from heavenly doctrine and that no one can get even the slightest taste of right and sound doctrine unless he be a pupil of Scripture... But not only faith, perfect and in every way complete, but also right knowledge of God is born of obedience." Inst. I.vi.2.

[52] Inst. I.x.1.

[53] See this Chapter 1.ii.

[54] "Every single Scripture reference that Calvin uses in developing the theme 'The Knowledge of God Conspicuous in the Formation and Continual Government of the Word" (I.v.1-13) could be dropped out without in any way affecting the argument. Scripture, mostly from Psalms and the Acts, is not appealed to as the ground of the argument, but to show that what is written stands in confirmation of what all men should know of the revelation in creation by their own experience. In every relevant instance Calvin first cites the revelation in creation, then introduces the Scripture

The core intention of Dowey's argument is to stress a systematic disconnection between God's revelation in Scripture and in creation. To be sure, Calvin expresses his desire to treat the revelation and knowledge of the creator-God in Scripture in a proper place (in Book I.vi-xviii).[55] This cannot, however, be interpreted as evidence of their theological and systematic disconnection, as Dowey suggests. He fails to recognise the implication of Calvin's sole commitment to the perspective of faith. The perspective of faith is the basis of the unity of Calvin's treatment of God's revelation in Scripture and in creation, and its knowability and knowledge. Calvin here focuses on illustrating the one true God as Creator from his revelation in creation and in Scripture. The perspective of faith confines the conceptual and dogmatic source and criterion of the true Creator solely to the revelation and knowledge of the triune God the Father. The two kinds of knowledge of God from his revelation in Scripture and from creation are therefore not contradictory, but complementary.

> That brightness which is borne in upon the eyes of all men both in heaven and on earth... Despite this, it is needful that another and better help be added to direct us aright to the very Creator of the universe... Just as old or bleary-eyed men and those with weak vision, if you thrust before them a most beautiful volume, even if they recognize it to be some sort of writing, yet can scarcely construe two words, but with the aid of spectacles will begin to read distinctly; so Scripture, gathering up the otherwise confused knowledge of God in our mind, having dispersed our dullness, clearly shows us the true God... besides these common proofs he also put forth his Word, which is a more direct and more certain mark whereby he is to be recognized.[56]

The different knowledge of revelation from these different ways has the same

reference with *'therefore*, the prophet exclaims' or *for this reason'* Paul or David says so and so. The emphasis is thrown on experience. At this point in the *Institutes* no mention has yet been made of the 'spectacles' of Scripture, nor have we come to the knowledge of creation by the man who has faith. In the *Institutes* (I.v.) Calvin purposely omits the special Biblical revelation of creation and speaks exclusively of such knowledge as comes from the general revelation... This clear-remaining general revelation is a norm for both Christian and pagan. What we are now about to point to is the philosophical and rational quality of the process by which man derives the content of the objective revelation from his existence of the world." Op. cit., p. 74.

[55] Inst. I.v.6.

[56] Inst. I.vi.1.

ultimate purpose.[57] It is designed for the instruction of the believer and for the benefit of obedient and worshiping faith in the triune God the Father[58] as the Creator and Lord of all good things.

Conclusion

Calvin's qualitative distinction between Scripture and the revelation (and dictation and inspiration) of God's Word is indisputable. He insists on the fact that the former actually becomes the latter in the subjectivity of faith by the Holy Spirit. This is because God alone is the fit witness of his own Word. This insistence is decisive for a dynamic notion of divine revelation, inspiration and dictation, and for their dynamic relationship with Scripture. The doctrine of Scripture in Book I.vi-xviii does not endorse *scriptura sola* in itself as the determinative source of his theology. It is designed to establish the Holy Spirit's internal witness of God's Word in faith as the noetic, conceptual and hermeneutical criterion and possibility of the revelation of the creative action and being of God the Father in Scripture.

The doctrine proposes a positive freedom and autonomy in faith to systematise various biblical teachings of the action (revelation) of the creator-God under the action (revelation) of the triune God the Father. There is no intention to undermine the importance of Scripture and reason for theological formation. Calvin establishes their proper relationship with the revelation and faith, and insists on the subjection of Scripture and reason to revelation and faith, respectively. The importance of Scripture is stressed by regarding it as the only material and witness of God's Word for dogmatic statements.

The systematic context of the doctrine is the revelation of the creative action

[57] "Indeed, the knowledge of God set forth for us in Scripture is destined for the very same goal as knowledge whose imprint shines in his creatures, in that it invites us first to fear God, then to trust in him. By this we can learn to worship him both with perfect innocence of life and with unfeigned obedience, then to depend wholly upon his goodness." Inst. I.x.2.

[58] Inst. I.x.1.

and being of God the Father in Scripture. The doctrine discusses the Holy Spirit's internal witness of God's Word in faith in order to assert the trinitarian nature of the creator-God as the Father from his self-revelation in Scripture. God's Word in faith is the the noetic, conceptual and hermeneutical criterion and possibility of this revelation. The doctrine does not suggest the Word in Jesus Christ as the only revelation of the triune God. The creator-God the Father reveals himself in and through Scripture and creation. His revelation in Scripture is identified with the revelation in creation from the perspective of faith.

Calvin recognises that these different ways of the revelation of the creator-God provide different forms of knowledge. The scriptural revelation provides a more direct and certain knowledge than the revelation in creation does. Even if different, however, these forms of knowledge nevertheless have the same ultimate purpose. They are designed for the instruction of the believer and for the practical benefits which arise from faith in the creator-God the Father. There is, therefore, a systematic link and continuity between God's revelation in Scripture and in creation. They are complementary. The treatment of the ways of God's revelation both in Scripture and creation are fundamentally Christian and biblical rather than atheistic and philosophical.

2.ii. The Trinity

Introduction

Calvin deploys the doctrine of the Trinity as a means of unraveling the triune nature of the creator-God from his revelation in Scripture. My exposition demonstrates the basis of the doctrine in revelation, the systematic context of the doctrine, and their effects. There is an assessment of Calvin's view of the threeness and the oneness of God, and their unity and relationship. It focuses on examining his treatment of the personal quality of each member of the Trinity and their unity and relationship, as well as the determinative factors of this treatment. Their personal qualities are considered in terms of their conscious subjects, beings and persons. These seem to be essential not only to elude impersonal and modalistic expression of the one essence of God and his Trinity, and their unity and relationship, but also to defend their distinctive qualities. The extensive justification of the co-existence of the two (temporal and eternal) personal subjects and beings of God is avoided, as beyond the scope of this thesis.

ii.1. Faith as the Conceptual Possibility of the Triune God.

Calvin's view of the triune nature of God stays within the boundaries of traditional views. The concepts of person (or subsistence) and essence are used respectively to express the particular qualities of the Trinity and its unity. The chief reason for their use is this: They are faithful to Scripture, and are useful for rejecting the contemporary revival of the anti-Trinitarianism of Arius and Sabellius (i.e. by Servetus).[1] The rejection of false Trinitarianism is not the aim of Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity, as L. Hodgson suggests.[2] Its goal is to unravel the triune nature of the Creator in terms of the triune God the Father. Hodgson

[1] Inst. I.xiii.4, 5 and 22.

[2] "Calvin ends his chapter on the Trinity... by saying that he himself has only aimed at refuting live errors, not at discussing every conceivable question that might be raised in connection with the doctrine." *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, Nisbet, London, 1943, p. 165.

overlooks this, because his exposition of the doctrine[3] is unsystematic. He ignores not only its systematic link with the rest of *Institutes*, but also the serious impact of its systematic goal[4] on its views of the qualities of the Trinity, their unity and their relationship.

The *principium cognoscendi* of the doctrine relies neither, as K. Barth claims,[5] on formal principles or literal meanings of Scripture[6] nor on the traditional formula. Rather, it depends on the revelation of the triune nature of the creator-God the Father to which the Bible attests. This biblical revelation is source of the doctrine. Calvin advocates God's Word (in faith by the Holy Spirit) as the only noetic, conceptual and hermeneutical possibility of the revelation.

> But now truth which has been peaceably shown must be maintained against all the calumnies of the wicked. And yet I will exert especial effort to the end that they who lend ready and open ears to God's Word may have a form standing ground. Here, indeed, if anywhere in the secret mysteries of Scripture, we ought to play the philosopher soberly and with great moderation; let us use great caution that neither our thoughts nor our speech go beyond the limits to which the Word of God itself extends... For, as Hilary says, he is the one fit witness to himself, and is not known except through himself.[7]

His doctrine of the Trinity does not discuss the Word of God in the context of his revelation or incarnation in the man Jesus Christ, as W. Niesel claims.[8] Instead, the context is the personal Word of the creator-God the Father in Scripture. The subject of inquiry of the doctrine is the revelation of the triune nature of the

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[3] Ibid. pp. 165-75.

[4] This impact will be spelled out greater detail later.

[5] CD I, 1. p. 300.

[6] Inst. I.xiii.3.

[7] Inst. I.xiii.21.

[8] "The purpose of Calvin's Trinitarianism is to secure the Biblical message "God is revealed in the flesh" against false interpretations... This Biblical proof of the strict Godhead of the Son occupies much space in the positive exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity in the *Institutes*... The message of Holy Scripture is radically different from other religious testimonies, and a truly joyful message, because it proclaims that God Himself has entered wholly into the sphere of our death-doomed life in order to approach us more nearly and to bestow Himself upon us. Whoever does not pay regard to this... he is not preaching the incarnate God but emptying the gospel of its specific content." Op. cit., pp. 57-8.

creator-God the Father in Scripture.

> Indeed, because Christ had not yet been manifested, it is necessary to understand the Word as begotten of the Father before time (cf. Ecclus. 24:14, Vg.)... And Moses clearly teaches this in the creation of the universe, setting forth this Word as intermediary... For here we see the Word understood as the order or mandate of the Son, who is himself the eternal and essential Word of the Father... Therefore we conclude that God has so spoken that the Word might have his share in the work and that in this way the work might be common to both. But John spoke more clearly of all when he declared that that Word, God from the beginning with God, was at the same time the cause of all things, together with God the Father (John 1:1-3). For John at once attributes to the Word a solid and abiding essence, and ascribes something uniquely His own, and clearly shows how God, by speaking, was Creator of the universe.[9]

The living Word of God in faith by the Holy Spirit functions to define the one true creator-God as the Father of the Word or Son and the Holy Spirit from this revelation. Calvin's doctrine of Scripture is designed to hammer out this very point. The systematic purpose of his doctrine of the Trinity is not to demonstrate the triune nature of the redeemer-God in the man Jesus Christ, but the creator-God the Father in his Word. Calvin does not view the triune nature of God from the relationship and unity of the Word with the Father and the Spirit, as D. Willis suggests,[10] but from those of the creator-God the Father with the Word in the Spirit. The divinity of the Word or Son and the Holy Spirit is apparently argued from their common essence with the creator-God the Father.[11]

Calvin establishes the ultimate objectivity of the Word (Son in Jesus Christ) in the eternal being of God. T. F. Torrance regards this as "the epistemological import of the *homoousion*" of the Word with God himself. "The Word is in fact God himself speaking to us personally, for he personally resides in his Word even when he communicates it to us."[12] Calvin here had "returned very decidedly to the teaching of Athanasius and Hilary, and departed from the Origenist and Au-

[9] Inst. I.xiii.7. cf. I.xiii.9 and 23.

[10] *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, pp. 104ff.

[11] Inst. I.xiii.12-5.

[12] *Theology in Reconstruction*, p. 88. cf. pp. 83ff.

gustinian notion of the *Logos*." Origen and Augustine treat the Word essentially as an agency of God rather than as God himself.[13] The assertion of the divine nature of the Word or Son leads Calvin to insist that all revelations of God must be understood as the words of God in the Word or Son.

> Yet before I proceed farther, I must demonstrate the deity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... Certainly, when God's word is set before us in Scripture it would be the height of absurdity to image a merely fleeting and vanishing utterance, which, cast forth into air, projects itself outside of God; and that both the oracles announced to the patriarchs and all prophecies were of this sort. Rather, "Word" means the everlasting Wisdom, residing with God, from which both all oracles and all prophecies go forth. For, as Peter testifies, the ancient prophets spoke by the Spirit of Christ just as much as the apostles did (I. Peter 1:10; cf. II Peter 1:21), and all who thereafter ministered the heavenly doctrine... But if that Spirit, whose organs were the prophets, was the Spirit of the Word, we infer without any doubt that he was truly God... Therefore, inasmuch as all divinely uttered revelations are correctly designated by the term "word of God," so this substantial Word is properly placed at the highest level, as the wellspring of all oracles. Unchangeable, the Word abides everlasting one and the same with God, and is God himself.[14]

The doctrine of the Trinity (in Book I.xiii) does not suggest the second person of the Trinity, the Word or Son as the only revelation of God, as the Barthian interpretors (e.g. T. H. L. Parker,[15] E. D. Willis[16]) claim. They overlook that Calvin does not claim the origin of all revelations or words of God in the context

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[13] Ibid.

[14] Inst. I.xiii.7. cf. I.xiii.9 and 23.

[15] " Properly speaking, there is but one revelation of God, that is, the Word of God: "as all revelations that come from God are rightly called 'the Word of God,' so the substantial Word of God ought to be placed in the highest rank as the fountain of all oracles, He who is liable to no variation, who remains with God perpetually one and the same, and who is God Himself". There is, however, more than one form of the one revelation; and it is to these forms of revelation that we now turn. The first is the *opera Dei*, in which Calvin comprehends all the creative and providential activity of God." Op. cit, pp. 36-7. Parker fails to grasp the theological context of Calvin's original Latin text, "*ut omnes divinitus profectae revelations verbi Dei titulo rite insigniuntur, ita verbum illud substantiale summo gradu locare convenit, oraculorum omnium scaturiginem, quod nulli varietati obnoxium, perpetuo unum idemque manet aqud Deum, et Deus ipse est.*" *Corpus Reformatorum*, Vol. xxx, Schwetschke, Brunsvigae, 1864, p. 95. He follows Henry Beveridge's interpretation of the word, *verbi*, as the second person of the Trinity, the Word or Son himself (W. B. Eerdmans, 1893, Grand Rapids, p. 116). Calvin, however, uses it to denote the revelation or word of God in the Word or Son, as F. L. Battles rightly translates in my quotation.

[16] Op. cit., p. 104.

of the distinctive work and being of the second person of the Trinity, the Word or Son. Instead, the context is the divine essence and unity of the Word or Son with the creator-God the Father in the Holy Spirit. It is therefore wrong to suggest the second person of the Trinity, the Word or Son alone as the origin and thus as the only ontological reality of all revelations and words of God. Calvin also assigns all words and revelations of God to his people as the distinctive work of the Holy Spirit. This assignment is made in the context of his divine essence rather than his distinctive work as the third person of the Trinity.[17] There is a clear and persistent recognition of the communication or word of the divine will to us from the revelation of the creator-God the Father in creation.[18]

Calvin's notion of revelation is fundamentally trinitarian. He advocates the particular self-communication and revelation of God in each person of the Trinity. The one true God in the Father, in the Son or Word and in the Holy Spirit reveals himself as Creator in creation, as Redeemer in the redemptive work of the man Jesus Christ, and as Sanctifier in sanctification. The acting subject of God is given to each distinctive person of the Trinity rather than to their single essence and unity. This is because he views the one true God as the Trinity from their revelations to us and for us in and through their distinctive works. The one essence of the Trinity is the absolute reality of God *in se*, and is transcendent and incomprehensible to our cognition.[19] The ontology is based on the epistemology of the triune God. For Calvin, the doctrine of revelation determines the precise nature of the doctrine of the Trinity.

The basis of his doctrine of the Trinity in revelation determines God's Word

[17] "Indeed, Peter, rebuking Ananias for lying to the Holy Spirit, says that he has lied not to men but to God (Acts 5:3-4). And where Isaiah introduces the Lord of Hosts speaking, Paul teaches that it is the Holy Spirit who speaks (Isa. 6:9; Acts 28:25-26). Indeed, where the prophets usually say that the words they utter are those of the Lord of Hosts, Christ and the apostles refer them to the Holy Spirit (cf. II Peter 1:21). It therefore follows that he who is pre-eminently the author of prophecies is truly Jehovah." Inst. I.xiii.15.

[18] Inst. I.iii.1. cf. v.9.

[19] Inst. I.xiii.1.

in faith of the believer as indispensable for its possibility. The doctrine is an interpretation of the object of faith,[20] the objective and dynamic revelation of the trinitarian reality of God in his biblical Word. B. B. Warfield claims that the doctrine comes out of the most profound soteriological experience of the redeeming Christ and the sanctifying Spirit in faith (piety) which occurs by the gracious gift of God the Father.[21] It is a revolt against the formalistic and intellectualistic treatment of the doctrine in Scholasticism.[22] The basis of Calvin's doctrine in revelation brings about its dynamic character as well as individual freedom and autonomy in faith for the formulation of the doctrine. The truthfulness of the doctrine rests not on the collective decision of the church, but on the individual's faithful, free and autonomous response to the revelation of the triune nature of God in Scripture.[23] A problem of arbitrariness is inevitable in such individual dogmatic freedom and autonomy, for it disregards the literal meaning and the original intention of Scripture for the sake of its dogmatic truth in God's Word from faith. Calvin seeks a direct proof for soteriological experience of God's triune relationship in faith from Scripture through his doctrine of the Trinity, although Scripture is not explicit on this matter.[24]

K. Barth is mistaken in attributing Calvin's doctrine to natural reason rather than faith. This argument arises his supposition that Calvin treats the doctrine

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[20] Calvin demonstrates the Trinity in the one God as the object of faith and baptism (Inst. I.xiii.16).

[21] "What wondrous and great thing is this, I ask, that the name of the Son alone is announced to us, when God bade us glory in the knowledge of him alone?... By this [pray for the same benefits from the Son as from the Father] we are taught not only that by the Son's intercession do those things which the Heavenly Father bestows come to us but that by mutual participation in power the Son himself is the author of them. This practical knowledge is doubtless more certain and firmer than any idle speculation. There, indeed, does the pious mind perceive the very presence of God, and almost touches him, when it feels itself quickened, illumined, preserved, justified, and sanctified." Inst. I.xiii.13.

[22] *Calvin and Augustine*, pp. 195-6.

[23] B. B. Warfield (Ibid. pp. 205ff) and W. Niesel (*The Theology of Calvin*, p. 55) apparently claim that Calvin refused to subscribe to the ancient creeds at Peter Caroli's dictation as the proof of the trinitarian faith. This was not only because the true certainty and verification of the trinitarian faith resides not in public declaration, but in faith in the triune God himself, but also because such a dictation imperils individual freedom and autonomy in the sovereign freedom of the triune God.

[24] B. B. Warfield also makes the same criticism (Op. cit., pp. 213ff).

in conjunction with the general discussion of the being and attributes of God apart from the content of faith,[25] namely the revelation of the trinitarian reality of God in his biblical Word. C. Welch accepts this interpretation without critical examination, and blames Calvin for F. Schleiermacher's relegation of the doctrine of the Trinity to the end of his exposition of faith.[26] Schleiermacher, thinks Welch, treats the doctrine as an appendix and consequently fails to integrate the doctrine with its rest, regarding it as irrelevant to the immediate utterances of the Christian self-consciousness.[27] He supposes that Schleiermacher follows Calvin in this.

Welch's accusation is wholly unjust. Calvin not only postulates his doctrine of the Trinity from the perspective of faith, but he also eliminates dogmatic scepticism as to the triune nature of God. He argues for the objective revelation of the trinitarian reality of God in his biblical Word as the positive and valid ground for subjective knowledge of it in faith and thus his doctrine of the Trinity. The dependence of this subjective knowledge on the objective revelation enables him to elude subjective and objective dualism, and to achieve an epistemological and theological objectivism. He regards the doctrine of the Trinity as the fundamental basis for the Christian faith[28] and theology. The whole structure of the 1559 *Institutes* corresponds to the doctrine's emphasis on the distinctive

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[25] "In putting the doctrine of the Trinity at the head of all dogmatics we are adopting a very isolated position from the standpoint of dogmatic history... The reason for this strange circumstance can be sought only in the fact that with overwhelming unanimity it has obviously been thought that a certain formally very natural and illuminating scheme of questioning should be followed in which one can and should speak first of Holy Scripture... as the *principium cognoscendi* (apart from the actual content of faith), and then that even in the doctrine of God itself one can and should deal first with God's existence, nature and attributes (again apart from the concrete givenness of what Christians call 'God'). Even Melanchthon and Calvin, and after them Protestant orthodoxy in both confessions, followed this pattern in a way that was strangely uncritical, and simply none of the later movements in Roman Catholic and Protestant theology has led to the taking of a different path at this point." CD I, 1. p. 300.

[26] *The Trinity in Contemporary Theology*, SCM Press, London, 1953, pp. 4ff.

[27] *The Christian Faith*, trans. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart, Edinburgh, T and T. Clark, 1928, pp. 739ff.

[28] Calvin considers the doctrine of the Trinity as the very root of the Christian faith (Inst. I.xiii.21).

beings and actions of the Trinity in the one God.[29] The doctrine has the greatest hermeneutical relevance to the structure of the 1559 *Institutes.* Barth and Welch are naive categorising the discussion of the being and work of the creator-God (in Book I.i-xii) prior to the doctrine of the Trinity (in I.xiii) as the general (non-trinitarian and Christian) doctrine of God. Instead, Calvin treats them as the part of the Christian doctrine of the triune God the Father. They are viewed from the perspective of the living faith who loves by faith[30] in him as the source of all good things.[31]

O. Weber interprets the difference between the doctrine of the Trinity and its previous discussion of God's being and work as a matter of clarification.[32] The former clarifies the distinctive being and action of the creator-God the Father by spelling out his relationship with the Son and the Spirit. The latter (i.e. Book I.iii-v) does not consider their mutual relations; it lacks its full systematic integration with the doctrine of the Trinity (i.e. its emphasis on the mutual action and being of the Trinity). Weber, however, stresses neither the trinitarian and Christian orientation of the discussion of the being and attributes of the creator-God in Book I.iii-ix, nor its link with the doctrine of the Trinity. He presupposes a link between Book I.x-xii and the doctrine, and thus the trinitarian and Christian

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[29] Calvin deals with the distinctive being and work of the creator-God in the Father in Book I, of the redeemer-God in the Son Jesus Christ in Book II, and of the sanctifying-God in the Holy Spirit in Book III and IV.

[30] Inst. I.xiii.29.

[31] Inst. I.xiii.18.

[32] "There is an old and widespread tradition according to which we now would be supposed to discuss God's 'being' and 'attributes.' It cannot be said right off that it would be absolutely wrong to proceed in that fashion. The order of the various dogmatic propositions would only be a decisive matter if dogmatics were a system. Nonetheless, there is the question whether or not a certain sequence could not necessarily be bound up with certain previous discussions about their content. And this is definitely the case when the Doctrine of the Being and Attributes of God is treated before the Doctrine of the Trinity. To be sure, in such a case the discussion of the Trinity later clarifies what was always presupposed in the earlier discussion of the Doctrine of God's Being and Attributes. But it is also easily possible that first a 'general' doctrine of God is developed and then in the Doctrine of the Trinity the special Christian doctrine of God is brought out." *Foundations of Dogmatics*, p. 350. "In the *Institutes*, I, x, 2... Calvin gives a brief doctrine of God's Attributes and then discusses the Doctrine of the Trinity in detail in I, xiii". Ibid. n. cf. E. A. Dowey, op. cit., pp. 145ff.

reference of the former. This is because he, like others (e.g. K. Barth, E. Brunner, W. Niesel, T. H. L. Parker, E. A. Dowey, C. Welch), fails to grasp the deeper intention of Book I (including its chapters i-xii) that shows the creator-God as the triune God the Father from faith of the believer for practical benefits.[33]

ii.2. The Trinity as the Three Temporal Persons

A relational concept of the Trinity dominates Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity.[34] Each person of the Trinity is distinguished from, but related to, the other two persons. Calvin designates the distinctive being of God in the Father as the primal founder of all things, in the Word or the Son Jesus Christ as their arranger, and in the Spirit as their final executor. The Son is begotten only from the God the Father, and the Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son.[35] The beginning, mediation and execution of all things are the distinctive works of the one true God in the Father, in the Son and in the Holy Spirit.

Calvin's maintenance of the Western doctrine of the *filioque* for the procession of the Holy Spirit is apparent. There is a clear endorsement of the traditional doctrine of an economic Trinity in the designation of the distinctive beings and works of the Trinity. Calvin is indifferent to the conceptual development of the threefold temporality of the Trinity for its distinctive temporal beings. His attribution of beginning, middle and end of all things to God in the Father, in the Son and in the Holy Spirit shows his openness to this development. It enables us to propose God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as an Initiator, a Mediator and a Executor of all things of God.

The relational understanding of each member of the Trinity no longer presents God as an unmoved and eternal solitary being in and for himself, but one whose

[33] This point is made in Chapter I.1.ii-iii.

[34] Thomas F. Torrance claims that the relational concept of the Trinity "was picked up in the West by Richard of St. Victor in the twelfth century, was remarkably expounded in his *De Trinitate*, and had a theological tradition through Duns Scotus down to Calvin" (*The Ground and Grammar of Theology*, Christian Journals, Belfast, 1980, p. 173.

[35] Inst. I.xiii.18-20.

trinitarian being is moving and relational in and for himself as well as to and for us in history. Its strength is that it evades the ontological and epistemological abstraction of each person of the Trinity from the other two. It succeeds in securing the ground of their unity without undermining their distinctive qualities. Their distinctive qualities are indispensable for their distinctive relations and actions. Calvin stresses their distinctive qualities by rejecting any exchange of their distinctive beings and works. The emphasis on their incommunicability establishes their individuality.[36] Their individuality is crucial for defending their distinction.

It is noticeable that Calvin does not argue for the distinctive qualities of the Trinity merely in terms of the triune action and relation of God *ad extra*. His triune action and relation, for him, is grounded in and derived from his triune being *in se*.[37] The constancy of the mutual relations of the Trinity in their inherent qualities is something that Augustine lacks in his mere rational concept of the Trinity,[38] and consequently he fails to justify the scriptural attestation of their distinctive qualities in their mutual relations. Calvin implies that this is because Augustine explains their mutual relations from the mutual relations of different mental faculties of one individual man,[39] rather than from the mutual relations of the three individual persons (subsistences) of the Trinity.[40]

C. Gunton criticises Calvin's conceptual basis of the distinction of the Trinity

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[36] "Thirdly whatever is proper to each individually, I maintain to be incommunicable because whatever is attributed to the Father as a distinguishing mark cannot agree with, or be transferred to, the Son." I.xiii.6.

[37] "Certainly the Father would not differ from from the Son unless he had in himself something unique, which was not shared with the Son." I.xiii.23.

[38] L. Hodgson believes that "Calvin takes a definite step forward" in defending the distinction of the Trinity from Augustine (*The Doctrine of the Trinity*, p. 168).

[39] *On the Trinity*, Books VIII-XI, trans. Marcus Dods, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1873.

[40] "I really do not know whether it is expedient to borrow comparisons from human affairs to express the force of this distinction. Men of old were indeed accustomed sometimes to do so, but at the same time they confessed that the analogies they advanced were quite inadequate. Thus it is that I shrink from all rashness here: lest if anything should be inopportunely expressed, it may give occasion either of calumny to the malicious, or of delusion to the ignorant. Nevertheless, it is not fitting to suppress the distinction that we observe to be expressed in Scripture." Inst. I.xiii.18.

in their inherent qualities as inappropriate. Calvin argues for their existence prior to the trinitarian relations and acts of God *ad extra*, and thus, as Welch claims,[41] gives rise to a static notion of the triune God.[42] Gunton's criticism is seemingly rooted in his alliance with K. Barth's conceptual confinement of the Trinity to the event of the trinitarian revelation (relations) of God. The Trinity exists only by his trinitarian revelation (actions) *ad extra* rather than his trinitarian qualities (beings) *in se*. This offers a dynamic notion of the triune being of God by viewing it from his continuous trinitarian becoming in its trinitarian relation and act *ad extra*.

Calvin opposes any speculation about the Trinity as a continuous becoming and action of the one being of God. For their existence and distinctive qualities already and eternally subsist in the one God.[43] The assertion of their inherent existence in the one God is tenable on epistemological as well as ontological grounds. The mutual relation and action and distinction of the Trinity *ad extra* ontologically presupposes their inherent distinctive qualities in God. Calvin does not assert the epistemological and conceptual possibility of their inherent qualities from their existence in and for God himself. Rather, he argues it from their

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[41] Op. cit., p. 191. Welch's claim relies on Barth's assertion of Calvin's impersonal and neutral notion of God's being from its expression as *essentia divina* (CD I, 1. pp. 350-1).

[42] "It does seem that Calvin here commits the characteristic sin of Western trinitarianism, of seeing the persons not as constituting the being of God by their mutual relations but as in some way inhering in being that is some sense prior to them. That is certainly the interpretation of Claude Welch... In general, however, the best way to define the person is ostensively, by indicating whether persons are to be found and the way that they are conceived to be and act. That is what has been attempted in different ways in this book." *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1991, p. 170. "Chaude Welch has argued that Barth fails to emphasize strongly enough a real difference between his thought and the old theology... Perhaps it would not be reading too much into Welch's words to suggest that it is the shift from static to dynamic terms, from a substance to an event-conceptuality that has made the chief difference... Jungel is more aware of what has happened. According to his understanding, Barth's understanding of revelation has made possible a radically different conception of God's independent reality (*Selbstandigkeit*), in which God is seen as *essentially* relational being; in which the being of God *for us* is not something foreign to God's essence but is grounded in his very being... This 'being in becoming' makes it impossible to conceive God in the old substantial categories." *Becoming and Being*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1978, pp. 142-3.

[43] "For what is the point in disputing whether the Father always begets? Indeed, it is foolish to imagine a continuous act of begetting, since it clear that three persons have subsisted in God from eternity." Inst. I.xiii.29.

living and dynamic revelation in their relation and action to and for us. Their epistemological actuality in faith (piety), for him, precedes their conceptual possibility.

> Therefore, let those who dearly love soberness, and who will be content with the measure of faith, receive in brief form what is useful to know: namely, that, when we profess to believe in one God, under the name of God is understood a single, simple essence, in which we comprehend three persons, or hypostases Therefore, whenever the name of God is mentioned without particularization, there are designated no less the Son and the Spirit than the Father; but where the Son is joined to the Father, then the relation of the two enters in; and so we distinguish among the persons. But because the peculiar qualities in the persons carry an order within them, e.g., in the Father is the beginning and the source, so often as mention is made of the Father and the Son together, or the Spirit, the name of God is peculiarly applied to the Father.[44]

The achievement of their conceptual basis in their revelation is quite remarkable It succeeds not only in avoiding an abstract and static notion, but also in confining their epistemological and conceptual possibility to the mutual relations and acts of the Trinity *ad extra* in the Word Jesus Christ.

Calvin does not affirm the inherent qualities of the Trinity merely to mark out their distinction, as Barth[45] and Welch[46] argue. One could invalidate their argument in the light of Calvin's explicit claim that the executive capacity lies in their inherent qualities for their action, relation and distinction. This capacity is bound to require dialogue between them, which in turn requires that they are personal conscious subjects and beings. To be certain, Calvin does not express their distinctive qualities in terms of three self-conscious subjects and beings. His consideration of them is confined to the traditional expression of their qualities. They are defined as the three temporal persons or subsistences rather than the subjects and beings in the one eternal being (essence) of God.

Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity fails to accommodate the biblical attestation

[44] Inst. I.xiii.20. cf. I.xiii.13.

[45] CD I, i. p. 361.

[46] Op. cit., p. 301.

of the unique personal consciousness, will, subject and being of the historical man Jesus Christ. It attends mainly to the ontological unity of the pre-existence of this man, the eternal Son or Word (and the Spirit) with God the the Father for their divinity.[47] This is because its systematic intention is to discuss the triune nature of the creator-God the Father from his relationship with the revelation of his Word rather than its incarnation in the man Jesus Christ. Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity lacks a full integration with Christology; it does not take seriously the unique anthropology of the man Jesus Christ.

It is, however, seriously mistaken to suppose that Calvin does not provide support for the personal subjects and beings of the Trinity. His interpretation of person as subsistence is not intended to dismiss the personal nature of the members of the Trinity. Rather, it attempts to reject any explanation of the Trinity in terms of three separate human persons. Calvin affirms the subsistence of the three individual persons of the Trinity in the one essence of God[48] in order to eliminate a division that suggests tritheism.[49] Throughout his doctrine of the Trinity there is no abandonment of the concept of person for particular qualities of the Trinity. L. Hodgson is right in saying that "persona, subsistentia, $\pi\rho o\theta\omega\pi o\nu$ and sometimes substantia, he says, have all been used as synonyms to describe the distinct Persons in the Trinity."[50]

Calvin apparently argues for the personhood of the members of the Trinity from the personhood of the man Jesus Christ,[51] although he does not explore their

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[47] Inst. I.xiii.7-15.

[48] "But laying aside disputation over terms, I shall proceed to speak of the thing itself: 'Person,' therefore, I call a "subsistence" in God's essence... When immediately after he adds that the Word was also God himself, he recalls us to the essence as a unity. But because he could not be with God without residing in the Father, hence emerges the idea of a subsistence, which, even though it has been joined with the essence by a common bond and cannot be separated from it, yet has a special mark whereby it is distinguished from it." Inst. I.xiii.6.

[49] Inst. I.xiii.17.

[50] Op. cit., p. 167.

[51] "Moreover, because God more clearly disclosed himself in the coming of Christ, thus he also became known more familiarly in three persons." Inst. I.xiii.16.

personhood in the light of the conscious will, subject and being of this historical man. The precise nature of their personhood for him is, however, individual and relational. Their individual, relational and personal nature surely offers an adequate ground for proposing their individual conscious persons, subjects and beings. Calvin apparently rejects a modalistic treatment that would regard them merely as the different modes (manifestations) and actions of the one being (essence) of God.[52] This denies the distinctive personhood of the members of the Trinity in the one God *in se*, and the traditional doctrine of the immanent (essential) Trinity.

ii.3. The One Essence of God as his One Living Life

We are now facing the serious question of the conceptual possibility of the one God as three individual persons. Answering it involves determining the precise nature and character of God's oneness that is described under various concepts (e.g. essence, deity, eternity). Barth sees this conceptual possibility, for Calvin, like his predecessors, "always spoke much too innocently and uncritically of the *deitas*, the *essentia divina*, etc. as though God were a neuter."[53] Welch goes further in emphasizing Calvin's impersonal treatment of God's oneness; he says that a "static and almost materialistic conception" of its substance enables him to "speak meaningfully of a divine *persona* as that which subsists in the divine nature."[54]

The emphasis of Barth and Welch appears to be unfair and careless. It suggests that Calvin's view of the one being of God is formalistic, although they do not realise and say it. They interpret his view of God's being as an impersonal (and static and materialistic) form (substance) of the three persons of the Trinity. Calvin, however, never speaks of the one being (essence) of God in a "static and

[52] Inst. I.xiii.4 and 22.

[53] CD I, 1. pp. 350-1.

[54] Op. cit., p. 191.

almost materialistic" sense. The fundamental purpose of his use of essence or deity is to hammer out the absolute oneness of God and the absolute unity of the Trinity.[55] It is viewed in terms of the one eternal and spiritual[56] living of God in the three temporal persons of the Trinity.

> They object that Christ, if he be properly God, is wrongly called Son. To this I have replied that when a comparison of one person is made with another, the name of God is not to be taken without particularization, but restricted to the Father, seeing that he is the beginning of deity, not in the bestowing of essence, as fanatics babble, but by reason of order. In this sense is to be understood that saying of Christ to the Father, "This is eternal life, that they believe three to be the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3 p.) For speaking in the person of the Mediator, he holds middle rank between God and man; yet his majesty is not on this account diminished... Therefore we must hold that, under this name of God is included his deity, which is also Christ's... Nothing is more absurd than to deny that Christ's deity is everlasting.[57]

Moreover, Calvin does provide crucial evidence for the self-conscious subjectivity and personhood of the one eternal being (essence) of God. It is the recognition of God's one eternal reason,[58] will,[59] command and power.[60] Their

[55] "But they are obviously deceived in this connection, for they dream of individuals, each having its own separate part of the essence. Yet we teach from the Scriptures that God is one in essence, and hence that the essence both of the Son and of the Spirit is unbegotten; but inasmuch as the Father is first in order... he is rightly deemed the beginning and fountainhead of the whole of divinity." Inst. I.xiii.25. cf. I.xiii.26.

[56] "For nothing excludes the view that the whole essence of God is spiritual, in which are comprehended Father, Son, and Spirit." Inst. I.xiii.20.

[57] Inst. I.xiii.26.

[58] "It is, indeed, true that if we had quiet and composed minds ready to learn, the final outcome would show that God always has the best reason for his plan". Inst. I.xvii.1. "In this way [the designation of God the Father as the source of both the generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit], unity of essence is retained, and a reasoned order is kept, which yet takes nothing away from the deity of the Son and the Spirit." Inst. I.xiii.20. The bracket is mine.

[59] "Thus, according to Luke, the whole church says that Herod and Pilate conspired to do what God's hand and plan had decreed. And indeed, unless Christ had been crucified according to God's will, whence would we have redemption? Yet God's will is not therefore at war with itself, nor does it change, nor does it pretend not to will what he wills. But even though his will is one and simple in him, it appears manifold to us because, on account of our mental incapacity, we do not grasp how in diverse ways it wills and does not will something to take place." Inst. I.xviii.3.

[60] "It is certain that those whom the Father is addressing were uncreated; but there is nothing uncreated except God himself, and he is one. Now therefore unless they grant that the power of creating was common to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, common also the authority to command, it will follow that God did not speak thus within himself, but addressed other outside artificers." Inst. I.xiii.24.

recognition is unthinkable without assuming the personal consciousness and subjectivity of the one eternal being (essence) of God; the former seems to be impractical without the latter. Calvin suggests crucial evidence for proposing the subsistence of the three (temporal) persons (beings) of the Trinity in the one personal being of the eternal God. This proposal contradicts the naive accusation of his view of God's one being (essence) as impersonal or formalistic.

The question arises why Calvin avoids the concepts of person and subject for the particular quality of God's one eternal being (essence). Avoiding them does not take seriously how integral God's eternal conscious subjectivity and personhood is to his eternal and rational being (essence). It derives from Calvin's unwillingness to go beyond traditional expression. He, like the Cappadocians, attributes the acting subject and person of God to the Trinity rather than to his one essence (being), as Augustine does.[61] His one being (essence) is consequently treated as if it were the common impersonal essence or form of the three persons of the Trinity without fully realising its formalistic implication. This attribution is the direct outcome of conceiving the basis of God's one essence as in the revelation of his three temporal persons of the Trinity in the Word Jesus Christ. His one essence is the eternal or timeless and spiritual reality, and is incomprehensible and transcendent to our cognition.

> For how can the human mind measure off the measureless essence of God according to its own little measure, a mind as yet unable to establish for certain the nature of the sun's body, though men's eyes daily gaze upon it?... Let us then willingly leave to God the knowledge of himself... as he reveals himself to us... from his Word.[62]

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[61] D. Brown demonstrates the different emphases of the Cappadocians and Augustine; they attribute the acting subject of God, respectively, to the Trinity and to the one Godhead (*The Divine Trinity*, Duckworth, London, 1985, pp. 272-89).

[62] Inst. I.xiii.21. "The Scriptural teaching concerning God's infinite and spiritual essence ought to be enough, not only to banish popular delusions, but also to refute the subtleties of secular philosophy... Surely, his infinity ought to make us afraid to try to measure him by our own sense. Indeed, his spiritual nature forbids our imagining anything earthly or carnal of him. For the same reason, he quite often assigns to himself a dwelling place in heaven. And yet as he is incomprehensible he also fills the earth itself." Inst. I.xiii.1

> Moreover, because God more clearly disclosed himself in the coming of Christ, thus he also became known more familiarly in three persons... Indeed, there is no doubt that Christ willed by this solemn pronouncement to testify that the perfect light of faith was manifested when he said, "Baptize them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19 p.). For this means precisely to be baptized into the name of the one God who has shown himself with complete clarity in the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Hence it is quite clear that in God's essence reside three persons in whom one God is known.[63]

The avoidance of person and subject for the one being (essence) of God is made for epistemological rather than ontological reasons. This epistemology, however, determines the character of the ontology of God. It is now not the one eternal being (essence) of God subsisting in his three temporal beings of the Trinity, but the three temporal beings of the Trinity subsisting in his one eternal essence. The emphasis rests not only on the triune actions, as T. F. Torrance implies (under Barth's conceptualisation of the Trinity as the different actions of the one God),[64] but also on the triune beings of God in his one being (essence). This emphasis is consistent throughout the structure of the 1559 *Institutes.*

The Trinity, for Calvin, becomes an internal, not only an external, characteristic of God. He recognises members not just in terms of the internal relations of God *in se* (the immanent Trinity), and also in terms of his external realities *ad extra* (the economic Trinity). His doctrine of the essential or immanent Trinity is based on his doctrine of the economic Trinity. The strength of this is that it provides an adequate ground for proposing the distinctive persons, subjects and beings of the Trinity. In the event of God's revelation, for Calvin, we encounter his three individual acting persons and thereby gain knowledge of his one true being (essence), not *vice versa.* Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity consequently ne-

[63] Inst. I.xiii.16.

[64] "The significance and relevance of Karl Barth's theology in this respect is best indicated by pointing to his doctrine of God. With a quite herculean effort of thought he brought together the Patristic emphasis upon the Acts of God in his Being, thus combining as never before the ontic and dynamic aspects of knowledge of God, thereby transcending the dualist modes of thought..." *The Transformation and Convergence in the Frame of Knowledge*, Christian Journals, Belfast, 1984, p. viii.

glects the intrinsic personal and acting quality of the one eternal being (essence) of God.

ii.4. The Dialectical Unity of the Triune God

The attribution of the acting subject of God to his Trinity is explicit in Calvin's view of God's eternal and temporal unity and their relationship He ascribes the *principium* (beginning) of the Godhead not to the one essence of God, but to the Trinity, the Father.[65] The triune God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, for him, consequently exists and acts for the fulfillment of the eternal will and plan of his Trinity, the Father, rather than his one being (essence or unity) with the Son and the Holy Spirit.

> It is this: to the Father is attributed the beginning of activity, and the fountain and wellspring of all things; to the Son, wisdom, counsel, and the ordered disposition of all things; but to the Spirit is assigned the power and efficacy of that activity. Indeed, although the eternity of the Father is also the eternity of the Son and the Spirit, since God could never exist apart from his wisdom and power, and we must not seek in eternity a *before* or an *after*, nevertheless the observation of an order is not meaningless or superfluous, when the Father is thought of as first, then from him the Son, and finally from both the Spirit. For the mind of each human being is naturally inclined to contemplate God first, then the wisdom coming from, and lastly the power whereby he executes the decrees of his plan... This appears in many passages, but nowhere more clearly than in chapter 8 of Romans, where the same Spirit is indifferently called sometimes the Spirit of Christ... not without justification.[66]

He rejects the doctrine of the *principium* of the one being (essence) of God. The very act of its assertion admits both division between his one essence and his Trinity, and thus a fourth reality of God apart from the Trinity that suggests a quaternary rather than trinitarian God.

Calvin advocates the doctrine of the *principium* of the Father in order to secure the one and simple unity (essence) of God,[67] as Hodgson highlights.

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[65] Inst. I.xiii.25 and 26.

[66] Inst. I.xiii.18.

[67] "Yet they do not observe that, even though the name "God" is also common to the Son, it is

> Why does Calvin, in spite of his expressed distaste for verbal sophistries and argumentation, twist and turn about in so lengthy an attempt to state the doctrine of the *principium* of the Father? It is because he, like his predecessors, believed that doctrine to be necessary to the maintenance of the unity of God... *Simplex unitas.* The Simplicity of unity! It is just this notion that unity is a simple thing that is exploded by the empirical evidence which is the basis of the doctrine of the Trinity. It we grasp the implications of this evidence, and think of the unity as unifying the Three Persons of whom none is afore or after another, we have no further need of the doctrine of the *principium* of the Father.[68]

Hodgson, however, fails to stress the indispensable relevance of the doctrine to the distinctive persons and works of the Trinity. Calvin regards the doctrine as indispensable for defending their distinctive persons and works.[69] Their defence remains also as his decisive reason for the maintenance of the doctrine. The doctrine entails a subordinate relation of the Son and the Holy Spirit to God the Father, for they derive from the Father for the fulfillment of his will. Their subordinate relation in this doctrine is integral to their distinction *in se* as well as *ad extra.* It (including the *filioque*) is based not on an abstract metaphysical idea, as Hodgson claims,[70] but on the biblical evidence.[71]

The doctrine of the *principium* of the Father seems to me necessary rather than unnecessary; it corresponds well to the biblical revelation of the relation of Jesus Christ to God the Father and the Spirit. Starting with the equal relations of the Trinity in their unity, which Hodgson proposes, appears to be rather metaphysical than biblical. This could end by obviating not only the subordinate relations of the Trinity, but also their distinctive qualities. For Calvin, the former is indispensable for the latter. Calvin's doctrine of the *principium* of the Father is associated much closely with the trinitarian tradition of the Cappadocian fa-

sometimes applied to the Father per excellence because he is the the fountainhead and beginning of deity—and this is done to denote the simple unity of essence." Inst. I.xiii.23.

[68] Op. cit., p. 173.

[69] Inst. I.xiii.18-26.

[70] "Nevertheless in one particular a metaphysical assumption controls his thought. That relic of subordinationism, the doctrine of the *principium* of the Father, remains." Ibid. p. 171.

[71] Inst. I.xiii.18.

thers[72] rather that of Augustine, as Hodgson claims.[73] Calvin sees the doctrine from the perspective of the acting subject of the temporal Trinity, the Father, rather than from that of his one eternal essence (unity).

Hodgson lacks understanding and appreciation of the context of Calvin's use of simplicity. Its purpose is not to suggest that the content of God's unity is one and simple. Rather, it is to stress that God's unity—one in life and essence—is one and simple. Calvin relentlessly elucidates the three persons of the Trinity as the contents of this one and simple unity (essence). His notion of God's unity is fundamentally constitutive. His conceptual use of a "simple" unity does not seem to be inappropriate for, nor inconsistent with, the biblical evidence of the trinitarian constitutive unity of God, as Hodgson thinks.[74] He is surely unfair to assert that the real ground of its use is an *a priori* philosophical and metaphysical notion of a "simple" unity.[75] Its use, for Calvin, is fundamentally rooted in actual *a posteriori* knowledge of the one God in faith, attested in Scripture.

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[72] T. F. Torrance demonstrates the Cappadocians' (i.e. Gregory Nazianzen's) advocacy of the doctrine of the *principium* of God the Father (*The Trinitarian Faith*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1988, pp. 239ff. and 318ff), and argues for Calvin's (and Barth's) suggestion of subordinationism in their doctrine of the *principium* of God the Father as the influence of the Cappadocians fathers (*Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1990, pp. 208-9).

[73] "I have argued that we should think of the unity of God as a unity wherein no one of the Persons has any metaphysical priority over another, that the strain in traditional theology according to which the Father is the *Principium* of the Godhead is a relic of subordination due to an inadequate grasp of the nature of unity as disclosed by the Christian revelation. In St. Augustine the metaphysical priority of the Father is unquestioned... In this he is followed by St. Thomas and by Calvin. But the real ground of the speculation is metaphysical. It is by locating the *Principium* of the Godhead in the Father that St. Augustine, who is working with what I have called the 'mathematical' conception of unity, believes himself able to maintain unity. This is why he regards the modes of derivation implied by the words filiation and procession as valid *secundum formam Dei.*" The reason for my holding this to be unnecessary, and indeed mistaken, is, of course, equally metaphysical. The difference between us lies in a realm in which no man can know the truth for certain until we know 'even as we are known.'... I have explained the grounds on which I hold the one I believe to be true, and I am of opinion that if St. Augustine, St. Thomas and Calvin were alive to-day they would be glad in this respect to revise what they have written." Ibid. pp. 156-7.

[74] "Calvin has suffered least from the inevitable contradiction between the evidence and the idea of unity. This is because he was more content than the others to confine himself to setting forth the evidence, leaving aside the philosophical problems involved." Ibid. p. 175.

[75] "The empirical evidence of God's self-revelation in Christ required a revision of the accepted idea of unity. That the ultimate unity of God must be a 'simple' unity, of what I have called the mathematical type, was a quasi-axiomatic presupposition of philosophical thought." Ibid. p. 174.

> For Paul so connects these three—God, faith, and baptism (Eph. 4:5)—as to reason from one to the other: namely, because faith is one, that he may thereby show God to be one; because baptism is one, that he may thence show faith also to be one... Indeed, there is no doubt that Christ willed by this solemn pronouncement to testify that the perfect light of faith was manifested when he said, "Baptize them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19). For this means precisely to be baptized into the name of the one God who has shown himself with complete clarity in the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Hence it is quite clear that in God's essence reside three persons in whom one God is known.[76]

Calvin never allows subordinationism in the one eternal essence of God, but only in the three distinctive (temporal) persons of the Trinity. Along with Augustine, he regards their simple unity (essence) as the one eternal self-existent life,[77] and renounces its beginning, change, division and distinction.[78] Their unity is the basis for affirming their simultaneous movement and presence and involvement, and thus for the traditional doctrines of the essential or immanent Trinity and their co-inherence or perichoresis ($\pi\epsilon\rho\iota\chi\omega\rho\nu\sigma\iota\varsigma$).[79] The remarkable fact is that Calvin sharply distances himself from Augustine,[80] for he suppresses the distinction of the Trinity in the acting subject of their one unity. He follows Gregory of Nazianzus in simultaneous emphasizing their threefold distinction and their one unity.[81] The distinction of the Trinity is indissoluble in their one essence; their

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[76] Inst. I.xiii.16. "Therefore, let those who dearly love soberness, and who will be content with the measure of faith, receive in brief form what is useful to know: namely, that, when we profess to believe in one God, under the name of God is understood a single, simple essence, in which we comprehend three persons, or hypostases. Therefore, whenever the name of God is mentioned without particularization, there are designed no less the Son and the Spirit than the Father... But because the peculiar qualities in the persons carry an order within them, e.g., in the Father is the beginning and the source... In this way, unity of essence is retained, and a reasoned order is kept... it is always necessary to come to the unity of essence. Thus we regard it a detestable sacrilege for the Son to be called another God than the Father, for the simple name of God admits no relation, nor can God be said to be this or that with respect to himself." Inst. I.xiii.20.

[77] Inst. I.xiii.24 and 26.

[78] Inst. I.xiii.19.

[79] Inst. I.xiii.18.

[80] Ibid.

[81] "And that passage in Gregory of Nazianzus vastly delights me: 'I cannot think on the one without quickly being encircled by the splendour of the three; nor can I discern the three without being straightway carried back to the one.' Let us not, then, be led to imagine a trinity of persons that keeps our thoughts distracted and does not at once lead them back to that unity." Inst. I.xiii.17.

one essence is indissoluble in their distinction.

The nature of the unity of the one eternal essence of God and his threefold Trinity, for Calvin, is indissoluble. The one eternal essence of God is identical with the three temporal (beginning, middle and end) persons of the Trinity. Their identification eliminates a division that might lead to the suggestion of a fourth reality of God apart from the Trinity.[82] Their indissoluble distinction is the very basis for the indissoluble distinction of each person of the Trinity from the other two persons.[83] It presupposes a dialectical unity of the one eternal essence of God and his three temporal Trinity. It is mistaken to regard their dialectical unity as merely impersonal. Their dynamic, personal and rational dialogue and relationship is arguable from their dialectical unity. They seem to be indispensable for the fulfillment of the one will and plan of God the Father through the Son by the Holy Spirit.[84]

To be sure, Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity does not develop a personal and relational model and concept of the unity of God, but it leaves suggestions for this concept. Calvin does not go beyond the boundary of the traditional expression of God's unity; he focuses on demonstrating it as if it were a single and simple essence[85] or mode of three individual persons of the Trinity. He is not free from an impersonal concept of God's unity. The systematic goal of his doctrine of the Trinity is largely responsible for this. It determines the focus of the doctrine on the revelation of the eternal Word or Son rather than on its incarnation in the historical man Jesus Christ for the triune nature of the creator-God the Father. This hinders application of the personal dialogue and relationship between the historical man Jesus Christ and the eternal God the Father to the concept of their ontological unity.

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[82] Inst. I.xiii.25 and 26.

[83] Inst. I.xiii.6.

[84] Inst. I.xiii.18.

[85] Inst. I.xiii.20.

Conclusion

Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity in Book I.xiii clarifies its *a priori* (and *a posteriori*) discussion of the being and action of God by spelling out his trinitarian relationship *in se* and *ad extra*. The doctrine has the greatest hermeneutical relevance to the content and form of the 1559 *Institutes*. It is based in the revelation of the triune nature of the creator-God in his Word which the Bible attests. Its basis in this revelation brings positive freedom and autonomy in faith for its formulation. It succeeds in resisting dogmatic scepticism about the doctrine of the Trinity. Calvin discusses the revelation in the context of its relationship with the eternal Word rather than with the historical man Jesus. The dogmatic aim of this discussion is to show the triune nature of the one creator-God the Father from his relationship with the eternal Word and Spirit.

The doctrine advocates a notion of the Trinity which emphasizes individual persons in relation. This secures their distinction without undermining their unity. Calvin does not express the persons of the Trinity as individual conscious subjects and beings. He nevertheless does offer sufficient ground for proposing that they are individual personal subjects and beings. He suggests their inherent capacity for their particular work as well as their mutual relations and distinction. These appear to be impossible without considering their individual conscious subjects and beings.

Calvin never treats the one being (essence) of the triune God as a static and materialistic unity. God's one being (essence), for him, is his one eternal and spiritual life. He does not develop a personal concept of God's one being (essence) in terms of self-conscious subjectivity. He nonetheless provides reasons for proposing the personal nature of the one being (essence) of God, evidence of the reasoning will, plan and command of the one eternal God. They seem to presuppose a conscious subject and person. This contradicts claims that Calvin's view of the one being (essence) of God is impersonal.

Calvin attributes the acting subject and person of God to his Trinity rather than to a one essence. He does this for epistemological rather than logical reasons. It determines the concept of the actual ontology of God. Calvin regards the three individual persons of the Trinity as the ones who exist or subsist and act in the one essence of God. The attribution is decisive in ascribing the *principium* of the Godhead to the Father (of the Trinity) rather than to an essence (the unity of the Trinity). The Son and the Spirit consequently exist and act for the fulfillment of the will and plan of God the Father rather than as fulfilling the one essence of God. Calvin maintains the doctrine of the *principium* of the Father in order to secure the single or simple source (essence or unity) of God as well as the diverse and complex constitution of the Trinity.

Calvin's simultaneous emphasis on the eternal oneness and the temporal threeness of God is highly significant. It gives rise to a dialectical and dynamic notion of their unity. His doctrine of the Trinity does not treat the nature of their unity merely as an impersonal mode. It suggests the fulfilling process of the one will of God the Father through the Son or Word in Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. It is hard to deny some kind of personal and rational dialogue and relationship of the Trinity in their unity in this process. The full development of a personal and relational model and notion of their unity is nevertheless absent in the doctrine.

The doctrine does not go beyond traditional trinitarian expressions. Calvin follows the trinitarian tradition of the Cappadocian fathers more closely than Augustine; he treats the one eternal being of God as the common essence of the acting persons of the Trinity without realising its impersonal implication. The serious weakness of the doctrine of the Trinity in Book I.xiii of the 1559 *Institutes*, however, is this. It fails to consider the self-conscious subject of the man Jesus Christ, and the eternal and rational will for the respective qualities of the Trinity and its personal unity and subject. It does not consider the implication of the

personal dialogue between the temporal Son Jesus Christ and the eternal God the Father for the nature of their ontological unity. Its systematic goal is largely responsible for such problems. Its focus is on the relationship between the pre-existence of the man Jesus, the eternal Word, and the creator-God the Father. This limits consideration of the particular anthropology of Jesus and his personal and rational relationship with the one eternal God the Father.

2.iii. Man

Introduction

Calvin's anthropology focuses not on the nature of man in and for itself, but on its relationship with the Christian creator-God, the Father. Man is God's creature. Calvin stresses different qualities of the nature of man and his different relationships with his Creator before and after Adam's Fall. He does not separate the issue of our nature from that of our image of God; he explores the former by defining the reality of the latter in the biblical revelation of God. We examine the conceptual basis of our nature and image of God in revelation, the implications of this basis, and their systematic purpose. Finally, the difference between the revelation of the Creator in Scripture and that in creation is marked out by the discussion of the manner of his creation of and providential care for man as set forth in Scripture.

iii.1. The Good Nature of Man in Creation

(a) The conceptual possibility of our original nature in faith

The primal purpose of Calvin's doctrine of man in Book I.x.v is to demonstrate our sinless (good) nature in creation. The doctrine highlights the responsibility of our sinful will and action for the corruption and sinfulness of our nature and image of God, so that it might defend the goodness of our creator-God in creation.[1] It is based in the revelation of creation of man in the Mosaic story of the Bible.[2] Creation is the self-revelation of the creator-God. God reveals himself as Creator and the glory and goodness and wisdom of the Creator in and through the creatureliness of our nature and image of God.[3] Calvin rejects natural noetic and conceptual ability for the biblical revelation of our original nature and image

[1] Inst. I.xv.1.

[2] Inst. I.xv.3.

[3] Inst. I.xv.1.

of God. They are inconceivably corrupted and deformed after Adam's fall. He argues for their noetic and conceptual possibility in their restoration (renewal) in Christ.

> Nevertheless, it seems that we do not have a full definition of "image" if we do not see more plainly those faculties... in which he ought to be thought the reflection of God's glory. That, indeed, can be nowhere better recognized than from the restoration of his corrupted nature. Therefore, even though we grant that God's image was not totally annihilated and destroyed in him, yet it was so corrupted that whatever remains is frightful deformity. Consequently, the beginning of our recovery of salvation is in that restoration which we obtain through Christ, who also is called the Second Adam for the reason that he restores us to true and complete integrity. For even though Paul, contrasting the life-giving spirit that the believers receive from Christ with the living soul in which Adam was created (I Cor. 15:45), commends the richer measure of grace in regeneration, yet he does not remove that other principal point, that the end of regeneration is that Christ should reform us to God's image. Therefore elsewhere he teaches that "the new man is renewed... according to the image of his Creator" (Col. 3:10). With this agrees the saying, " Put on the new man, who has been created according to God" (Eph. 4:24)... But since God not only deigned to give life to an earthen vessel, but also willed it to be the abode of an immortal spirit, Adam could rightly glory in the great liberality of his Maker.[4]

His doctrine of creation of our original nature and image of God is viewed from the perspective of faith. Faith is indispensable for their restoration and knowledge in Christ.[5] For Calvin, it derives from the internal witness of the Word[6] of God in Scripture by the Holy Spirit,[7] and gives rise to the conceptual possibility of our original creaturehood and Creator in this internal witness. There is a dogmatic freedom and autonomy in this. It emancipates Calvin from rigid and formal scriptural and traditional views of man, and enables him to present his own view of man in accordance with his own hearing of God's Word. He succeeds in presenting a realistic and objective view of our original nature and image of God

[4] Inst. I.xv.4.

[5] Inst. III.i.4.

[6] Inst. III.ii.6. cf. ii.35.

[7] Inst. I.vii.5. cf. III.i.4.

in the sight of God.

Calvin rejects Augustine's link between our image of God and *vestigia trinitatis.* It is speculative to regard the threefold faculties of the soul (intellect, will and memory) as the image and reflection of the Trinity in the one God. He claims the image of God as the reflection of the one creator-God.[8] Irenaeus' different interpretation of the biblical expression of the image and the likeness of God in man[9] is dismissed by asserting their synonymity. The "likeness" is added by way of explanation of "image"; "simply man is called God's image because he is like God."[10] Repetition that expresses one thing twice were common among the Hebrew-biblical writers.

Like Plato, Calvin advocates the twofold constitution of man's nature, namely body and soul. Priority is given to the soul over the body; the soul animates and controls all parts of the body.[11] The additional recognition of a spirit of man in the Bible is identified with the soul on the assumption that the biblical writers use the term, the spirit, to describe the separated state of the soul from the body.[12] The biblical suggestion of the dominion given to man as the image of God (e.g. in Genesis I:26) is opposed. It presupposes the existence of the image not within the inner soul of man, but outside his soul.[13] Calvin uses the doctrine of the image of God more than the Bible warrants;[14] he relates it to the doctrines of creation and redemption of man, as well as to eschatology. The full restoration of the image of God in our heavenly life is considered as our final and immortal

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[8] Inst. I.xv.4.

[9] D. Cairns regards Irenaeus as the first one amongst the early fathers, who differentiates the linkness and the image of God in man. The former lost at the Fall, whilst the latter is remanent even today in all men (*The Image of God in Man*, SCM Press, London, 1953, p. 74).

[10] Inst. I.xv.3.

[11] Inst. I.xv.6.

[12] Inst. I.xv.2.

[13] Inst. I.xv.4.

[14] B. A. Gerrish, *The Old Protestantism and the New*, pp. 152-3.

blessing.[15]

The remarkable outcome of basing of our original nature and image of God in their renewal in the biblical revelation is this. Discussion is focused on the original condition of the faculties of the soul of man in creation. Calvin speaks of our renewal as a renewal of all parts of our inner soul (mind or heart, intellect, reason and will),[16] and argues for our original nature as the good, rightness, soundness, and holiness of all parts of the soul in creation.[17] It is noticeable that he avoids a substantial and static view of its faculties, which "prevailed among the Schoolmen ever since Boethius,"[18] and adopts a functional and dynamic view. The existence of reason (or intellect or understanding) and will is recognised always in the context of their dynamic function and activity. Reason (intellect or mind or heart) is discussed in terms of its activity in distinguishing good (just) from evil (unjust).[19] Will is viewed as the activity following a good decision of reason.[20] Calvin insists on a perfect co-ordination of the dynamic activities. It enables man not only to order earthly affairs, but also to gain true knowledge and image of God from his revelation in creation for eternal life.[21]

(b) The image of God as spiritual and dynamic knowledge of him

Calvin defines the reality of our original image of God as spiritual[22] and dy-

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[15] Inst. I.xv.2 and 4.

[16] "Now we are to see Paul chiefly comprehends under this renewal. In the first place he posits knowledge, then pure righteousness and holiness. From this we infer that, to begin with, God's image was visible in the light of mind, in the uprighteousness of the hearts, and in the soundness of all the parts. For although I confess that these forms of speaking are synecdoches, yet this principle cannot be overthrown, that what was primary in the renewing of God's image also held the highest place in the creation itself." Inst I.xv.4. cf. II.i.9.

[17] "Now we need bear only this in mind: man was far different at the first creation from his whole posterity, who, deriving their origin from him in his corrupted state, have contracted from him a hereditary taint. For, the individual parts of his soul were formed to uprightness, the soundness of his mind stood firm, and his will was free to choose the good." Inst. I.xv.8. cf. xv.4.

[18] T. F. Torrance, *Calvin's Doctrine of Man*, p. 122.

[19] Inst. I.xv.7.

[20] Inst. I.xv.8.

[21] Inst. I.xv.6.

[22] Inst. I.xv.3.

namic knowledge of the Creator in his dynamic relationship and communication with us, and regards the inner soul (mind and heart) as its proper and primary seat. He does not regards man's soul itself as God's image and glory. The former, like a mirror,[23] reflects the latter only when God reveals or shines his own image and glory there.[24] The creation and sustenance of our image depends on the grace and power of God's action to and for us. The expression, e.g. the divine image engraven in man's soul, cannot be interpreted as the static dispensation of the divine image to the human soul. Calvin advocates the reality of our image of God as creation out of nothing. This is the basis for stressing the ontological discontinuity and distinction between the human soul and the divine image to eliminate any suggestion of their ontological continuity and fusion.

> But before we go farther, we must confront the delusion of the Manichees, which Servetus has tried to introduce once more in this age. Because it is said that God breathed the breath of life upon man's face (Gen. ii. 7), they thought the soul to be a derivative of God's substance, as if some portion of the immeasurable divinity had flowed into man. Yet it is easy to point out quickly what crass and foul absurdities this devilish error drags in its train... Therefore we must take it to be a fact that souls, although the image of God be engraven upon them, are created just as angels are. But creation is not inpouring, but the beginning of essence out of nothing... When Paul discusses the restoration of the image, it is clear that we should infer from his words that man is made to conform to God, not by an inflowing of substance, but by the grace and power of the Spirit. For he says that by "beholding Christ's glory, we are being transformed into his very image... as though the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. 3:18), who surely works in us without rendering us consubstantial with God.[25]

Calvin repudiates Osiander's argument of the image of God from the body of Christ and all other men. This is not because Osiander claims the reflection of God's glory and image in the external body (and all created things), but

[23] "There is no doubt that Calvin always thinks of the *imago* in terms of a *imago*. Only while the mirror actually reflects an object does it have the image of that object. There is no such thing in Calvin's thought as an *imago* dissociated from the act of reflecting. He does use such expressions as *engrave* and *sculptured*, but only in a metaphorical sense and never dissociated from the idea of the mirror." T. F. Torrance, op. cit., p. 36.

[24] Inst. I.xv.3.

[25] Inst. I.xv.5.

because he does not subject the noetic and conceptual possibility of God's glory and image to the actuality of their spiritual knowledge in the soul (mind and heart).[26] The definition of the image as spiritual knowledge of God is highly significant. It raises the question of women's equality in the image of God.[27] Spiritual knowledge of God is available to women as well as men. Calvin rejects qualification of the image of God based on gender, and distances himself from the traditional acceptance of the literal meaning of I Cor. II:7 that excludes women from being the image and glory of God. This exclusion is made on the basis of socio-political culture, namely human law rather than divine law.[28]

Calvin recognises the tension between I Cor. 11:7 and Gen 1·26-7 which presupposes the image of God in all human (male and female) beings. The vital importance of this recognition is that, as Jane D. Douglass argues, it offers "a new step in critical exegesis of the Scriptures and continued progress towards a teaching of the full equality of men and women in the image of God from the time of their creation."[29] Calvin, however, neither treats their equality as an essential part of the doctrine of the image of God,[30] nor develops the image of God as a mutual reality and relation of male and female on the basis of the mutual reality and relation of the triune God. "Like Luther, Calvin remains deeply influenced by a tradition which sees men as more fully made in the image of God than

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[26] Inst. I.xv.3 and 4.

[27] Jane D. Douglass suggests that "Calvin struggles with the question of women's equality in the image of God more self-consciously than Luther, he is probably indebted to the French Renaissance culture where the *querelle des femmes* was a significant issue and where women rulers—in several cases sympathetic to the Calvinistic Reformation—were a fact of life." "The Image of God in Women as seen by Luther and Calvin," in *Image of God and Gender Models in Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, ed. Karl E. Borresen, Solum Forlag, Oslo, 1991, p. 252.

[28] "Now we see how Christ is the most perfect image of God; if we are conformed to it, we are so restored that with true piety, righteousness, purity, and intelligence we bear God's image. When this has been established, Osiander's fancy concerning the shape of the body readily vanishes of itself. But the statement in which man alone is called by Paul 'the image and glory of God' (I Cor. 11:7) and women excluded from this place of honor is clearly to be restricted, as he the context shows, to the political order. Yet I now consider it sufficiently proved that whatever has to do with spiritual and eternal life is included under 'image,' mention of which has been made." Inst. I.xv.4.

[29] Op. cit., p. 252.

[30] Anthony A. Hoekema, *Created in God's Image*, W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1986, p. 49.

women".[31] His theology provides no liberation for women from their subordinate position to men in church and society.[32]

T. F. Torrance proposes that Calvin's basic concept of God's image is the mutual reality (society) in male and female. Calvin implies it again and again, although he does not state it expressly as this.[33] Torrance's proposal is made by articulating Calvin's claim of the sacred union of man and wife in the light of the mutual unity, relation and reality of the triune God. The evidences of this claim are drawn from his *Commentaries* (i.e. on *Gen.* 2 : 18, 21, 26. *Ps.* 8 : 5. *John* 17 : 11) and *Sermons* (i.e. on *Job*: 10:7). There is no clear distinction between Calvin's view of our nature and image of God in his *Commentaries* and *Sermons*, and in his systematic theology of the *Institutes*. This appears to be the major weakness of Torrance's treatment of Calvin's doctrine of man as a whole. His treatment does not demonstrate that Calvin does not carry over certain views of man in his *Commentaries* and *Sermons* into his systematic theology. The 1559 *Institutes* does not interpret the reality of our image of God in the light of the sacred union of man and wife. There is no implication of the image as a mutual reality (society) of male and female.

iii.2. The Sinfulness of Man

(a) Total depravation of our originally good nature

Calvin asserts the sinful nature of man as depravation[34] or corruption of his

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[31] Jane D. Douglass, op. cit., p. 252. Kari E. Borresen remarks that "Partristic interpretation of human God-likeness, *Imago Dei*, presupposes andromorphic or metasexual God-imagery. In consequence, creational image of God is attributed to human males or man-like, asexual souls. As a patriarchally inculturated, monotheistic religion, Christianity excludes femaleness at the divine level. It follows that women cannot be God-like *qua* females, with corresponding lack of fully human status, i.e. full religious capacity, *qua* women." "God's Image, Man's Image? Patristic Interpretation of Gen. 1,27 and I Cor. 11,7," in *Image of God and Gender Models in Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, Solum Forlag, Oslo, 1991, p. 188. cf. 189-207.

[32] Ibid. p. 254.

[33] Op. cit., pp. 43-6.

[34] Inst. II.i.5.

original good nature in creation, and renounces any defect in creation of man[35] (and the world[36] and even devils and Satan).[37] Adam's fall, the original sin, in the biblical revelation is taken seriously as explanation of our sinfulness.[38] He interprets it as the cause, beginning and propagation of God's curse that permits depravation and perversion of all creation, and thus all human, ecological and angelic evil).[39] The persistent emphasis is on the free and voluntary nature of Adam's Fall or sin in order to oppose the attribution of its cause either to his original nature or to his Creator.[40]

Like Augustine, Calvin interprets original sin as hereditary sin, and insists on biological transmission of Adam's sinful nature to the whole humanity.[41] Original sin puts man by nature under divine condemnation.[42] Calvin's doctrine of original sin provides for a justifiable ground of God's reprobation of some, and highlights God's election of some by his pure grace and goodness. It opposes Pelagius who claims the confinement of the effect and punishment of original sin only to Adam himself. It is not a mere rationalisation of sin in the biblical revelation. Calvin presents the the biblical revelation of the reality of sin in the light of its actual experience in faith. The possibility of his doctrine of sin relies on redemption of sin in faith by the Holy Spirit.

> Thus it is pointness and foolish to restrict the corruption that arises thence only to what are called the impulses of the senses... In this matter Peter Lombard has betrayed his complete ignorance... Paul removes all doubt when he teaches that corruption subsists not in one part only, but that none of the soul remains pure or untouched by that mortal disease... From the 'renewal' that fact appears more clearly. For the Spirit, who is opposed to the old man and the flesh, not only marks the grace whereby the lower or sensual part of

[35] Inst. I.xv.1.

[36] Inst. I.xiv.2.

[37] Inst. I.xiv.16.

[38] Inst. II.i.1ff.

[39] Inst. II.i.5.

[40] Inst. I.xv.1 and 8. cf. II.i.4, 6, 10, and 11.

[41] Inst. II.i.5 and 6.

[42] Inst. II.i.8.

> the soul is corrected, but embraces the full reformation of all the parts... From this it follows that that part in which the excellence and nobility of the soul especially shine has not only been wounded, but so corrupted that it needs to be healed and to put on a new nature as well.[43]

This doctrine is consequently treated in the context of the doctrine of God's redemption in the Son, Jesus Christ. It highlights the necessity of God's redemption in Christ. The remarkable point is that the doctrine of redemption is not a reaction to the doctrine of sin. Redemption in the eternal electing grace of God precedes the occurrence of sin in history.[44] T. F. Torrance rightly views Calvin's doctrine of sin as a corollary of the doctrine of grace.[45] K. Barth opposes this because he thinks that Calvin discusses our sinfulness apart from our redemption in Christ, and proposes self-evidence of the reality of sin in us (i.e. in the beginning of the *Institutes*).[46] Barth does not take seriously the fact that Calvin here insists on the indispensability of faith (piety) for the true noetic and conceptual possibility of God and ourselves (our sinful and originally good nature).[47] He does view the reality of sin from the standpoint of redemption in faith; hence he presupposes the historical occurrence of sin as a reaction to redemption in the electing grace of God in Christ. The existence and sustenance of faith depends on the redemptive will and work of the God the Father in Christ by the Holy

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[43] Inst. II.i.9.

[44] Calvin upholds God's predestination of the historical occurrence of sin in his eternal will (Inst. II.i.10).

[45] Op. cit., pp. 83-85.

[46] "It is noteworthy that Calvin plainly regarded the Old Testament as supremely instructive... It never seems to have struck him that this *lux Domini* has truly and decisively shone upon us and exposed us in man's confrontation by God in the crucified and risen Jesus Christ, not even when he came to discuss this part of the New Testament. There is simply maintained that this antithesis breaks through man's self-deception and gives a genuine self-knowledge. (It seems doubtful to me whether we can agree with T. F. Torrance in his fine book, *Calvin's Doctrine of Man*, 1949, 83f.—and we would be only too ready to do so if it were a fact—that with Calvin the doctrine of the corruption of man is a corollary of the doctrine of grace.) In the introduction to the *Institutio*—at the beginning of the book *De cognitione Dei creatoris*—he seems to have regarded it as self-evident that for the moment we cannot and ought not to speak of man in his confrontation with Jesus Christ. For this reason his account of the encounter with God and its effect is not altogether dissimilar to that given by R. Otto (in his book *Das Heilige*) of what he calls the experience of man—even non-Christian man—in relation to the *fascinosum* of the Wholly Other." CD IV, 1. p. 367.

[47] Inst. I.ii.1 and 2.

Spirit.[48]

The perspective of faith enables Calvin not only to propose a realistic view of our sinful nature in the sight of God, but also to determine the degree of depravation[49] and corruption of our original good nature and image of God. He declares their total depravation or corruption on the basis of the renewal of all parts of the soul in faith by the grace of God.[50] The perspective gives rise to the focus of his doctrine of sin (and renewal) on faculties of his soul (e.g. reason or intellect or mind and will) rather than on his body. He insists on the complete destruction of the good, sound and upright mind of man, and of his free will to pursuit the decision of reason. Man no longer has a sound intellectual ability to gain true and saving knowledge and image of God from his revelation in creation. He moves only in the direction of sinful desire of the body and flesh.[51] Freedom of will becomes the slave of sin. Calvin argues for the necessity of sinning as well as for its voluntary character.[52] This necessary sinning is done in accordance with man's own voluntary sinful passion and nature.

Calvin opposes the unduly optimistic view of man in humanistic philosophy which ignores his sinfulness and declares his reason as the leader of a good and blessed life.[53] He sharply distances himself from medieval (e.g. Thomistic) Scholasticism that confines corruption to the sensual part of man and affirms the remnant of his sound reason and free will after the Fall as a natural dowry.[54] His doctrine of total depravation is based on the movement of man's whole being to sinful direction in the sight of God.[55] This is not found in the medieval

[48] This point will be substantiated in the treatment of Calvin's doctrine of faith in chapter II.2.ii of this thesis.

[49] Inst. II.i.5.

[50] Inst. II.i.9.

[51] Inst. II.ii.27.

[52] Inst. II.iii.5.

[53] Inst. I.xv.7. cf. II.ii.2 and 3.

[54] Inst. II.ii.4.

[55] Inst. II.i.3.

Catholicism which views sinful nature from its each components.[56] It recognises the subsistence of corruption in the sensual part of man, but not in the part of his reason and will.

Calvin's anthropology does not advocate a pessimistic view of man that despises everything in man and stresses his utter powerlessness to do anything good, as Erich Fromm thinks. Fromm asserts Calvin's authoritarian conscience or psychology as responsible for his teaching of self-denial and a pessimistic view of man. It not only gives rise to the feeling of powerlessness, fearfulness and sinfulness of man before the authority of the all-powerful and holy God, but it also stimulates Calvin to affirm this feeling in a authoritative, strict and even cruel manner. There is a certain amount of sadism in this. It is taken as the sign of one's goodness and virtue.[57] Calvin's teaching of self-love as sinful, Fromm argues, has increased significantly the antagonism towards selfishness in the Western society.[58] It is wholly unacceptable. Selfishness is the most powerful and legitimate drive in man in modern society. Man makes his best contribution to the common good in this imperative drive.[59]

Fromm's psychological analysis of Calvin's doctrine of total depravation com-

[56] O. Weber, *Foundations of Dogmatics*, Vol. I, p. 568.

[57] "Paradoxically, the authoritarian guilty conscience is a result of the feeling of strength, independence, productiveness, and pride, while the authoritarian good conscience springs from the feeling of obedience, dependence, powerlessness, and sinfulness. St. Paul, Augustine, Luther, and Calvin have described this good conscience in unmistakable terms. To be aware of one's powerlessness, to despise oneself, to be burdened by the feeling of one's own sinfulness and wickedness are the signs of goodness. The very fact of having a guilty conscience is in itself a sign of one's virtue because the guilty conscience is the symptom of one's 'fear and trembling' before the authority... The internalization of authority has two implications: one, which we have just discussed, where man submits to the authority; the other, where he takes over the role of the authority by treating himself with the same strictness and cruelty. Man thus becomes not only the obedient slave but also the strict taskmaster who treats himself as his own slave. This second implication is very important for the understanding of the psychological mechanism of authoritarian conscience. The authoritarian character, being more or less crippled in his productiveness, develops a certain amount of sadism and destructiveness." Ibid. pp. 150-1. Also see Fromm's books (*Escape from Freedom*, Rinehart and Company, New York, 1941, pp. 87-8 and *Psychoanalysis and Religion*, Yale Univ. New Haven, 1950, pp. 34-6) for his interpretation of protestantism including Calvin's theology as authoritarian religion.

[58] *Man for Himself: An Enquiry into the Psychology of Ethics*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1948, pp. 119-23 and 134-5.

[59] Ibid. p. 119.

pletely ignores its theological perspective and intention. Calvin views the reality of our sin from our renewal and hope in faith. His perspective of faith negates our subjective psychology and affirms the objective Word of God in the biblical revelation as its determinative source. His doctrine of sin never teaches sadistic self-denial, but the denial of self-confidence in oneself to stress the total dependence of man's goodness on the free grace of God's redemptive action in Christ.[60] Its thematic subject or focus is the redemptive being and action (revelation) of God in the man Jesus Christ. Calvin renounces any co-operative merit of man (believer and unbeliever) with God for his renewal and redemption in faith.[61] The doctrine does not nullify God's intention of creation of man that leads him into true knowledge and image of God for eternal life. Rather, it kindles man's hope in God for this.

> But knowledge of ourselves lies first in considering what we were given at creation... there is in us nothing of our own, but that we hold on sufferance whatever God has bestowed upon us. Hence we are ever dependent on him. Secondary, to call to mind our miserable condition after Adam's fall; the awareness of which, when all our boasting and self-assurance are laid low, should truly humble us and overwhelm us with shame. In the beginning God fashioned us after his image (Gen. 1:27) that he might arouse our minds both to zeal for virtue and to meditation upon eternal life. Thus, in order that the great nobility of our race (which distinguishes us from brute beasts) may not be buried beneath our own dullness of wit, it behooves us to recognize that we have been endowed with reason and understanding so that, by leading a holy and upright life, we may press to the appointed goal of blessed immortality. But that primal worthiness cannot come to mind without the sorry spectacle, since in the person of the first man we have fallen from our original condition. From this source arise abhorrence and displeasure with ourselves, as well as true humility; and thence is kindled a new zeal to seek God, in whom each of us may recover those good things which we have utterly and completely lost.[62]

Fromm fails to recognise Calvin's distinction between natural and supernatural gifts of God in man. Calvin, like Augustine, declares the complete disap-

[60] Inst. II.v.15.

[61] Inst. II.ii.6ff.

[62] Inst. II.i.1.

parence of the supernatural gift of God that brings forth our true knowledge and image of him for eternal life,[63] and the remnant of natural gifts (e.g. intelligence and will) of God despite their corruption.[64] He gives a positive evaluation of our natural gifts, and accentuates their excellence[65] and the great mercy and grace and kindness of God which is responsible for their existence and function.[66] They are good enough to distinguish good (just) from evil (unjust); they are the basis of Calvin's social ethic. They enable man not only to govern and advance earthly matters (e.g. politics, economics, mechanical arts, and all liberal studies),[67] but also to respond to God's revelation in creation for natural knowledge and image of him.[68]

"This whole line of thought in Calvin brings him very close to modern Christian existentialism, which pictures man's being as a life of decision in response"[69] to God's revelation in creation and in scripture. Man "is continuously being called out of non-being into being and life by the Word and Will of the Creator who is the Lord of life and death".[70] Calvin defines man as dynamic and existential and as a being dependent on God. He contradicts the claim of D. Cairns that Calvin's concept of the image "is faced with the problem of relating it to the Old Testament image, which is common to all mankind."[71] It is based fundamentally on the New Testament sense of the image only in the regenerated and elected in Christ.[72] For Calvin, natural knowability, knowledge and image of God belong to the very nature of every man.[73] They make man what he is, and

[63] Inst. II.ii.11 and 12.
[64] Inst. II.ii.12.
[65] Inst. II.ii.15.
[66] Inst. II.ii.17.
[67] Inst. II.ii.13.
[68] Inst. II.ii.12 and 13.
[69] D. Cairns, op. cit., p. 131.
[70] T. F. Torrance, op. cit., p. 62.
[71] Ibid. p. 132.
[72] Ibid. p. 131.
[73] Inst. II.ii.18.

differentiate man from brute beasts.[74] Calvin uses them as the concrete basis for the primal and inclusive relationship of the creator-God with all men (believer and unbeliever).[75]

(b) The remnant image of God

The insistence on the remnant of God's image invites D. Cairns' criticism that it is inconsistent with the doctrine of total depravation.[76] Cairns' criticism stems from his misinterpretation of the image. He, like E. Brunner,[77] views the remnant of the image in sinful man as some portion of the undamaged original image of God. The difference between the original image and its remnant is a matter of quantity rather than quality. Cairns endorses not only E. Brunner's interpretation of them[78] as form and content of a single reality,[79] but also his claim of positive and good utility of natural image (and knowledge) of God in faith.[80] Brunner proposes that Calvin supports a natural or formal image (and knowledge) of God as the necessary precondition for special or material image (and knowledge) of God in faith.[81]

Cairns and Brunner overlook that Calvin affirms two qualitatively different

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[74] Inst. I.xv.3 and 4.

[75] See Chapter I.1.iii.

[76] Op. cit., p. 140. cf. Anthony A. Hoekema, op. cit., p. 48.

[77] "Thanks to the undamaged *image* the *theologia naturalis* is derivable from reason alone It is purely rational and as such complete. There is such a thing as rational theology and therefore also rational ethics or moral philosophy is possible." *Natural Theology*, p. 46.

[78] Ibid. p. 41.

[79] "His apparent contradictions on the subject are at least in part due to two aspects of the reality with which he had to do. He did draw the right distinction between them, but perhaps not with sufficient clarity and persistence. His use of the term 'relic' is not wholly fortunate, but it is hard to find an adequate term to describe the very singular reality with which he is dealing. Op. cit., pp. 144. cf. P. 140.

[80] "This, however tempting it may be to treat as an inconsistency Calvin's doctrine of a relic of the image in fallen man, he does not hesitate to make considerable use of that doctrine on occasion. And his own teaching on the perversity of the will is not necessarily, but only accidentally, in conflict with what he says of the relic. Nor can this image in fallen man be described as merely an instance of that image which is shared by the universe in general, so far as by its excellence it declares God's glory. It is something far more paradoxical than that, and more tragic, though in the last instance, by the insight of faith we can see that it promises good and not evil." pp. 140-1.

[81] Op. cit., p. 31.

kinds and realties of knowledge and image of God. One is natural, false and unsaving knowledge and image of God. The other is saving and true knowledge and image of God in faith. O. Weber,[82] like Cairns and Brunner, fails to stress the fact that Calvin's definition of the reality of the image cannot be confined, strictly speaking, to its original uprightness and glory. He consequently ignores the inadequacy of Brunner's conceptual distinction of these two realties of knowledge and image of God as form and content of a single reality.[83] For Calvin, natural, false and unsaving knowability and knowledge and image of God can never be the necessary precondition of saving and true knowledge and image of God in faith. Their relationship is one of mutual exclusion and irreconciliation, a dialectical relation.[84] He insists on the indispensability of God's new creation of saving knowability of God in faith for his savable image and knowledge. This is to demonstrate the grace of God's renewal as the origin, the beginning and basis of all our goodness once given to us in creation.

> Surely there is ready and sufficient reason to believe that good takes its origin from God alone. And only in the elect does one find a will inclined to good... Further, there is another similar reason: for since willing and doing well take their origin from faith, we ought to see what is the source of faith itself. But since the whole of Scripture proclaims that faith is a free gift of God, it follows that when we, who are by nature inclined to evil with our whole heart, begin to will good, we do so out of mere grace. Therefore, the Lord when he lays down these two principles in the conversion of his people–that he will take from them their "heart of stone" and give them "a heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36: 26)–openly testifies that what is of ourselves ought to be blotted out to convert us to righteousness; but that whatever takes its place is from him... He testifies that our conversion is the creation of a new spirit and a new heart. What other fact could more clearly claim for him, and take away from us, every vestige of good and right in our will? For it always follows that nothing good can arise out of our will until it has been reformed; and after its reformation, in so far

[82] Op. cit., p. 567.

[83] "This last remnant can also be understood formally (the 'image of God' in the formal sense) as does E. Brunner, not varying appreciably here from Thomas Aquinas, which means that this remnant is deprived of every material quality and every value emphasis. In doing so, nothing decisive is altered in the fundamental position." Ibid. p. 554.

[84] See Chapter I.iii.1.

as it is good, it is so from God not from ourselves.[85]

Calvin's doctrine of total depravation of the original good nature and image of God is not inconsistent with his claim of the remnant of the image.[86] He speaks of the remnant of corrupted and sinful image of God.[87] There is no original sound and upright nature, knowledge and image of God in sinful man. Sin is not a static or idle thing, rather it continuously vitiates and perverts every part of our original nature and image of God.[88] Calvin renounces any undamaged original nature (reason and will) and image of God in sinful man, for it directly undermines God's grace in his renewal of our whole sinful nature.[89] This is the very point which Cairns and Brunner fail to consider in their interpretation of Calvin's doctrine of man and his image of God.

iii.3. The Subject of Inquiry of Our Original Nature

(a) The Creator as the subject of inquiry

The possibility of Calvin's doctrine of our original creatureliness in its renewal in Christ does not lead to a suggestion of the redemptive action of God in Christ as the subject of its inquiry. The doctrine is the essential part of the doctrine

[85] Inst. II.iii.8. cf. iii.9.

[86] T. F. Torrance, op. cit., pp. 93 and 101.

[87] "Therefore, even though we grant that God's image was not totally annihilated and destroyed in him, yet it was so corrupted and whatever remain is frightful deformity... Now God's image is the perfect excellence, but was subsequently so vitiated and almost blotted out that nothing remains after the ruin except what is confused, mutilated, and disease-ridden. Therefore in some part it now is manifest in the elect, in so far as they have been reborn in the spirit; but it will attain its full splendour in heaven." Inst. II.i.8. cf. i.9.

[88] "We must, therefore, distinctly note these two things. First, we are so vitiated and perverted in every part of our nature that by this great corruption we stand justly condemned and convicted before God, to whom nothing is acceptable but righteousness, innocence, and purity... Then comes the second consideration: that this perversity never ceases in us, but continually bears new fruits–the works of the flesh that we have already described–just as a burning furnace gives forth flame and sparks, or water ceaselessly bubbles up from a spring... For our nature is not only destitute and empty of good, but so fertile and fruitful of every evil that it cannot be idle." Inst. II.i.8. cf. i.9.

[89] "Therefore we must keep in mind what we have elsewhere cited from Augustine: in vain, people busy themselves with finding any good of man's own in his will. For any mixture of the power of free will that men strive to mingle with God's grace is nothing but a corruption of grace." Inst. II.v.15.

of creation and Creator. It is designed to attest the revelation of Creator and his characteristic in creation of man.[90] The ontological ground of our image of God is argued from the Creator rather than from the Redeemer, Jesus Christ. In other words, he insists that we are created in the image of our Creator rather than our Redeemer, Christ. There are specific reasons for this.[91] The first one is that Christ is not the sole image of God, but the most perfect image of God, for his human image of God, like ours, is created out of nothing. The other reason is that the man Jesus is also God, which means he is the image of himself. We cannot talk about the reality of Christ merely as the created image of God.

The subject of inquiry of the doctrine is the revelation of the creative action and being of God in Scripture. The doctrine demonstrates the goodness, soundness and integrity of our original nature and image of God in creation in order to defend the good creative action and being of the one true God.[92] Calvin here concerns the primal and inclusive relationship of God with all human beings as their creator, and asserts it by insisting on the existence of knowledge and image of Creator in every man as the part of his essential nature. He apparently highlights the goodness and love of the creator-God in the light of the biblical revelation of the time of creation of man in six days (after providing all necessary things).[93]

Calvin maintains a mutual link between knowledge of God and of ourselves. T. H. Parker is mistaken to regard the mutual tie as the thematic subject of the *Institutes.*[94] It is a basic epistemological proposition[95] that attempts to view

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[90] "We must now speak of the creation of man: not only because among all God's works here is the noblest and most remarkable example of his justice, wisdom, and goodness; but because, as we said at the beginning, we cannot have a clear and complete knowledge of ourselves." Inst. I.xv.1.

[91] Inst. I.xv.3 and 4.

[92] Inst. I.xv.1 and 8. cf. II.i.4, 6, 10, and 11.

[93] Inst. I.xiv.2.

[94] *Calvin's Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 2nd ed. W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1959, pp. 8ff.

[95] E. A. Dowey, *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1952, pp. 19-20.

ourselves and God from the revelation of their relative realities to us and for us, in order to avoid abstract speculation of their absolute realities *in se*.[96] The untenability of Parker's claim is this; it presupposes knowledge of ourselves as the systematic and thematic subject of the doctrine along with knowledge of God. Knowledge of ourselves, as he admits,[97] however, has no independent status in Calvin's theology. It is derived from and determined by knowledge of God.[98] Its dogmatic function is to attest knowledge of God.

It is vitally important to recognise the hermeneutical relevance of faith to the revelation of the creative being and action of God in Scripture. Calvin insists on the indispensability of faith for the noetic and conceptual possibility of the Creator in this revelation, and assigns God's own Word as the hermeneutical criterion of the revelation of Creator in Scripture. The perspective of faith, which occurs the Word of God in Christ by the Holy Spirit, enables him to demonstrate the fatherly character of the Creator from this revelation, and to identify the one true Creator with the triune God the Father of the eternal Wisdom (Word or Son) and the Spirit.

> With the same intent Moses relates that God's work was completed not in a moment but in six says (Gen 2:2). For by this circumstance we are drawn away from all fictions to the one God... Here also, until human reason is subjected to the obedience of faith and learn to cultivate that quite to which the sanctification of the seventh day invites us, it grumbles, as if such proceedings were foreign to God's power. But we ought in the very order of things diligently to contemplate God's fatherly love toward mankind, in that he did not create Adam until he had lavished upon the universe all manner of good things... Now when he disposed the movements of the sun and stars to human uses, filled earth, waters and air with living things, and brought forth an abundance of fruits to suffice as foods, in assuming the responsibility of a foreseeing and diligent father of the family he shows his wonderful goodness toward us. If

[96] Inst. I.ii.1.

[97] Op. cit., p. 18. cf. T. F. Torrance, op. cit., p. 14.

[98] "Again, it is certain that man never achieves a clear knowledge of himself unless he has first looked upon God's face, and then descends from contemplating him to crutinize himself." Inst. I.i.2. "Yet, however the knowledge of God and of ourselves may be mutually connected, the order of right teaching requires that we discuss the former first, then proceed afterward to treat the latter." Inst. I.i.3.

> anyone should more attentively ponder what I only briefly touch upon, it will be clear that Moses was a sure witness and herald of the one God, the Creator. I pass over what I have already explained, that he there not only speaks of the bare essence of God, but also sets forth for us His eternal Wisdom and Spirit; that we may not conjure up some other god than him who would have himself recognized in that clear image.[99]

> Indeed, as I pointed out a little before, God himself has shown by the order of Creation that he created all things for man's sake. For it is not without significance that he divided the marking of the universe into six days (Gen. 1:3)... But he willed to commend his providence and fatherly solicitude toward us in that, before he fashioned man, he prepared everything he foresaw would be useful and salutary for him. How great ingratitude would it be now to doubt whether this most gracious Father has us in his care, who we see was concerned for us even before we were born![100]

The presupposition here is that God's Word in Christ attests the revelation of Creator in creation of man as the Father's in the subjectivity of faith by the Holy Spirit in the event of this very revelation. It is arguable that the subject of inquiry of our original creaturehood is the revelation of the creative action and being of the one true God the Father in Scripture.

(b) The dogmatic utility of the revelation of Creator in faith

E. A. Dowey[101] (and D. Cairns)[102] is misleading in suggesting the nature of this revelation as general and untrinitarian. God's revelation in creation always brings forth natural or general and untrinitarian knowledge of God as Creator. Dowey argues for natural or general and untrinitarian knowledge and revelation of God as the subject of inquiry of Calvin's doctrine of Creator and creation

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[99] Inst. I.xiv.2.

[100] Inst. I.xiv.22.

[101] "The special revelation of the Creator in Scripture is not a substitute revelation, a completely new picture placed before the eyes." *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology*, p. 144. "Therefore, in this specific area of revelation, Scripture is a special revelation in regard to the *means* God uses to reach men, but with regard to the *content* it is nothing else but the general revelation. Scripture is, so far, a special means by which a select group can see the general revelation. It is a finger pointing to God's work in the world; it is not yet a new 'source' of the knowledge of God." Ibid. p. 145.

[102] Op. cit., p. 141.

of man in the 1559 *Institutes.*[103] He endorses[104] E. Brunner's claim of Calvin's natural theology[105]—that confirms natural or general knowledge and revelation of the Creator as the conceptual source of God—within faith. This is precisely because he, like Brunner, fails to recognise the noetic and conceptual basis of the revelation of Creator in Scripture in faith, that not only interprets this revelation as the triune God the Father's, but also determines this trinitarian revelation as the source and thematic subject of the doctrine of Creator and creation of man.

It is arguable that Calvin's link between faith and the revelation of the Creator is decisive in resisting any natural theology. It defines this revelation as the triune God the Father's. Faith is indispensable for the noetic and conceptual possibility of his self-revelation as Creator in creation. The Barthian[106] commentators (e.g. T. F. Torrance, W. Niesel, T. H. L. Parker and E. D. Willis) also fail to elaborate the implication of the link here. They apparently interpret the revelation and knowledge of the Creator as "a natural revelation"[107] (or some "natural light"[108] or a self-revelation) and knowledge of Creator,[109] or God,[110] and confine the dogmatic function of this revelation and knowledge to the declaration of the unbeliever's inexcusability before God. For they eliminate any suggestion of Calvin's natural theology within or without faith of the believer.[111] The Barthian commentators oppose the direct relevance of the revelation of the Creator in creation to true knowledge and image of God in faith of the believer, and suppress Calvin's delight and praise in the revelation, and his positive and constructive use of it in faith as the conceptual source of the Christian God and theology.

103 Op. cit., pp. 41ff and 144-7.

104 Op. cit., pp. 81ff.

105 *Natural Theology*, pp. 40ff.

106 *Natural Theology*, pp. 104ff.

107 E. D. Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, p. 104.

108 Torrance, op. cit., p. 154. He also expresses it as "a primal revelation" (Ibid. p. 33).

109 Parker, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, pp. 15ff.

110 W. Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, p. 48.

111 Torrance, op. cit., pp. 154ff. Niesel, op. cit., pp. 49ff. Parker, op. cit., pp. 53ff. D. Willis, op cit., pp. 129ff.

They insist on the exclusive relevance of true knowledge and image of God in faith to the revelation of the Word of God in Christ. Their creation and sustenance depend solely on this revelation.[112] Torrance argues that Calvin does not speak of the knowledge and image of God directly from the revelation of the Creator in creation. His discussion of the knowledge and image of God from this revelation is based on the knowledge and image of God from the revelation of the Word of God in Christ.[113] The christocentric interpretation of the true knowledge and image of God stems from a christocentric interpretation of God's revelation. The revelation of the Word of God in Christ is interpreted as the only ontic reality and the true noetic and conceptual possibility of every revelation of God whether in creation or in Scripture.[114] This interpretation coheres with Barth's christocentric analysis of revelation and knowledge of God in Calvin's theology.[115] Its serious weakness is that it does not correspond to Calvin's own view of the revelation and knowledge of Creator in creation. He differentiates the revelation of the creator-God the Father in creation from the revelation of the Word of God in the Redeemer, Christ. They are the distinctive actions of God

[112] Torrance, op. cit., pp. 38-42.

[113] "Calvin uses *imago dei* in a twofold sense: (1) In a general sense, in which all creation is said to reflect (as in a mirror) the glory of God. God images Himself in nature, by beholding the works of His hands. This workmanship, however, may be regarded as a mute reflection of His glory, until it is made to speak of God by means of the Word which, properly speaking, is the image of God. It is by this Word that man is really able to see the glory of God imaged in creation. (2) In a particular sense, in which man specially is said to reflect (as in a mirror) the glory of God, by an intelligible response to the Word." Ibid. p. 35. "Calvin's position, however, is that 'if man had not fallen' he would be able to see the imaging of God in the universe as God originally intended." Ibid. p. 38. "Calvin employs several times in this connection the metephor of spectacles, for man needs the Word as a pair of spectacle in order to be able to see the imaging of the glory of God in nature... All this means that behind Calvin's wider sense of the *imago dei* he thinks of the image as the reflection seen by the eye of man who, coming down from his knowledge of God, reads it into nature, or who by means of the Word makes the *mute* creation speaks of the glory of God. Therefore Calvin's wider use of the *imago dei* is grounded upon the special relation of man to the Word of God, that is, upon the narrower sense of the *imago dei*. This narrower sense of the image is the important one, and it is in this sense that the expression *imago dei* should most properly used." Ibid. pp. 41-2. cf. K. Barth, *Natural Theology*, pp. 108-9. There is a argument for the inclusion of a real knowledge of Creator in his knowledge in Christ.

[114] Torrance, op. cit., p. 36-7. Niesel, op. cit., p. 27. T. H. L. Parker, op. cit., pp. 36-7. D. Willis, op. cit, p. 126. cf. p. 124.

[115] *Natural Theology*, pp. 108-9. Barth opposes actual occurrence of knowability and knowledge of God's revelation in creation. For "this possibility can only be discussed hypothetically: *si integer stetisset* Adam" (*Natural Theology*, p. 106).

the Father (Creator) and the Son (Word or Redeemer), and are the subjects of Book I and II of the 1559 *Institutes.*

It is true that Calvin never advocates the true knowledge of creation and God's image from his revelation in creation. Their creation depends solely on the revelation of God's Word in the subjectivity of man by the Holy Spirit. God's Word in the faith of the believer is claimed as the only and true noetic and conceptual possibility of the revelation of the Creator in creation since the Fall. But Calvin neither regards this claim as the decisive basis for denying the actual occurrence of the revelation of the creator-God the Father in creation, nor suggests the Word of God in Christ as the ontic reality of this revelation, as the Barthian commentators insist. The Word and the Holy Spirit, for him, interpret the revelation of Creator in creation as the triune God the Father's. The discussion of the revelation of the creator-God in Scripture does not undermine our direct and constant meditation on his revelation in creation.

> Meanwhile let us not be ashamed to take pious delight in the works of God open and manifest in this most beautiful theater. For, as I have elsewhere said, although it is not the chief evidence for faith, yet it is the first evidence in the order of nature, to be mindful that wherever we cast our eyes, all things they meet are works of God, and at the same time to ponder with pious meditation to what end God created them. Therefore, that we may apprehend with true faith what it profits us to know of God, it is important for us to grasp first the history of the creation of the universe, as it has been set forth briefly by Moses... From this history we shall learn that God by the power of his Word and Spirit created heaven and earth out of nothing; that thereupon he brought forth living beings and inanimate things of every kind... We shall likewise learn that he nourishes some in secret ways... provided and filled with the most exquisite and at the same time most abundant furnishings. Finally, we shall learn that in forming man and in adorning him with such goodly beauty, and with such great and numerous gifts, he put him forth at the most excellent example of his works.[116]

Calvin affirms the relevance of the revelation of the creator-God the Father in creation (including ourselves) to the believer's living faith (piety), and stresses

[116] Inst. I.xiv.20.

the necessity of the believer's direct and constant meditation on the revelation of the creator-God the Father in creation including man. This revelation sustains and improves not only true and saving knowledge (and thus image) of Creator in faith as the triune God the Father, but also their praising, trusting, serving and loving faith in him. These practical benefits of the believer are the persistent aim of Calvin's doctrine of Creator and creation (of man) in Book I of the 1559 *Institutes.*[117]

iii.4. The Creation of Man in the Biblical Revelation

(a) The manner of the creation of man

Calvin never supports a qualitative distinction between the revelation of the Creator in creation (including man) and in Scripture. The perspective of faith enables him to define the revelation of Creator as that of the triune God the Father. Rather, he endorses the different kinds of knowledge of creation (ourselves) and the Creator, and their relationship from the different means of the one revelation of the creator-God the Father. The revelation of the Creator in Scripture functions to clarify and supplement their knowledge that gains from his revelation in creation (including man).[118] It unravels not only the original nature of man and the time of his creation, but also the specific manner of his creation and providence. These kinds of knowledge we cannot obtain from the revelation of the Creator in creation including ourselves.

The discussion of the manner of the creation of man (and all other things) includes the co-operative action of the Word or Son and the Spirit in the creative work of God the Father,[119] and hammers out the triune nature of the creator-

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[117] Inst. I.xiv.21 and 22.

[118] E. A. Dowey, op. cit., p. 144.

[119] "Therefore, that we may apprehend with true faith what it profits us to know of God, it is important for us to grasp first the history of the creation of the universe, as it has been set forth briefly by Moses... From the history we shall learn that God by the power of his Word and Spirit created heaven and earth out of noting; that thereupon he brought forth living beings

God from the perspective of faith. It is remarkable that the recognition of their co-operative action does not undermine the distinctive being of God the Father as the Creator. Creation and Creator are persistently considered as intrinsic to the distinctive action and being of God the Father. The Word and the Spirit are the agency of God the Father. For Calvin views the one true creator-God from the revelation of the distinctive being of the Trinity, the Father, in his distinctive work of the creation of man. This gives rise to the attribution of the acting subject of God in creation to the individual person of the Trinity, the Father, rather than to their common life and unity. The emphasis rests on the particular creative action and being of the Trinity, the Father, in their common life and action.

Calvin takes seriously the manner of the creation of man out of nothing in the biblical revelation. It highlights the eternal self-existence of the creator-God by indicating a definite and spatial and temporal beginning in creation.[120] The significance of the recapitulation of the biblical concept of creation is that it provides a decisive basis for Calvin to emphasise the ontological discontinuity and distinction between temporal man (creation), and eternal Creator. Calvin's brilliance is that he maintains their constant relationship. It relies neither on their ontological similarity (the doctrine of *analogia entis*), nor on their ontological continuity (pantheism), but on man's dynamic and spiritual knowledge and image of the creator-God, namely on their rational communication and relationship.

The emphasis here, thinks T. F. Torrance, is a contrast to the mediaeval (e.g. Thomistic) philosophical notion of the relationship between creation and Creator

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and inanimate things of every kind... although all were subject to corruption, he nevertheless provided for the preservation of each species until the Last Day." Inst. I.xiv.20.

120 "Therefore it was his will that the history of Creation be made manifest, in order that the faith of the church, resting upon this, might seek no other God but him who was put forth by Moses as the Maker and Founder of the universe. Therein time was first marked so that by a continuing succession of years believers might arrive at the primal source of the human race and of all things. This knowledge is especially useful... once the beginning of the universe is known, God's eternity may shine forth more clearly, and we may be more rapt in wonder at it." Inst. I.xiv.1.

as a continuous relation of cause and effect.[121] That gave rise to the correlation of God and creation, man, and had a very damaging effect upon the nature of creation, man, by giving "it a changeless character through a timeless relation to the divine causation - nature was in its heart impregnated with divine causes."[122] Calvin's recapitulation of the biblical concept of creation out of nothing "at once emancipated the study of nature from philosophical preconceptions and led to the disenchantment of nature of its secret divinity",[123] and paves the way for the scientific investigation of the nature of creation in accordance with its distinctive creaturely temporal nature.

(b) Providence

Calvin upholds the inseparable relationship between creation and providence in the biblical revelation, and accentuates God's special providence of each one of the believers (along with other created things and beings). His doctrine of providence affirms the total dependence of man's constant existence on the sustaining power of the creator-God, and thus their constant and dynamic relationship. The reality of man is viewed as dynamic and existential and as a dependent being on God in this affirmation. The dogmatic function of knowledge of providence is to attest the revelation of the Creator and his particular characteristics in his providence. The doctrine demonstrates the sovereign (omnipotent, good and just) lordship and government and providence of Creator over all created things and beings. His sovereign lordship is highlighted well by the submission of the good or bad action and will of all angelic figures (e.g. angels and Satan or devil)[124] to his

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[121] T. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, *qu.* 44, *art.* 2. E. Brunner thinks that Aquinas' interpretation here is due to his Aristotelian doctrine of entelechy (*The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption*, Dogmatics Vol. II, trans. Olive Wyon, Lutterworth, London, 1952, p. 37).

[122] *God and Rationality*, p. 39.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Calvin's angelology and demomology are treated to explore the biblical view of creation. Their scope is confined to their relevance to the practical benefit of the believer (Inst. I.xiv.4 and 16). His angelology is geared to strengthen our confidence in God (Inst. I.xiv.12), whilst his demomology puts us on our guard against the machinations of devils and leads us to realise our weakness so as to trust in God's help (Inst. I.xiv.13).

providence and will (predestination).[125] The recognition of their autonomous will, action and influence upon man (and the world) violates the sovereign lordship of God.[126]

The subject of inquiry of providence is the revelation of the providing action and being of the Creator in Scripture. The perspective of faith enables Calvin not only to identify the Creator with the Provider, but also to declare the fatherly care and love of the Creator from his self-revelation in his special providence of each one of us along with all other created things and beings [127] It is decisive in showing the true Creator, Provider, Governor and Preserver as the triune God the Father. The purpose of this is to inspire our meditation on the biblical revelation of his fatherly loving and caring character in his creation and providence.[128] There is a great benefit of our peaceful, comforting[129] and trusting (serving, praising and worshiping)[130] faith in this in the midst of danger, difficulty and uncertainty.

Calvin does not give a rational justification how the good creator-God permits evil influence of Satan or devils upon men (the world) as a means of carrying out his just judgement upon their wickedness.[131] Malicious actions of Satan and men, which bring God's judgement upon them, accomplish the eternally decreed will of God,[132] by means of what is clearly forbidden by God's preceptive will. They

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125 Inst. I.xiv.5 and 7.

126 Inst. I.xiv.2.

127 "Moreover, to make God a momentary Creator, who once for all finished his work, would be cold and barren, and we must differ from profane... In short, carnal sense thinks there is an energy divinely bestowed from the beginning, sufficient to sustain all things. But faith ought to penetrate more deeply, namely, having found him Creator of all, forthwith to conclude he is also everlasting Governor and Preserver–not only in that he drives the celestial frame as well as its several parts by a universal motion, but also in that he sustains, nourishes, and cares for, everything he has made, even to the least sparrow... Indeed, although they subscribe to Paul's statement that we have our being and move and live in God... they do not at all taste God's special care, by which alone his fatherly favor is known." Inst. I.xvi.1.

128 Inst. I.xvii.6,

129 Inst. I.xvii.12

130 Inst. I.xiv.21 and 22.

131 Inst. I.14.17.

132 "We ought, indeed, hold fast by this: while God accomplishes through the wicked what he has decreed by his secret judgment, they are not excusable, as if they had obeyed his percept which

simultaneously obey the decretive will and disobey the preceptive will of God.[133] There seems to be contradictory and paradoxical in the good God's permission of all evil things of man (and the world). Calvin insists on the acceptance of this permission in faith (piety) in order not to undermine God's sovereign providence and government of man (and the world).[134] God is perfectly good and just in his providence and government of man and (the world). His omnipotent act and power can always bring good out of evil in the end,[135] although we cannot comprehend this. It belongs to the realm of incomprehensible wisdom and justice of God, the hidden judgement of God.[136] The apparent weakness of Calvin's eschatological answer to the problem of all (social, economic, political and natural) evils is this. It does not provide sufficient room for their revolutionary and immediate resolution through man under the providence and will of the good and caring God the Father.

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out of their own lust they deliberately break." Inst. I.xviii.4. cf. xviii.5.

[133] Calvin does not regard the simultaneous occurrence here as evidence of two different or contradictory wills of God, or the possibility of changing in God's will. Our mental incapacity is responsible for the contradictory and diverse appearance of the one and simple will of God *in se*. "God's will is not therefore at war with itself, nor does it change, nor does it pretend not will what he wills. But even though his will is one and simple in him, it appears manifold to us because, on account of our mental incapacity, we do not grasp how in divers ways it wills and does not will something to take place." Inst. I.xviii.3.

[134] "Also, Mani, with his sect, arose, fashioning for himself two principles: God and the devil. To God he attributed the origin of good things, but evil natures he refers to the devil as their author. If this madness held our minds ensnared, God's glory in the creation of the universe would not abide with him... Now where is God's omnipotence, if such sovereignty is conceded to the devil that he carries out whatever he wishes, against God's will and resistance?... Therefore, in order to meet these perverse falsehood it is necessary to life to lift up our our minds higher than our eyes can reach... we will take care to keep to the measure which the rule of godliness prescribes, that our readers may not, by speculating more deeply than is expedient, wander away from simplicity of faith." Inst. I.xiv.3. cf. I.xvi.ix and xvii.12.

[135] "Rather, when we do not grasp how God wills to take place what he forbids to be done, let us recall our mental incapacity... Therefore all godly and modest folk readily agree with this saying of Augustine: 'Sometimes with a good will a man wills somethings which God does not will... A little before he [had said that by their defection the apostate angels and all the wicked, from their point of view, had done what God did not will, but from the point of view of God's omnipotence they could in no way have done this, because while they act against God's will, his will is done upon them. Whence he exclaims: 'Great are God's works, sought out in all his wills'... nothing is done without God's will, not even that which is against his will. For it would not be done if he did not permit it; yet he does not unwillingly permit it, but willingly; nor would he, being good, allow evil to be done, unless being also almighty the could make good even out of evil'." Inst. I.xviii.3.

[136] Ibid. cf. I.xvii.1.

Calvin does not treat predestination as a part of providence, as the mediaeval theologians do (e.g. T. Aquinas).[137] God's temporal providence and creation of man are grounded in his eternal predestination (will); the former is the inner basis of the latter.[138] The significance of the treatment of providence is this, it introduces the involvement of the undivided one eternal will[139] (decree or command or determination)[140] of God in creation and providence.
Its involvement presupposes the existence and involvement of the one eternal and rational being and subject in these; the former appears to be impossible without the latter. The recognition of their involvement is something new that is not found in the treatment of knowledge of God from his revelation in creation (in Book I.iii-v).

Calvin views the one eternal will and being of God as the Father's from the perspective of faith.

> But these calumnies, or rather ravings of distracted men, will be easily dispersed by pious and holy meditation on providence, which the rule of piety dictates to us, so that from this we may receive the best and sweetest fruit. Therefore the Christian heart... will ever look to him as the principal cause of things, yet will give attention to the secondary causes in their proper place... Therefore, we rightly rejected a little above the opinion of those who imagine a universal providence of God, which does not stop to the especial care of any particular creature, yet first of all it is important that we recognize this special care toward us. Whence Christ, when he declared that not even a tiny sparrow

[137] *Summa Theologica*, I, *qu.* 22, *art.* 2.

[138] Calvin's view of predestination and its relationship with creation, providence and redemption will be discussed in greater detail in chapter three.

[139] Inst. I.xviii.3. Calvin denies any emotion or feeling in God so as to defend the immutableness of the undivided one will of God (Inst. I.xvii.13). The intention of this denial is to hammer at the fact that every event is directed by the fixed eternal-will of the divine counsel before the foundation of the world. And the once fixed eternal will of God can never be mutable by any contingent sublunary affairs or human appeals and merited actions (Inst. I.xvii.12 and 13). Otherwise, the omnipotent God is seen as if he were incapable of knowing of what is to happen or of evading it from eternity. Calvin continues his argument that the emotional expressions of God in regrettable and repentant terms in the Scripture (e.g. his anger with the wicked, his repentant of having made man in Gen. 6.6, of raising Saul to the kingdom in I Sam. 15.11 etc.) does not suggest that there is any emotion and thus actual regration or repentant in him. The anthropomorphous descriptions of God here are, in fact, to do with accommodated expressions of God to our capacity in order to be intelligible (Inst. I.xvii.13).

[140] Inst. I.xvi.3 and 4.

> of little worth falls to earth without the Father's will (Matt. 10:29), immediately applies it in this way: that since we are of greater value than sparrows, we ought to realize that God watches over us with all the closer care (Matt. 10:31)... I speak not only concerning mankind; but, because God has chosen the church to be his dwelling place, there is no doubt that he shows by singular proofs his fatherly care in ruling it.[141]

The attribution of the one eternal will (and being) of God is made not to the common life and unity of the Trinity, but to the individual person of the Father. God the Father is the beginning (*principium*) and foundation of all the actions of the Godhead (himself, and the Son and the Holy Spirit).[142] Calvin upholds the doctrine of the *principium* of God the Father. This appears to be the very reason that he takes the doctrine of the creator-God the Father as an appropriate place to mention the involvement of his one eternal will (and being) in his special providence and predestination of each one of the believers.

The attribution here (and the doctrine of the *principium*) is the direct outcome of the conceptual basis of the will and being of the one true God in their revelation in the providing and predestining action and being of the Creator and Father. It is geared to secure the absolute unity of God,[143] and resist any conceptualisation of the action and will of the one true God apart from their revelation in the distinctive works of the distinctive personal beings of the Trinity. For that presupposes a division, a fourth reality in God, and thus a quartering God that contradicts our belief in the triune God. The decision of the inner ontology of God in the attribution and the doctrine is based on epistemological actualism. Calvin endorses them, for he recognises the revelation of the eternal will (and being) of the creator-God the Father in his distinctive work of a special providence and predestination of each one of the believers. The ontological actuality of the creator-God the Father in his self-revelation precedes and determines the noetic

141 Inst. I.xvii.6.

142 Inst. I.xiii.18 and 20.

143 I made this point plain in the treatment of Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity.

and conceptual possibility.

Conclusion

The focal issue of Calvin's anthropology in Book I.xv is the epistemology and ontology of our original creaturehood and Creator, and of their relationship. It views their revelation in Scripture from the perspective of faith. The revelation of creation of man in Scripture is the source and the subject of inquiry of Calvin's anthropology in Book I.xv. Creation is the self-revelation of the creator-God the Father. God's living Word in faith is the only noetic, conceptual and hermeneutical possibility of the biblical revelation of creation of man from the creator-God the Father. The conceptual basis in this revelation offers dogmatic freedom and autonomy in faith. It enables Calvin not only to be free from a rigid biblical and traditional view of man, but also to present a realistic and objective view of his nature in the sight of God's Word.

The outcome of the perspective of our original good nature and image of God in their renewal in faith is this. Their discussion focuses on the condition of the good faculties of the soul. The reality of our image of God in creation is defined as spiritual and dynamic knowledge of the Creator. The ontology of man in faith precedes and determines the noetic and conceptual possibility of his nature. Calvin regards our spiritual and dynamic knowledge and image of the Creator as constitutive to our very nature in the order of creation. This substantiates the spiritual and dynamic character of our nature and relationship with the creator-God. The spiritual understanding of our image of God compels Calvin to pay attention to the question of women's equality in the image of God. He does not, however, commit himself to develop an adequate ground for this; he does not view the image of God as a mutual reality and relation of male and female in the light of the mutual reality and relation of the triune God.

The exposition of our sinfulness is viewed from the total renewal of every

good part of the soul in faith. This view determines the focus of its discussion on defects of faculties of the soul, and the proposal of total depravation of its original good faculties. Calvin develops the doctrine of the necessity of sin so as to consolidate this total depravation. The doctrine of total depravation is not intended to propose a pessimistic view of man that despises everything in him. Calvin stresses the excellence of the remnant of faculties of the soul (e.g. reason or intellect and will) despite their corruption and perversion. They are good enough to govern and advance earthly affairs, as well as, to gain knowledge and image of God.

The intention of the doctrine is to hammer out the total dependence of our good and saving knowledge and image of God and action on the redemptive grace of God in Christ. The thematic subject of the doctrine in Book II.1-5 is the revelation of the being and action of the redeemer-God in Christ. The doctrine is not inconsistent with the claim of the remnant of the image of God in sinful man. Calvin speaks of the quality of its remnant not as undamaged or uncorrupted, but as totally damaged and corrupted. The recognition of the former violates the law of God's grace in the renewal of every good and savable quality of the image of God in the soul. It is arguable that Calvin supports two qualitatively different kinds (good or uncorrupted and false or corrupted, and saving and unsaving) of image and knowledge of God.

The revelation of God in the Word, Jesus Christ, is not the subject of inquiry of our original nature in creation. The perspective of its inquiry in God's Word in faith does not lead to this suggestion. Its subject of inquiry is the revelation of the creation of man in Scripture. Creation is the self-revelation of the creator-God. God reveals himself as Creator in and through our creatureliness. The inquiry is the essential part of the doctrine of creation and Creator. Calvin here attests the biblical revelation of the characteristics and nature of Creator in the creation of man. Knowledge of our original good creaturehood functions to witness the

good creative action and being of God. The thematic subject of the inquiry is not man, but the creative action and being of God in the biblical revelation. The function of God's Word in faith is to inform us in the event of the revelation of Creator in creation that this revelation is the triune God the Father's.

Calvin contradicts both the Brunnerian commentators who interpret this revelation as general and untrinitarian, and the Barthian commentators who claim a christocentric view of its ontic and noetic reality. The revelation of the Word of God in the Redeemer, Jesus Christ, for him, differs from the revelation of the creator-God the Father in creation. The implication of the assertion of the trinitarian character of the revelation of Creator in creation is this. It not only resists natural theology, for faith is indispensable for the noetic and conceptual possibility of this revelation, but it also enables its relevance to true knowledge and image of Creator in faith and thus its positive and constructive use as the dogmatic source of Christian God. This is the primary purpose of inquiry of the biblical revelation of the Creator in the creation of man (and other things and beings).

The revelation of the Creator in Scripture differs from his revelation in creation not in its various qualities, but in its various modes or ways in them. It deals with the original good nature of man, the time and manner of the creation of man, and a special providence of each one of us. These kinds of knowledge we cannot gain from God's revelation in creation including ourselves. Knowledge of ourselves is geared to witness the revelation of the characteristics of the Creator in creation and providence. The temporal nature and beginning of man is marked out in the manner of the creation of man out of nothing in order to demonstrate the eternal nature and self-existence of the creator-God. Calvin demonstrates the triune nature of the creator-God the Father by recognising the involvement of the Word or Son and the Spirit in his creation of man out of nothing. The doctrine of providence stresses the reality of man (creation) as a

dependent being on the sustaining power of the creator-God. This is designed to demonstrate the sovereign (omnipotent, good and just) lordship and government and providence of the Creator over all created beings (i.e. man and angelic figures) and things. The subject of the doctrine is the revelation of the providing action and being of the one true creator-God the Father in Scripture.

Calvin consolidates this by attributing the eternal will and being of the creator-God to the individual person of the Trinity, the Father, rather than to their common life and unity. The acting subject of God in creation, providence and predestination is attributed to the Trinity, the Father, rather than to their common life and unity. This is vital to defend the distinctive action and being of the creator-God the Father. The attribution here endorses of the doctrine of the *principium* of God the Father. It is also vital to secure the absolute unity of the creator-God the Father with the Son and the Spirit. This is the direct outcome of the conceptual basis of the eternal will and being of God in their revelation in the providence and predestination of the Creator and the Father. Calvin supports the precedence of the noetic actuality to the conceptual possibility of the creator-God the Father, and avoids an abstract speculation about him. His ontological actuality in revelation precedes and determines his noetic and conceptual possibility.

3. Summary

3.i. The Relevance of Faith for the Revelation of Creator

The subject of inquiry of Book I of the 1559 *Institutes* is the revelation of the creative action and being of God the Father in creation and in Scripture. Calvin here discusses the Christian doctrine of creation and Creator, and God's primal and inclusive relationship with all men as their Creator, Governor and Provider. This Chapter examines the epistemology and the ontology of creation and Creator, and their relationship. It demonstrates the conceptual basis of the creative action and being of God in revelation in and through creation and Scripture, and the implication of this basis. The dynamic action and being of God in revelation determine their noetic and conceptual actuality and possibility; this emancipates Calvin from a rigid fidelity to biblical and traditional views.

Calvin's basis in revelation allows him dogmatic freedom and autonomy in faith. He perceives, interprets and systematises the revelation of the creative action and being of God in creation and Scripture as the distinctive action and being of the triune God the Father from the perspective of faith. Faith is the only noetic and conceptual possibility of the revelation of the action and being of the creator-God. It relies on the Word of God the Father which the Holy Spirit reveals in the subjectivity of man through the human word of Scripture. For Calvin, revelation is the simultaneous movement of the triune God. The perspective of faith is decisive in resisting a static rational systematisation of biblical and doctrinal ideas of creation and Creator. It subjects their systematisation to the authority and judgement of the Word of the living God, and maintains their epistemological and theological dynamism. It enables Calvin to present their realistic and objective view in the sight of God's Word.

The Barthian and Brunnerian interpreters are misleading in their dismissal of Calvin's affirmation of the actual occurrence of the trinitarian revelation of the

creator-God as the Father in creation and in Scripture. For they fail to elaborate the hermeneutical relevance of faith for this revelation. Their failure leads to misinterpretation of the nature and purpose of revelation. E. A. Dowey interprets the nature of the revelation of Creator in creation as general and nontrinitarian, and argues that the subject of inquiry of Book I is this general and nontrinitarian revelation from the perspective of natural reason. Dowey endorses E. Brunner's claim of a natural theology in Calvin, for he, they believe, confirms natural or general revelation and knowledge of Creator as the conceptual source of God within faith. They do not take seriously the insistence of the Barthian interpreters that Calvin views natural knowledge of God (*divinitatis sensus*) as false It cannot therefore be used within true knowledge of God in faith. Their relationship is exclusive and irreconcilable.

The Barthian interpreters confine the purpose of Calvin's treatment of the revelation of the Creator in creation to the declaration of the unbeliever's inexcusability before God. For they eliminate any suggestion of natural theology in this treatment. They (e.g. T. F. Torrance, W. Niesel, T. H. L. Parker and D. Willis) do not consider the treatment as integral to his theology, marginalising it from the rest of his theology. It is based on the revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ. They ignore Calvin's own way of obviating natural theology, and also the constructive and positive use of the revelation of the Creator in creation for the believer. Calvin defines the revelation of the Creator in creation and in Scripture as that of the triune God the Father from the perspective of faith, and determines this trinitarian revelation as the determinative source of knowledge of the creative action and being of God. The conceptual basis of knowledge in revelation eliminates any suggestion of natural theology. It confines the noetic and conceptual possibility of revelation to faith alone.

Willis proposes the revelation of the Creator in creation as the source of the Christian doctrine of God. His proposal relies on the Barthian christocentric

interpretation of the nature of God's revelation. He and others (e.g. T. F. Torrance, W. Niesel, T. H. L. Parker) believe that Calvin designates the second person of the Trinity, the Word or Son, Christ, as the only ontic reality of God's revelation. Willis argues for the revelation of the creator God in creation from the Word or Son of the Father and the Holy Spirit, and proposes a christocentric interpretation of this revelation as a theoretical basis for trinitarian knowledge of the creator-God as the Father. We perceive the Word or Son of God the Father and the Holy Spirit from the revelation in creation. The trinitarian nature of the creator-God as the Father is viewed from the ontological unity and relationship of the Word or Son with the creator God the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Willis fails to appreciate Calvin's own methodological procedure. Calvin argues for the trinitarian knowledge of the creator God from his trinitarian revelation as the Father, and for his trinitarian nature from his ontological unity and relationship of with the Word or Son in the Holy Spirit. The trinitarian knowledge of the creator God is based not on the revelation of God in the Word, Christ, but in the Father. Willis' failure is rooted in his ignorance of the dogmatic function of faith in Book I that affirms the actual occurrence of the trinitarian revelation of the creator-God as the Father in creation and in Scripture. Calvin never suggests one individual person of the Trinity, the Word or Son, Christ, as the sole origin of all revelations and words of God, as the Barthian interpreters claim. He also recognises the revelation of God the Father in creation and the Holy Spirit in sanctification.

Calvin's understanding of the nature of God's revelation is fundamentally trinitarian rather than christocentric. He asserts the possibility of diverse revelations and words of God in each distinctive person of the Trinity. The subject of inquiry of Book I is not the revelation of God in the Word or Son, but in the Father. It concerns the revelation of the creative action and being of God the Father in creation and Scripture. Calvin here claims the internal witness of God's

Word in faith by the Holy Spirit as the hermeneutical and conceptual possibility of the revelation of the creator-God as the Father. He considers the revelation of God in the Word or Son in Book II, in which he deals with the redemptive action and being of God the Word or Son in the man Jesus Christ.

3.ii. The Creator-God the Father as the Thematic Subject

Book I of the 1559 *Institutes* is designed to recognise and praise the creative action and being God the Father from his revelation in creation and in Scripture We cannot freely and willingly praise, worship, serve and love the creator God without knowing his fatherly goodness and love to us and for us. Calvin here formulates a Christian doctrine of creation and Creator from this revelation The primary and positive purpose of the discussion of natural or false knowledge of God (*divinitatis sensus*) from the revelation is designed to demonstrate it as the creative gift and action of God. The Barthian interpreters (e.g. T. F. Torrance, W. Niesel, T. H. L. Parker) are indifferent to its positive function for the believer. Calvin never suggests natural knowledge of God (*divinitatis sensus*) as the conceptual source of Christian God, as E. Brunner argues. The conceptual possibility of natural knowledge of God (*divinitatis sensus*) relies on the perspective of the living faith of a believer. The secondary and negative function of the treatment of the *divinitatis sensus* is to declare the unbeliever's inexcusability before God. They neither thank and praise the revelation of the fatherly goodness and love of the creator God in creation and Scripture.

Calvin never qualitatively differentiates the revelation of the Creator in creation from his revelation in Scripture, but proposes different kinds of knowledge of creation and Creator in these different means of revelation. The knowledge of them in faith from these means is not contradictory, but complementary. The knowledge of them from the revelation of the Creator in Scripture clarifies and supplements the knowledge of them from his revelation in creation. The treat-

ment of the former does not deal with the involvement of the eternal will and essence of God and the Word or Son and the Holy Spirit in the creative work of God the Father. Their involvement is recognised in the treatment of the revelation of the Creator in Scripture. This revelation also provides knowledge of the original nature of man, the time and manner of his creation, an angelology, a demonology and God's special providence and relationship with each one of us For Calvin, we cannot gain these kinds of knowledge from the revelation of the Creator in creation (including ourselves) since the Fall. He stresses the knowability of God in the creation of man, and God's general or universal providence and relationship with all men from this revelation.

The common tendency in the treatment of the revelation of the Creator in creation and in Scripture is this. Calvin not only determines the reality of creation (including ourselves) in the light of its dynamic relationship with the creator-God, but he also discusses its reality in order to witness the creative action and being of God the Father. The thematic subject of the treatment is the creative action and being of God the Father. Calvin presents the good and bad nature of creation before and after the Fall of the first man, Adam, from the perspective of faith. The recognition and praise of the goodness, the beauty and glory of creation is geared to glorify the wisdom, goodness and love of the creator-God. Calvin advocates total depravation of our original good nature and image of God to highlight God's gracious and free renewal of it, and admits the excellence of the natural gifts of the creator-God (e.g. faculties of the soul such as natural reason, intellect and will) in sinful man so as to stress the mercy and grace of God which preserve them.

Man is the focus of Calvin's doctrine of creation. Not only does the reality of the whole creation depend on man's faithful and unfaithful relationship with the creator-God, but it also exists for human life and salvation. Calvin's anthropology spells out the precise relationship between creation and Creator. Its conceptual

basis in God's Word in faith gives rise to its focus on the dynamic response of faculties of the soul (e.g. reason, intellect and will) to the revelation of God. Our true nature and image of God in creation is discussed predominantly from his spiritual and dynamic knowledge of God.

The relationship between the Word of God, Christ, and creation is epistemological rather than ontological. God's Word in faith by the Holy Spirit provides the hermeneutical and conceptual possibility of the revelation of the reality of creation (and Creator) in Scripture. Calvin does not regard the creatureliness of God in the man Christ as the ontological basis of the creatureliness of man and the world. The ontological basis of our created image of God is argued not from Jesus Christ, the redeemer-God the Son or Word, but from the creator-God the Father. The orientation of the doctrine of creation is trinitarian rather than christocentric. Creation (including ourselves) is interpreted as the distinctive work of God in the Father rather than in the Word or Son, Christ.

The emphasis of the doctrine rests persistently on the ontological continuity and distinction between temporal creation and eternal Creator. The doctrine nevertheless succeeds in maintaining their constant relationship by declaring the total dependence of the existence and sustenance of creation on the power and providence of the creator-God. The insistence on this dependence not only highlights the sovereign lordship of the creator God over all created things and beings, but it also leads us to view creation and its relationship with the creator God not as a static and fixed reality, but as a dynamic and existential reality.

The doctrine of creation coheres with the doctrine of the creator God the Father. It is designed to attest the revelation of the creative action and being of God the Father in creation and in Scripture. There is a mutual tie between knowledge of creation including ourselves and the creator-God. Their mutual relationship is not the central theme of the 1559 *Institutes*, as T. H. L. Parker claims, but its epistemological basis. This is intended to avoid abstract speculation about the

essence of God in and for himself, and to view this from his action (revelation) of creation (of man). The untenability of Parker's claim is that it presupposes knowledge of creation including ourselves as the central theme of Book I. Its real theme and subject is, however, the creative action and being of God the Father. Knowledge of ourselves as creation is designed to witness this.

The doctrine of the creative action and being of God is based in their revelation in creation and Scripture. This resists any dualistic and separate treatment of the creative action and being of God. Calvin deals with the question of (the being) who the one true God is always from the question of what he does (the action). The outcome of the conceptual basis of God in his self-revelation (action) is this. God is viewed no longer as a solitary being in and for himself, but as a relational and trinitarian being to us and for us. The acting person and subject of God in revelation and the work of creation is attributed to the distinctive being of the Father, rather than to his eternal essence in common with the Word or Son and the Holy Spirit. We encounter and know God as the Creator and the Father in the event of revelation. The eternal essence of God is incomprehensible and transcendent to our cognition. The attribution here relies on epistemological actualism rather than a logical priority of the Trinity to its unity.

The emphasis of the doctrine rests on the distinctive action and being of the Father rather than on his being and action in common with the Son or Word and the Holy Spirit. Their involvement in the creative work of God the Father does not hinder Calvin from affirming creation as the distinctive work of God the Father and his distinctive being as the Creator. The doctrine differentiates the distinctive person of the creator-God the Father from his essence, recognising them as temporal and as eternal realities. The temporal quality of God the Father is implied in the designation of his distinctive work and being as the beginning and the Initiator of all things. His eternal quality is recognised in the light of his ontological unity with the Son or Word in the Holy Spirit.

Calvin does not go beyond traditional trinitarian expressions. He expresses the temporal and eternal qualities of the creator-God the Father as the temporal person and as the eternal essence. The major weakness of the doctrine of the creator-God the Father in Book I of the 1559 *Institutes* is this It fails to consider the personal dialogue between the temporal man Jesus Christ and the eternal God the Father for the quality of their unity. There is no recognition of the conscious subjects and personal dialogue in the unity of the temporal and eternal qualities of the creator-God the Father. The systematic goal of the doctrine is largely responsible for its major weakness. It limits Calvin's trinitarian interpretation of the creator-God as the Father within his relationship with the pre-existence of the man Jesus, the eternal Word.

Chapter II Soteriology

Calvin's soteriology follows his doctrine of the creative action and being of God the Father, the first step of theology,[1] and is expounded in the context of christology and pneumatology. This chapter examines the relevance of Calvin's soteriology to the revelation (action) of the Son or Word of God in the man Jesus and then to the revelation (action) of the Spirit of God in our subjectivity The former establishes the objective basis of redemption, whilst the latter creates and sustains faith for our subjective appropriation of God's redemption in Jesus Christ. The chapter focuses on unraveling the implications of the conceptual basis of Calvin's soteriology in the trinitarian revelation, and argues that the orientation of his soteriology and his doctrinal freedom and dynamism in faith is the direct outcome of his basis in the trinitarian revelation.

II.1. The Revelation of the Son of God in Redemption

Introduction

Book II of the 1559 *Institutes* deals with soteriology by exploring the implications of the revelation of the Son or Word of God in the man Jesus. It begins with the doctrine of sin (in i-vi), and then treats the relationship between the law in the Old Testament and the gospel in the New Testament (in vii-xi). This treatment demonstrates the basis of the doctrine of redemption in the biblical witness to the exclusive covenantal relationship of God with the believer in Christ. The doctrine of sin highlights the necessity of the historical human life (revelation) of the Son of God in the man Jesus for the redemption of fallen men. Calvin's exposition of the revelation concentrates on its divine and human natures and their redemptive purpose. This leads to a treatment of the person and work of the man Jesus (in xii-xvii).

[1] Inst. II.vi.4.

The major concern of this section still remains as illustrating the basis and perspective of Calvin's doctrine of redemption, and their implications. The relevance of Christ's two natures and their unity in his redemptive work is considered through an exposition of the christological basis of the doctrine. Attention is paid to the precise trinitarian nature of the doctrine. It is essential to understand in what sense Calvin talks about the redemptive action and being of God in Jesus Christ.

1.i. The Perspective of Faith

The subject of inquiry of the doctrine of redemption in Book II is the biblical witness to the revelation of the redemptive action and being of the one true God in Christ. The doctrine relates the gospel of the New Testament to the law of the Old Testament, and makes both indispensable for Christian theology and life.[2] They attest the revelation of God's merciful and gracious redemption of fallen men in Christ. Their unity in the saving history (*Heilsgeschichte*) of God in Christ, however, does not seem to allow sufficient attention to be given to their context and history. The unfulfilled and fulfilled promises of historical and socio-political deliverance of God in the Old Testament appear merely as symbols referring to his promise of eternal and spiritual salvation in Christ.

The implication of Calvin's basis in the biblical revelation of the redemptive action and being of the Son of God in Christ is this. Faith becomes indispensable for the noetic and conceptual possibility of this revelation. The perspective

[2] Inst. II.vii-xi. Calvin's view of the gospel is twofold. First, he refers to the New Testament itself (Inst. II.xi.10). Second, he refers to the covenantal promises of God's gracious and merciful deliverance of man in Christ, which is in common to both the Old and New Testaments (Inst. II.x.1. cf. ix.2). The Son or Word of God, Christ, manifested himself to the pious Jews (e.g. Abraham, Hannah and David) of the Old Testament, who had knowledge of him as their Redeemer in faith. True and saving knowledge of the redeemer-God stems solely from faith in Christ (Inst. II.vi.4). Christ was presented to them under the Law as the object of their faith (Inst. II.vi.2). Calvin acknowledges the difference of the Old from the New Testaments. The general method of confirming the covenantal relationship of God with man in the Old Testament is the consideration of sacrificial ceremonies (Inst. II.x.4), whereas it is the proclamation of Christ's redemptive life and works in the New Testament (Inst. II.x.8).

of faith relates the doctrine of redemption (and christology) to pneumatology[3] Faith relies on the internal witness of God's Word by the Holy Spirit. Calvin does not consider Scripture itself as the determinative source of the doctrine of redemption and christology. We cannot therefore treat the doctrine of redemption and christology in Book II of the 1559 *Institutes* merely as a rational exposition of formal biblical principles of the redemptive action and being of God. The assertion of the Old Testament's witness to Christ stems from Calvin's interpretation of the Testament from the perspective of faith.[4] An expectation of God's redemption through a mediator of Christ is utterly foreign in the Old Testament itself.

The doctrine of redemption in Book II has its particular systematic purpose It systematises the biblical witness to the revelation of the redemptive action and being of God in the man Christ as the distinctive action and being of the Son or Word. "*Christus* may refer in a secondary sense to the Eternal Son of God *extra carnem* as well as in a primary sense to the *Deus manifestatus.*"[5] The beauty of Calvin's systematisation is that it does not fall into a rigid and formalistic rationalisation and systematisation of biblical materials. His systematisation is subjected to the Holy Spirit's internal witness of God's living Word in faith. The perspective of faith by this internal witness actually gives rise to Calvin's trinitarian interpretation of Jesus Christ as the Son or Word of God.

The dependence of Calvin's theology on the internal witness is apparent in Calvin's endorsement of the Apostles' Creed's attestation of the redemptive life

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[3] W. Krusche, *Das Wirken des Heiligen Geistes nach Calvin*, Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1957, pp. 202ff. O. Weber, *Foundations of Dogmatics*, Vol. II, trans. D. L. Guder, William B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1983, p. 134.

[4] "Now if we review objectively the second chapter of Zechariah, the angel who sends the other angel (Zech. 2:3) is immediately declared to be the God of Hosts, and to him is ascribed the highest power (v. 9). I pass over innumerable testimonies on which our faith safely agrees, even though they move the Jews not a whit. For when it is said in Isaiah, "Behold, this is our God;... he is Jehovah; we shall wait upon him, and he will preserve us"... anyone with eyes can see that this refers to God, who rises up anew to save his people. And the emphatic demonstrations twice repeated permit a reference here to no one else but Christ." Inst. I.xiii.10.

[5] E. D. Will, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, p. 109.

and action of the Son of God in the man Jesus Christ. The basis of his endorsement is not the authority and credibility of the Creed as such, but its perspective of faith. In other words, it is authoritative because based on the Holy Spirit's internal witness of God's Word in faith from Scripture.

> Rather, the noteworthy point about the Creed is this: we have in it a summary of our faith, full and complete in all details; and containing nothing in it except what has been derived from the pure Word of God. If any persons have scruples about admitting this article into the Creed, it will soon be made plain how important it is to the sum of our redemption: if it is left out, much of the benefit of Christ's death will be lost.[6]

> Thus far I have followed the order of the Apostles' Creed because it sums up in a few words the main points of our redemption, and thus may serve as a tablet for us upon which we see distinctly and point by point the things in Christ that we ought to heed... We consider to be beyond controversy the only point that ought to concern us: that the whole history of our faith is summed up in it succinctly and in definite order, and that it contains nothing that is not vouched for by genuine testimonies of Scripture. This being understood, it is pointless to trouble oneself or quarrel with anyone over the author. Unless, perchance, it is not enough for one to have the certain truth of the Holy Spirit, without at the same time knowing either by whose mouth it was spoken or by whose hand it was written.[7]

The perspective of faith allows Calvin to propose a dynamic and realistic view of the nature and purpose of the revelation of God's Word (or Son) in the man Jesus Christ. Faith entails a dynamic encounter with the Word of God in Christ by the Holy Spirit, which makes us believe and understand the nature and purpose of this revelation in Scripture. Its nature and purpose are considered in the context of Christ's whole redemptive life and work (his divine and human life, incarnation, suffering, death, resurrection and ascension).[8]

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[6] Inst. II.xvi.8.

[7] Inst. II.xvi.18.

[8] "Therefore, we always have Christ according to the presence of majesty; but of his physical presence it was rightly said to his disciples, 'You will not always have me with you' (Matt. 26:11). For the church had him in his bodily presence for a few days; now it holds him by faith, but does not see him with the eyes." Inst. II.xvi.14. "The cross, to which he was nailed, was a symbol of this, as the apostle testifies: 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, when he

Calvin presupposes Christ's own word, the Word of God in faith, as the noetic, hermeneutical, conceptual possibility of the biblical revelation of his own redemptive nature and work, and rejects any rational speculation of Christ's two natures and their relationship, or of their relevance to redemption. He designates Christ's role in this possibility as his prophetic office, and stresses its indispensability for true and saving knowledge of God.[9] The possibility of his christology in faith does not undermine the historicity of Christ. He views the biblical revelation of the historical person and work of the man Jesus from the perspective of faith in God's Word in Christ. We therefore encounter the revelation of the historical Jesus and his own interpretation of his nature and work in faith here and now by the Holy Spirit.

> On the other hand, we must note this: he received anointing, not only for himself that he might carry out the office of teaching, but for his whole body that the power of the Spirit might be present in the continuing preaching of the gospel. This, however, remains certain: the perfect doctrine he has brought has made an end to all prophecies. All those, then, who, not content with the gospel, patch it with something extraneous to it, detract from Christ's authority. The Voice that thundered from heaven, "This is my beloved Son... hear him" (Matt. 17:5; cf. Matt. 3:17), exalted him by a singular privilege beyond the rank of all others... That is, outside Christ there is nothing worth knowing, and all who by faith perceive what he is like have grasped the whole immensity of heavenly benefits. For this reason, Paul writes in another passage: "I decided to know nothing precious... except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (I Cor. 2:2). This is very true, because it is not lawful to go beyond the simplicity of the gospel. And the prophetic dignity of Christ leads us to know that in the sum of doctrine as he has given it to us all parts of perfect wisdom are contained.[10]

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became a curse for us...' Yet we must not understand that he fell under a curse that overwhelmed him; rather—in taking the curse upon himself—he cursed, broke, and scattered its whole force. Hence faith apprehends an acquittal in the condemnation of Christ, a blessing in his curse." Inst. II.xvi.6. Calvin elaborates the significance of Christ's ascension for redemption from the perspective of faith. The redemptive benefits of Christ's ascension is knowable only to faith (Inst. II.xvi.16).

[9] Inst. II.vi.1 and 4.

[10] Inst. II.xv.2.

1.ii. The Christological and Soteriological Link

The basis of Calvin's doctrine of redemption in God's revelation in Christ determines its christological character. He confines the scope of the doctrine to the revelation of the Son of God in the man Jesus Christ. The doctrine explores the implication of the being and action of this man for redemption, and demonstrates the objective basis of our redemption and faith in the human and historical life and work of the Son of God in the man Jesus. Calvin's Christology is soteriologically orientated.[11] It views the divine and human natures of Christ from their mediatorial and reconciling function for the redemption of fallen men by God.[12] It is a functional christology[13] that stresses the importance of Christ's divine and human natures in their particular redemptive functions.[14]

Calvin's interpretation of christology in the light of the doctrine of sin appears responsible for the prominence of soteriology in his christology. The doctrine of sin precedes christology. Christology is designed to answer the problem of sin in the world. This was not the case in the patristic and mediaeval dogmatics [15] Calvin always sees the divine and human person of Christ as the Redeemer of sinful men and as their Mediator in their reconciliation with God. In other words, the understanding of christology in the light of the doctrine of sin entails the view of the divine and human person of Christ from his redemptive work. It is crucial for Calvin's successful intergration of the person (being) with the work (action) of Christ. The action (work) derives from and depends on the personal being of

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[11] O. Weber, op. cit., p. 11. R. A. Muller is convinced that the soteriological structure of Calvin's Christology follows the Augustinian and Anselmic argument for the necessity of the humanity and the divinity of Christ for his mediatorial function, although he "examined scripture as a source of doctrine." *Christ and The Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins*, Baker Book House, Michigan, 1986, p. 27.

[12] The redemptive functions of the divine and human natures of Christ will be spelled out later.

[13] Jurgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, SCM Press, London, 1974, pp. 257-259.

[14] "Now it has been of the greatest importance for us that he who was to be our Mediator is both true God and man." Inst. II.xii.1. "For the same reason it was also imperative that he who was to become our Redeemer be true God and true man." Inst. II.xii.2.

[15] O. Weber, op. cit., p. 10.

Christ, but never *vice versa*, even though they are inseparable as self-explanatory to each other.

The implication of Calvin's integration of the person with the work of Christ is this. It eludes the suggestion of Christ as a mere symbol and means of redemption and grace as in the mediaeval Thomistic christology; that considers the work of Christ and its benefits independently from his person,[16] and fails to stress the personal subject of Christ in his work and its benefit to us and for us. Calvin also avoids the abstract notion of person of Christ as a being existing in and of itself in patristic christology,[17] which did not take seriously the redemptive action of Christ to us and for us in its treatment of the personal being of Christ.

Calvin's christology opposes any separation of the divine and human natures, and of the mediatorial and redemptive works of Christ. They are regarded as the contents of the one revelation of the Son of God in the man Jesus Christ from the perspective of faith. "Calvin understands Jesus's divine and human person, not his human nature, as the bearer of his office as mediator".[18] He distances himself from the mediaeval Thomistic christology that claims the mediatorial

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[16] Thomas Aquinas fails to stress the relevance of the human and divine person of Christ for sacraments (*Summa Theologica*, III, *qu.* 50-6), and consequently reduces the significance of Christ to a mere means and symbol of grace and redemption (O. Weber, op. cit., p. 10).

[17] Weber asserts that the words *ousia* and *prosopon* or *hypostasis* were "originally meant the 'mask' behind which the essential was concealed and only indirectly appeared. Thus the concept completely lacks any trace of someone who is there as an opposite, who confronts with us. It leads us very easily to an understanding of the 'person' of Jesus Christ as a being existing in and of itself... We must bear in mind that such 'titles of honor' in the New Testament as 'the Lord,' or 'the Christ,' or 'the Son,' do not designate a being in and of itself, which could also be conceived of as ineffective and inactive, but rather, in speaking of a person, they mean this person as the One who encounter us, who carries out his work upon us. This has but no means always been recognized in the history of Christology, although certainly Christology always was connected with soteriology, which was generally the case in the West, but also often in the East, especially in Athanasius. Yet this is the very glory of Jesus Christ, that he is who he is completely for us. This is the correct insight which is expressed in the phrase 'Christ for us' (*Christus pro nobis*). This is where the strength of Calvin's Christology lies. And this is the reason that it may be regarded as a special accomplishment when Calvin, following and continuing theological ideas of the early Church and the Middle Ages, introduced the doctrine of the threefold office of Christ (*triplex munus Christi*) into Reformed dogmatics first, which was then taken over into Lutheran dogmatics, beginning with Johann Gerhard." Op. cit., p. 11.

[18] W. Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*, trans. L. L. Wilkins and D. A. Priebe, SCM Press, London, 1968, p. 124. cf. p. 222.

action (office) of Christ mainly from his human nature.[19]

The mediatorial and redemptive work of Christ is contemplated in the light of his threefold (prophetic, kingly and priestly) office. Calvin introduces their dogmatic significance into Reformed dogmatics first,[20] and demonstrates the divine and human natures of Christ from his threefold office, and *vice versa*. The threefold office of Christ should not be understood as static and successive, but as dynamic and simultaneous activities. "He is not now a prophet, now a priest, or now a king; rather, He is always at every moment prophet, priest, and king."[21] The offices are the actions of the one person of Christ for his mediation between God and fallen men for redemption.

J. F. Jansen is misleading to claim that the essential structure of Calvin's doctrine of Christ's work remains two-fold in the kingly and priestly offices.[22] Calvin upholds the threefold (prophetic, kingly and priestly) work of Christ, and apparently warns us not to overlook the indispensability of each one of the threefold offices of Christ for our faith and our hope of redemption.[23] Jansen's claim relies on the fact that "revelation is not a 'third something'; revelation is redemption since the Revealer is the Redeemer."[24] It fails to recognise the fact that Calvin views Christ's threefold office from his threefold (prophetic, kingly

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[19] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, III, *qu.* 26, *art.* 2.

[20] E. Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption*, trans. Olive Wyon, Lutterworth Press, London, 1952, p. 314. W. Pannenberg, op. cit., p. 222. O. Weber, op. cit., p. 12. The doctrine of Christ's threefold office (*triplex munus Christi*) functions to identify the anointed messianic figures of prophet, king and priest in the Old Testament with Christ in the New Testament (Inst. II.xv.2), and achieves a theological unity of the Old and New Testaments.

[21] J. F. Jansen, *Calvin's Doctrine of The Work of Christ*, J. Clarke, London, 1956, p. 17.

[22] Ibid. p. 51.

[23] "Therefore, in order that faith may find a firm basis for salvation in Christ, and thus rest in him, this principle must be laid down: the office enjoined upon Christ by the Father consists of three parts. For he was given to be prophet, king, and priest." Inst. II.xv.1. "Now it is to be noted that the title "Christ" pertains to these three offices: for we know that under the law prophets as well as priests and kings were anointed with holy oil. Hence the illustrious name of "Messiah" was also bestowed upon the promised Mediator. As I have elsewhere shown, I recognize that Christ was called Messiah especially with respect to, and by virtue of, his kingship. Yet his anointings as prophet and as priest have their place and must not be overlooked by us." Inst. II.xv.2.

[24] Ibid. p. 106.

and priestly) works, not from his one being as the Revealer and the Redeemer There is no difficulty in arguing the distinctiveness of the prophetic, kingly and priestly works of the one person, Christ. His prophetic office, the continuous proclamation of his redemptive nature and work in our faith for redemption, differs from his priestly office, the offering of his obedient and sinless human life unto death on the cross as a satisfactory sacrifice to God the Father for our redemption.[25]

1.iii. Christ's Divinity for Redemption

iii.1. God's Election as the Origin of Christ's Humanity

Calvin maintains the traditional doctrine of the *anhypostasis* that rejects the autonomous existence of the historical man Jesus, and argues for the total dependence of his existence on the self-revelation and incarnation of the eternal Word or Son of God. There is clear rejection of the copulation of the virgin Mary with man for the conception of the man Jesus.[26] His conception denotes the self-revelation and dwelling of the eternal Son of God, Christ, in the virgin Mary's womb.[27] The incarnation of Christ does not mean that he became a man or gained his humanity for the first time.

The doctrine of the *Logos ensarkos* (λογος 'ενσαρκος) is upheld much favorably than *Logos asarkos* (λογος 'ασαρκος). Calvin views the humanity of the historical Jesus from that of the eternal Word or Son of God, Christ, rather than confirming the humanity of Christ only from his incarnation in the man Jesus.[28] There is a persistent emphasis on the direct relevance of the human life of the Son

[25] Inst. II.xv.6.

[26] Inst. II.xiii.4.

[27] Inst. II.xiv.1.

[28] "Now we confess that the Mediator, who was born of the virgin, is properly the Son of God... he is believed to be the Son of God because the Word begotten of the Father before all ages took human nature in a hypostatic union." Inst. II.xiv.5. "But if his filiation, so to speak, took its beginning from the time when he was manifest in flesh, it will follow that he was Son also with respect to human nature." Inst. II.xiv, 8.

of God, Christ, to the redemptive will and decree of God the Father; the former derived from the latter and existed for its fulfillment.[29] God the Father assumed human nature in the Son or Word, Christ, to be our Redeemer and Mediator and Reconciler before the foundation of the world.[30] For Calvin, humanity is intrinsic to the nature of God in the Son or Word, Christ. This God has redemptive, mediatorial and reconciling nature *in se*.

The ontological identification of the Son of God, Christ, with the man Jesus opposes the introduction of new humanity to his nature from his incarnation, which might present the man Jesus as some new sort of Christ.[31] It overcomes Nestorius' failure to obviate the possibility of two different persons of Christ, as the son of man and the Son of God. There is a difference between the pre-historic and historic existence of Christ for Calvin; our knowledge of the fatherhood of God *in se* is clearer from the latter than from the former.

> Now we confess that the Mediator, who was born of the virgin, is properly the Son of God... he is believed to be the Son of God because the Word begotten of the Father before all ages took human nature in a hypostatic union. Now the old writers defined "hypostatic union" as that which constitutes one person out of two natures. This expression was devised to refute the delusion of Nestorius, because he imagined that the Son of God so dwelt in the flesh that he was not man also. Servetus accuses us of making two Sons of God when we say that the eternal Word, before he was clothed with flesh, was already the Son of God—as if we were saying something else than that he was manifested in the flesh. If he was God before he became man, he did not, for that reason, begin to be a new God! It is no more absurd for us to say that the Son of God was manifested in the flesh yet had by virtue of eternal generation always possessed sonship... But after the only-begotten Son of God was brought into the world,

[29] "Now it has been of the greatest importance for us that he who was to be our Mediator is both true God and man. If someone asks why this is necessary, there has been no simple (to use the common expression) or absolute necessity. Rather, it has stemmed from a heavenly decree, on which men's salvation depended. Our most merciful Father decreed what was best for us." Inst. II.xii.1.

[30] "For the same reason it was also imperative that he who was to become our Redeemer be true God and true man. It was his task to swallow up death... It was his task to conquer sin... Now where does life or righteous, or lordship and authority of heavenly lie but God alone? Therefore our most merciful God, when he willed that we be redeemed, made himself our Redeemer in the person of his only-begotten Son." Inst. II.xii.2.

[31] Inst. II.xii.5.

the heavenly fatherhood became more clearly known.[32]

The link between the human and historical life of the Son and the redemptive will of God the Father is made from the perspective of faith.[33] The outcome of this link is remarkable. The direct cause of the reconciliation of God with fallen men in Christ is not ascribed to Adam's Fall and the sinful alienation of the whole humanity from God in history. It relies on the predetermined will and decree of God the Father in Christ before the foundation of the world.[34] The link here is decisive in demonstrating the sovereign grace, mercy and love of God in the redemptive action and being of Christ in the man Jesus.

iii.2. A Trinitarian Interpretation of the Man Jesus

Calvin presents the redemptive action and being of the Son of God, Christ, in the man Jesus in the light of a trinitarian movement. The whole human and historical life of the Son in the man Jesus is to fulfil the redemptive will of God the Father by the power of the Holy Spirit.[35] Calvin attributes the initiation, the fulfillment and the efficacy of the objectivity of redemption, respectively, to the distinctive actions of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This attribution shows that there is a subordination of the Son to the Father regarding their particular functions and actions for redemption. This appears in the doctrine of the Trinity (in Book I.xiii.18); the claim there is the frame of reference for the doctrine of redemption in Book II.

Commentators are well aware of Calvin's trinitarian interpretation of the action and being of the man Jesus.[36] They are indifferent to the implication of the precise nature of the trinitarian orientation of the doctrine of redemption

[32] Inst. II.xiv.5. cf. xiv.7.

[33] Inst. II.xvii.2.

[34] Inst. II.xii.5.

[35] Inst. II.xiii.4. cf. xv.2.

[36] F. Wendel, *Calvin*, pp. 215. E. Dowey, *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology*, pp. 41-9. T. H. L. Parker, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, pp. 107-110. E. D. Willis, op. cit., pp. 74ff.

and christology in Book II, however, even though this is vital to understand in what sense Calvin discusses the redemptive action and being of God in the man Jesus. This is largely because they fail to appreciate the trinitarian orientation and unity of the 1559 *Institutes* as it is.

Calvin views the man Jesus in the context of the relationship and unity of the Son or Word with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, and designates the redemptive action and being of God in the man Jesus as the distinctive action and person of the Son or Word. He never presents the personhood of Jesus as that of the divine essence of the Son of God in common with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Rather, he describes it as the personhood of the man Jesus who is identical with the second mode of the Trinity, the Son of God,[37] Christ, the Mediator[38] and the Redeemer. This seems to be vitally important, for it not only defends the distinctive person and being of the Son in the one God, but also provides the basis for claiming the distinctive person and being of the other members of the Trinity.

Calvin's doctrines of redemption and his christology, like his doctrine of the Trinity, attribute the acting person and subject of God in the redemptive work of the man Jesus to the individual being of the Son or Word rather than to the whole Trinity or to the one essence of God. This attribution is based not on a logical priority of the Trinity over its unity, but on epistemological actualism. This is because our faith encounters the person of the Son, Christ, in the revelation of God in the man Jesus, and understands the Son, Christ, as the Redeemer, the Mediator and the Reconciler. The one divine essence of the Son, Christ, in unity with God the Father and the Holy Spirit is transcendent to our cognition and incomprehensible.[39]

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[37] "For the same reason it was also imperative that he who was to become our Redeemer be true God and true man... Therefore our most merciful God, when he willed that we be redeemed, made himself our Redeemer in the person of his only-begotten Son." Inst. II.xii.2.

[38] Inst. II.xiv.2 and 3.

[39] Inst. I.xiii.1.

The attribution here leads to an emphasis on the individual action and person of the Son or Word, rather than on the common action and being of the whole Trinity. The recognition of the involvement of the Father and the Holy Spirit in the redemptive action of the Son of God in the man Jesus does not undermine the fact that the principal action of the Son of God in the man Jesus are mediation and reconciliation between God and fallen men for their redemption, and that he is the Redeemer, the Mediator and the Reconciler of fallen men. Mediation and reconciliation for redemption are intrinsic to the nature of the Son of God in the man Jesus.

iii.3. The True Divinity of the Man Jesus

The trinitarian interpretation of the man Jesus demonstrates his divinity in the light of the eternal unity of the Son with God the Father in the Holy Spirit.[40] The divinity of the man Jesus Christ is indispensable for his redemptive mediatorial office. It is the divinity of the eternal Son which assumed human nature in the flesh of the historical man Jesus, which enables him to conquer sin and Satan by his sinless life and perfect obedience to God, the Father, so that we may be free from the slavery of sin, death, and Satan.[41] Christ's protection of the believer from the evil influence of Satan is regarded as Christ's kingly office and work of Christ.[42]

Calvin stresses the true divinity of the man Jesus by insisting on its transcendent and boundless activity which crosses an geographical and historical boundaries,[43] and opposes the complete containment of the divinity of Christ in the

[40] "On the other hand, I contend that he is called Son of God by virtue of his deity and eternal essence. For it is just as appropriate to refer the fact that he is called 'Son of God' to his divine nature, as it is to refer the fact that he is called 'Son of man' to his human nature." Inst. II.xiv.6. cf. I.xiii.8.

[41] Inst. II.xii.1 and 2.

[42] Inst. II.xv.3-5.

[43] "They thrust upon us as something absurd the fact that if the Word of God became flesh, then he was confined within the narrow prison of an earthly body. This is mere impudence! For even if the Word in his immeasurable essence united with the nature of man into one person, we do not imagine that he was confined therein. Here is something marvelous: the Son of God descended

flesh of Jesus of Nazareth. This is incompatible with the Lutheran doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's body, which argued for the presence of Jesus' total divinity and humanity in the eucharistic elements. The rejection of the confinement of the divinity of Christ in his humanity, which is termed as the *extra Calvinisticum* by Lutheran theologians, is not new. It is more appropriate to describe it as 'extra Catholicum' or 'extra Patristicum' than as 'extra Calvinisticum'.[44]

The divinity of the eternal Son is by no means lessened either by the process of his incarnation, or by his earthly and historical life in the man Jesus Christ Calvin insists on the full divinity of the eternal Son of God in this man,[45] and opposes any kenotic theory which regards the humanity of Jesus as limiting or lessening his divine power or quality,[46] and any adoptionist theory that presupposes gradual adoption of the man Jesus as the Son of God (the second member of the Trinity) at his birth of the Virgin Mary[47] or at his baptism by the Holy Spirit. Calvin recognises that the concealment of the divine glory or majesty of the man Jesus is concealed only to the eyes of men.[48] Its concealment never leads to the reduction and limitation of the divine power and quality of the eternal Son. The human and historical life of the Son in the man Jesus, in fact, extends his divine kingly rule. It redeems fallen men from the slavery of sin and Satan,

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from heaven in such a way that, without leaving heaven, he willed to be born in the the virgin's womb, to go about the earth, and to hang upon the cross; yet he continuously filled the world even as he had done from the beginning!" Inst. II.xiii.4.

[44] E. D. Willis, op. cit., p. 60. "The label 'extra Calvinisticum,' applied to the affirmation that in the Incarnation the Eternal Son of God was united to but restricted to his humanity, is misleading, to say the least. There is nothing uniquely Calvinist about the doctrine... There is a direct liaison from Calvin to Lombard and especially to St. Augustine. That he learned the doctrine from other portions of the tradition cannot be proved from his writings, but it was in fact almost universally confessed—from Origen and Theodore of Mopsuestia, to Athanasius and Cyril, to St. Thomas and Gabriel Biel." Ibid.

[45] Inst. II.xii.2.

[46] H. R. Mackintosh believes that Lutheran Christology's acknowledgement of the real interpenetration of divinity and humanity of Jesus is the direct cause for a kenotic theory (*The Doctrine of The Person of Jesus Christ*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1913, pp. 24-1).

[47] Calvin rejects the proposal of Servetus that the man Jesus was adopted as the Son of God at his virgin's birth by the Holy Spirit (Inst. II.xiv.7 and 8).

[48] Inst. II.xiv.3.

and brings them under the divine kingly rule of the Son.[49]

1.iv. Christ's Humanity for Redemption

iv.1. The True Humanity of Christ

Calvin supports the doctrine of the *enhypostasis* that stresses the true human nature of Jesus Christ in the incarnation of the Son or Word of God in him.[50] The true humanity of Jesus Christ is indispensable for the accomplishment of his redemptive work. His suffering in body and soul[51] is regarded as the necessary price of our redemption.[52] M. Dominicé does not seem to understand Calvin's emphasis on the immense significance of Christ's humanity for redemption, as he comments that "this humanity of Christ has no value for him except by its union with the divine nature."[53] Calvin opposes Osiander's dismissal of the direct relevance of the human and historical life of the Son of God in the man Jesus to redemption.[54] The fundamental purpose of this life is the redemption of fallen man from the slavery of sin and the eternal condemnation of God.[55] This was

[49] Inst. II.xii.2. cf. xv.3 and 4. E. D. Willis claims that Calvin's use of the government or political phraseology is rooted in his theological as well as his legal preparation. "Tertullian and Augustine, as well as his teachers in jurisprudence, Alciati and L'Etoile, provide linguistic resources for Calvin's theological expression." *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, p. 75.

[50] "By *anhypostasia* classical Christology asserted that in the *assumptio carnis* the human nature of Christ had no independent *per se* subsistence apart from the event of the Incarnation, apart from the hypostatic union. By *enhypostasia*, however, it asserted that in the *assumptio carnis* the human nature of Christ was given a real and concrete subsistence within the hypostatic union—it was enhypostatic in the Word." T. F. Torrance, "The Atonement and the Oneness of the Church," in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 7, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1954, pp. 249-250.

[51] Calvin understands that the reality of a human being consists of a body and a soul (Inst. I.xv.2).

[52] Inst. II.xvi.10. "The point is that the Creed sets forth what Christ suffered in the sight of men, and then appositely speaks of that invisible and incomprehensible judgment which he underwent in the sight of God in order that we might know not only that Christ's body was given as the price of our redemption, but that he paid a greater and more excellent price in suffering in his soul the terrible torments of a condemned and forsaken man." cf. II.xiii.2.

[53] *L'Humanité de Jésus d'après Calvin*, Je Sers, Paris, 1933, p. 48. F. Wendel (*Calvin*, p. 224) and E. D. Willis (Op. cit., p. 79) also criticise Dominice's comment here.

[54] Osiander, as Calvin sees, claims that the Son or Word of God, Christ, was to be born not Redeemer but as the First Man and as the archetype for everyone before creation, and would still have been, or become, man regardless of Adam's Fall and the redemption of fallen mankind (Inst. II.xii.4-7).

[55] Inst. II.xii.4.

predestined by the will of God the Father before the foundation of the world.[56]

The argument for the true human nature of Jesus Christ is reinforced in the light of his subjection to "hunger, thirst, cold, and other infirmities of our nature"[57] (e.g. suffering, anguish and fear),[58] and to genuine growth in his age, stature, wisdom, and holiness.[59] This growth[60] appears to be vitally significant. It demonstrates some difference between the humanity of the historical man Jesus and his pre-existence as Son or Word of God, Christ. The genuine growth of human age, stature and wisdom does not seem to be applying to the humanity of the Son of God, Christ. Calvin merely recognises the true humanity of Christ, and his manifestation as the Mediator to the people of the Old Testament.

The humanity of Jesus Christ which Calvin argues for is humanity in general, not in particular. Jesus Christ, unlike us, was totally free from committing sins, even though he shared in our Adamic sinful nature.[61] His obedient and sinless life is indispensable for the redemption of disobedient sinners,[62] and is "not just because he was begotten of his mother without copulation with a man, but because he was sanctified by the Spirit that the generation might be pure and

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[56] Inst. II.xii.5.

[57] Inst. II.xiii.1.

[58] Inst. II.xvi.5.

[59] Inst. II.xiv.2.

[60] The recognition of the full ethical reality of the man Jesus, his awareness and action of the goodness before God and man, is rare in Lutheran Christology. H. R. Mackintosh sees that Calvin's sharp distinction between the divinity and humanity of Jesus is the decisive reason for the clear recognition of the ethical reality of the man Jesus. Lutheran Christology's recognition of the real interpenetrative properties between the divinity and the humanity of Jesus in order to stress their unity is the direct cause of the rareness of the ethical reality of Christ (*The Doctrine of The Person of Jesus Christ*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1913, pp. 39-42). As the result, Lutheran Christology obscures the true humanity of Jesus Christ, for "even in His human nature Christ is almighty and omnipresent." (p. 241) He believes that "Luther's underlying axiom, 'that human nature has been created for participation in the life of God, and is destined to reach it to a degree of which we can form no conception save from the exemplary instance of Jesus Christ, our Head'," (p. 239) has brought his followers to take seriously the inseparability of the two natures and to argue for an actual transference of properties between the divinity and humanity of Jesus.

[61] Inst. II.xiii.4.

[62] Inst. II.xii.3.

undefiled as would have been true before Adam's fall."[63] For Calvin, the Holy Spirit not only enables the self-revelation of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, in the subjectivity of our faith here and now, but also effected the objective nature of this revelation. The sinless human nature of the man Jesus derives from and depends on the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.

iv.2. The Importance of Christ's Death for Redemption

Calvin stresses the crucial importance of the death of the man Jesus for our redemption despite his rejection of any separation of the other events and actions of Jesus Christ.[64] The purpose of the incarnation is the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. The complete fulfillment of our righteousness and redemption relies on the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. A living hope of our righteousness and redemption derives from his resurrection.[65] Christ's ascension is essential for him actually to be our advocate and the intercessor before God the Father for our righteousness and redemption.[66] His continuous intercession and reconciliation between God the Father and sinful man is considered as his priestly office.[67]

Jesus Christ's death is vital for Calvin's assertion of the divine and human person and the redemptive work of Christ. It is the decisive event that not only demonstrates the mortal humanity and the immortal divinity of the man Jesus, but also enables us to see the Son of God, Christ, in this man as our Redeemer in the face of his death on the cross. His death cleanses and expiates our sins, and nullifies the just curse and condemnation of God the Father so as to realise his paternal favour and love towards us for redemption.[68] It fulfills the contrasting

[63] Inst. II.xiii.4.

[64] Inst. II.xvi.5.

[65] Inst. II.xvi.13.

[66] Inst. II.xvi.16.

[67] Inst. II.xii.4.

[68] Inst. II.xvi.1-5. cf. xvii.1-3.

and paradoxical will of God (e.g. his blessing or loving and curing or just will). Calvin comprehends the priestly office of Christ in the light of his death. Christ as the priest offers himself as a sacrificial victim on the cross to God the Father on behalf of us, for the expiation of our sins and the satisfaction of the justice of God, to reinstate sinful men in his favour.[69]

The divine life and power of Christ not only brought the resurrection of his human life from death, but it also undoes the decisively evil influence of the devil and Satan which leads us into sin and spiritual death.[70] Calvin's recognition of the involvement of Christ's divinity in the redemptive work of his humanity is highly significant. We understand from this that Christ is the judged man as well as the judging God on the cross. In other words, he is the object as well as the subject of redemption, the redeemer-God.[71] Calvin here not only obviates the Nestorian suggestion that the suffering and death of the man Jesus and the just demand of God are action and demand of the two different beings, and the view that the Father or the Holy Spirit are cold-blooded and disinvolved from the Son's painful suffering and death. He also resists any subordination of the Son of God in the man Jesus either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit in redemption. For the Father and the Holy Spirit share the divine life and power with the Son of God in the man Jesus Christ. There is no beginning and end,[72] distinction, change or division in their divine life and power.[73]

Considerable attention is paid to the means of the death of Christ. Calvin interprets the nature of his death primarily as a voluntarily[74] sacrificial death, and never separates it from the blood which was shed at this death. The blood actually satisfies God's demand and expiates the sins of men for their redemp-

[69] Inst. II.xv.6. cf. xvi.3.

[70] Inst. II.xvi.7, 10 and 11.

[71] Inst. II.xvi.1 and 18.

[72] Inst. II.xiv.3.

[73] Inst. I.xiii.19.

[74] Inst. II.xvi.5.

tion and reconciliation with God the Father.[75] Calvin's doctrine of the atonement does not simply return to Anselm's theory of satisfaction, as W. Pannenberg suggests.[76] Calvin also interprets the suffering and death of Christ as a vicarious or substitutional penalty.[77] Christ bore our human nature, and suffered, condemned and died on the cross in our place for remission of our sins.[78] Paul van Buren argues that the satisfaction of Christ's death for our redemption is "a way of saying what has been accomplished by substitution."[79] Substitutional or vicarious suffering and the death of the human nature of Christ satisfies the just demand of God for our redemption and reconciliation with him.

> The curse caused by our guilt was awaiting us at God's heavenly judgment seat. Accordingly, Scripture first relates Christ's condemnation before Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea, to teach us that the penalty to which we were subject had been imposed upon this righteous man... To take away condemnation, it was not enough for him to suffer any kind of death: to make satisfaction for our redemption a form of death had to be chosen in which he might free us both by transferring our condemnation to himself and by taking our guilt upon himself... Thus we shall behold the person of a sinner and evildoer represented in Christ, yet from his shining innocence it will at the same time be obvious that he was burdened with another's sin rather than his own... This is our acquittal: the guilt that held us liable for punishment had been transferred to the head of the Son of God (Isa. 53:12). We must, above all, remember this substitution, lest we tremble and remain anxious throughout life—as if God's righteous vengeance, which the Son of God has taken upon himself, still hung over us.[80]

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[75] Inst. xvi.6. Calvin's assertion of the inseparability of the blood from the death of Christ is intended to highlight the continuity or consistency of God's will in the Old and New Testaments. They both attest the necessity of the blood of a sacrificial victim to satisfy God's demand and to expiate our sins for redemption.

[76] "Luther was probably the first since Paul and his school to have seen with full clarity that Jesus' death in its genuine sense is to be understood as vicarious penal suffering. Subsequent Protestant theology, unfortunately, did not maintain this insight. Both Melanchthon and Calvin returned to Anselm's theory of satisfaction with the somewhat baroque revision that not the man Jesus, but the divine-human person was the bearer of the accomplishment of satisfaction." *Jesus—God and Man*, p. 279.

[77] Paul van Buren, *Christ In Our Place: The Substitutionary Character of Calvin's Doctrine of Reconciliation*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1957, pp. 54-80.

[78] Inst. II.xvii.6.

[79] Op. cit., p. 78.

[80] Inst. II.xvi.5. "The second requirement of our reconciliation with God was this: that man, who by his disobedience had become lost, should by the way of remedy counter it with obedience, satisfy God's judgment, and pay the penalties for sin. Accordingly, our Lord came forth as true

The major weakness of van Buren's interpretation of Calvin's doctrine of redemption is that it fails to stress the comprehensiveness of the doctrine. Van Buren is preoccupied with the substitutional nature of Christ's whole life, and is reluctant to articulate the link between the demonic power and influence, and Christ's death,[81] even though their link appears to be the major concern of Calvin's doctrine of redemption. Calvin regards Christ's victory over the demonic power and influence as the primary outcome of his death for redemption,[82] and claims the substitutionary nature of Christ's victory. Christ gained the victory over the devil on behalf of us, so that we might be free from their decisive cosmic[83] and evil influence, which brings about our sins and spiritual death.[84]

The strength of Calvin's doctrine of the atonement relies on its comprehensiveness. Calvin's understanding of Christ's substitutionary life includes the fact of his representation. Christ, as a sinner, is viewed as our representative, just as Adam was our representative before God. As by the disobedience of one man, Adam, we are made sinner and are under the curse of God, so by the obedience of one man, Jesus, to God unto death we are made righteous and are under the

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man and took the person and the name of Adam in order to take Adam's place in obeying the Father, to present our flesh as the price of satisfaction to God's righteous judgment, and, in the same flesh, to pay the penalty that we had deserved." Inst. II.xii.3.

[81] "It should be noted that death, as Calvin sees it, is not a cosmic force that has control of man, a force that Christ comes to defeat in order to release us from this foreign captivity. Calvin can use such language (as in the passage just quoted, where he speaks of death holding us in bondage), but his quotation from Hebrews, as well as the preceding sentences, quoted above, shows that he is thinking of death primarily as the punishment due to sin. Sin has cosmic consequences, but that is not Calvin's primary concern. His use of such language is only to amplify what he has to say about death as punishment, the punishment that Christ took upon himself... Christ's death, therefore, is to be understood personally and substitutionally rather than cosmologically, the use of cosmological terminology never replacing the meaning that Christ's work is one of reconciliation between a loving and righteous God and His sinful creatures." Op. cit., p. 55.

[82] "He differed from us, however, in this respect: he let himself be swallowed up by death, as it were, not to be engulfed in its abyss, but rather to engulf it that must soon have engulfed us; he let himself be subjected to it, not to be overwhelmed by its power, but rather to lay it low, when it was threatening us and exulting over our fallen state. Finally, his purpose was 'that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage' (Heb. 2:14-5). This is the first fruit that his death brought to us." Inst. II.xvi.7.

[83] Inst. II.xv.3.

[84] Inst. II.xvi.11.

heavenly blessing. Calvin maintains the classic idea of atonement that highlights Christ's victory over the decisively evil influence of the devil in the world,[85] and combines the substitutionary aspect of Christ's atonement with the Anselmic emphasis on satisfaction to God's demand. Their combination encompasses the objective and subjective aspect of Christ's atonement. The maintenance of the Anselmic emphasis highlights the objective satisfaction of Christ's atonement for redemption. Calvin's understanding of the substitutionary nature of Christ's life and death accentuates the genuine involvement of his subjectivity in atonement

I.v. Christ's Divine and Human Unity for Redemption

Calvin's christology never views the humanity apart from the divinity of Jesus Christ, or *vice versa*, and his redemptive work apart from his divine and human person, or *vice versa*. Jesus Christ is apparently recognised as the Redeemer, the Mediator and Reconciler in the light of his divine and human unity.[86] The inseparability of his divine and human natures, and their inseparability from his redemptive work is fundamentally rooted in their conceptual basis in the one revelation of the Son of God, Christ, in the man Jesus. They are the different aspects of this revelation. Calvin does not articulate the implication of the basis of the being and action of Christ for their inseparability. His objection to their separate treatment is rooted in his understanding of them in the light of the one personal being.

The divine and human unity of the man Jesus is regarded as the mystery which is grounded in the redemptive will of God the Father.[87] Calvin defines their unity as a hypostatic (personal) union. The divine and human natures constitute the

[85] G. Aulén, *Christus Victor*, trans. A. G. Hebert, SPCK Press, London, 1931, pp. 4ff. He illustrates Luther's revival of the classic idea of atonement (pp. 101ff), but he is unaware of Calvin's recapitulation of it.

[86] Inst. II.xii.1-3.

[87] Ibid.

one personal being of Jesus.[88] The explanation of the mystery of their hypostatic union from the union of our human body and soul[89] is inappropriate. As K. Barth says, it overlooks the fact that "the soul does not assume the body into unity with itself and in this way give it existence",[90] as the divinity of Christ assumed his humanity into unity with itself, and gives rise to his human life in this assumption. The humanity of Jesus is dispensable for the existence of his divinity, but body is indispensable for the existence of soul in our present life

The emphasis of Calvin's christology rests on the distinction of Jesus' divine and human natures in their unity. Neither is confused and mingled with the other; neither transmits substance to the other.[91] The entire property of each nature remains in the one person of Jesus Christ in such a way that he is true God and true man. The traditional doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum* (*ιδωματων κοινωνια* or interchange of properties) is considered to deal with the exchangeable expression of the Godhead and the manhood of Christ in Scripture. Scripture states that the Son of Man came down from heaven, and that the Son of God was crucified, even though these are incompatible with their distinctive natures. Calvin argues that this is not because the divine and human properties of Christ actually interchange, but because they are united in the one person of Christ.[92] In other words, Christ is viewed as the Son of God and the Son of Man in the light of the unity of his divine and human natures in his one personal being.

Support for the Chalcedonian (and Antiochene) christology is apparent in Calvin's christology.[93] It accentuates the distinction of Jesus' divine and human

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[88] Inst. II.xiv.5.

[89] Inst. II.xiv.1.

[90] CD IV, 2. p. 54.

[91] Inst. II.xiv.1, 4 and 7.

[92] Inst. II.xiv.2.

[93] The Synod of Council of Chalcedon "resists those who image a mixture or confusion of the two natures of Christ... The distinction of the natures is in no way taken away by their union, but the distinctive properties of each nature are preserved." Tony Lane, *The Lion Concise Book of Christian Thought*, Lion, United Kingdom, 1984, p. 50. H. R. Mackintosh claims that Calvin's assertion of the unity of the two distinctive natures must have been faithful rather to the

natures in their unity, and renounces any Eutychianism that destroys their distinction at the expense of their unity. It also contradocts any Nestorianism that pulls apart rather than distinguishes the humanity from the divinity of Jesus, and presents him as two different persons of the Son of God and the son of man.[94] The difference between Calvin's christology and Chalcedonian christology should be noticed. Calvin maintains the emphasis of Chalcedonian and Antiochene christology on the distinctive natures of Jesus in their unity, from the perspective of the Cappadocian christology.[95]

Calvin, like the Cappadocian fathers, attributes the acting subject of God in redemption to the individual human person of the Son Jesus rather than to a divine essence common to the whole Trinity. The one personhood of Jesus is consequently viewed as that of the Son of God in the man Christ rather than the one divine essence (or the divine unity) of the Trinity. Chalcedonian christology is indifferent to these matters. "Calvin's doctrinal determination of the Son as God emphasizes the full Godhead of the Son rather than the eternal generation of his person as stressed by Chalcedon and by the later Greek theology."[96] Calvin stresses the relevance of the divine and human person to the mediatorial and redemptive work of Christ much more strongly than did the early (Eastern and Western) fathers.[97]

Antiochene and Chalcedonian Christological emphasis, than to the Alexandrian Christological tradition which stresses the unity of the two natures of Jesus (*The Doctrine of The Person of Jesus Christ*, p. 242).

[94] Calvin was not aware of the fact that Nestorius himself also refused to split the God-man into two distinct Persons. J. N. D. Kelly's study of Nestorius' book of *Heracleides* shows that Nestorius is "a thorough-going Antiochene, he insisted that the two natures of the incarnate Christ remained unaltered and distinct in the union." *Early Christian Doctrines*, Adam and Charles Black, London, 1958, p. 312.

[95] K. Barth, CD IV, 2. p. 68.

[96] R. A. Muller, op. cit., p. 29. He illustrates that the main emphasis of both the western and eastern christological tradition is on the relation of Christ to the Father and to the Holy Spirit. p. 192. He confirms this view by referring to B. B. Warfield's book, *Calvin and Calvinism*, pp. 247-252 and 233-243.

[97] Calvin apparently criticises the lacks of attention to the relevance of the human and divine person of Christ to his mediatorial and redemptive work in the ancient writers. "For what purpose were power and lordship given to Christ, unless that by his hand the father might govern us? In this sense, also, Christ is said to be seated at the right hand of the Father... Yet this is but for a

What is more regrettable in Calvin's christology is this. Like the doctrine of the Trinity in Book I.xiii, it merely recognises the biblical witness to the human will and the divine will of Jesus Christ, and their unity.[98] It does not elaborate on the issue. This question appears to be crucial for understanding the nature of the humanity and the divinity of Jesus and their unity and relationship. The existence of the human will and the divine will of Jesus opposes materialistic interpretation of the two natures of Jesus, for it presupposes the human consciousness and subject, and the divine consciousness and subject. The will is unthinkable for modern man without assuming a self-consciousness and subject. The personal communication of the Godhead and manhood of Jesus is perceivable in the light of the dialogue between their distinctive and rational wills.

The major reason for Calvin's dismissal of the task here seems to be his fear of any Nestorian tendency. Any attempt to elaborate on the question of two (divine and human) wills, subjects and persons of Jesus; this would lead to the Nestorianism.[99] Calvin does not go beyond the traditional understanding of person, in the sense that he asserts the one personhood in the divine and human natures of Jesus, and follows the Cappadocian fathers in attributing it to the individual being of the Son, Christ, rather than to his divine essence in common with the Father and the Holy Spirit.[100] He did not develop the way in which it is possible to express the divine personhood and subject of Jesus without suggesting that there are two different and separate persons of the Son of God and the son of man. For he did not perceive that this is essential to obviate any suggestion of materialistic nature of the divinity of Jesus. Meanwhile, the recognition of the

time, until we enjoy the direct vision of the Godhead. Here we cannot excuse the error of the ancient writers who pay no attention to the person of the Mediator, obscure the real meaning of almost all the teaching one reads in the Gospel of John, and entangle themselves in many snares. Let this, then, be our key to right understanding: those things which apply to the office of the Mediator are not spoken simply either of the divine nature or of the human... And the name 'Lord' exclusively belongs to the person of Christ only in so far as it represents a degree midway between God and us." Inst. II.xiv.3.

98 Inst. II.xiv.2.

99 Inst. II.xiv.5.

100 Inst. II.xii.2. cf. xiv.2 and 3.

divine will of Jesus provides the basis for proposing the self-conscious personhood and subject of his Godhead. It is hard for a modern man to accept the divine will of Jesus without assuming the existence of his divine consciousness, personhood and subject.

Conclusion

The determinative source of the doctrine of redemption in Book II of the 1559 *Institutes* is not the Bible itself, but its witness to the revelation of the redemptive action and being of God in Christ. Faith is indispensable for the noetic and conceptual possibility of the revelation. It depends on and determines the internal illumination of God's Word by the Holy Spirit as providing the hermeneutical and conceptual possibility of the revelation, and offers a conceptual freedom, and a dynamic and realistic view of the redeemer-God attested to in the Bible. The perspective of faith in this internal illumination enables Calvin to systematise the revelation of the redemptive action (revelation) and being of God in Scripture as the distinctive being and action of the Son of God, Christ, in the man Jesus. This is essential for Calvin's trinitarian interpretation of the biblical witness to the redemptive action and being of God in the man Jesus Christ.

The dependence of Calvin's doctrine of redemption on God's revelation in Christ gives rise to the christological orientation of the doctrine. It determines the view of the objective basis of redemption solely from the redemptive work of the Son of God, Christ, in the man Jesus. Calvin opposes any separate treatment of the divine and human natures, of the divine-human person and redemptive work of the man Jesus, and any separate understanding of the continuous threefold offices and works of Christ as a priest, king and prophet. They are all different aspects of the one revelation of the Son of God, Christ. The conceptual basis of the divine and human natures and the various works of Jesus Christ in this revelation is decisive in resisting separate treatment of them. Calvin does not

explicitly argue for their inseparability from their conceptual basis in revelation

His christology has a soteriological character. It argues for the true divinity and humanity of, and their unity in this man from his redemptive work The divinity of Jesus Christ not only assumed his humanity before the foundation of the world, the humanity which was incarnated in the historical man Jesus, but also enabled this man's obedient and sinless life before God for our redemption. His divinity signifies that he is the object as well as the Subject of redemption, the Redeemer, and is the judged man as well as the Judging God on the cross for our redemption. Calvin stresses the importance of Jesus's death for redemption His death actually expiates our sins, nullifies the decisively evil influence of the devil and Satan upon us, and satisfies God's just demand for our redemption. Calvin's doctrine of the atonement is much more comprehensive than commentators (e g Buren and Pannenberg) recognise.

The trinitarian orientation of Calvin's doctrine of redemption and his christology is explicit. It is based on the trinitarian revelation, the revelation of the Son of God, Christ, in the man Jesus to which the Bible attests. The doctrine and christology treat the divine and human natures of this man, and their redemptive function, as those of this revelation. The precise nature of their trinitarian orientation is seen in their emphasis on the distinctive action and being of the Son of God in the man Jesus. The involvement of the Father and the Holy Spirit in the redemptive work does not alter the fact that the Son of God in this man is the Redeemer. Mediation between God and fallen men for redemption are his principal works. Calvin attributes the acting person and subject of God in the man Jesus to the human being of the Son rather than to his divine essence in common with the Father and the Holy Spirit. This enables us to understand in what sense Calvin presents the redemptive action and being of the Son of God, Christ, in the man Jesus.

II.2. The Revelation of the Spirit of God in Sanctification

Introduction

The thematic concern of Book III and IV of the 1559 *Institutes* is the Holy Spirit's appropriation of the redemptive will and work of God the Father in Christ in our faith. This belongs to soteriology; it deals with the Holy Spirit's communication and actualisation of God the Father's promise of salvation in Christ in our faith. Book III demonstrates faith[1] and its properties (e.g. regeneration and sanctification,[2] justification,[3] Christian freedom,[4] prayers,[5] election,[6] and resurrection of our body)[7] for salvation as the principal work of God in the Holy Spirit. Book IV explores the church[8] and its properties (e.g. its government, order,[9] power, discipline,[10] preaching and sacraments,[11] and its position in relation to civil and external regulation[12]) as the external means of the Holy Spirit in creating, sustaining and increasing our faith and its properties for salvation

The relationship between pneumatology and the Creed, between Spirit and Word, between Spirit and our faith and church, and between Spirit and Christ are examined to clarify the subject, purpose, basis and perspective of the doctrine of faith and church (in BooK III and IV). The treatment of the doctrine of faith and its properties (i.e. sanctification and justification and election) confirms the outcome of this clarification. Here also, the implication of the basis of this doctrine in revelation is expounded. We demonstrate the trinitarian orientation

[1] Inst. III.i-ii.
[2] Inst. III.iii-x.
[3] Inst. III.xi-xviii.
[4] Inst. III.xix.
[5] Inst. III.xx.
[6] Inst. III.xxi-iv.
[7] Inst. III.xxv.
[8] Inst. IV.i-ii.
[9] Inst. IV.iii-vii.
[10] Inst. IV.viii-xiii.
[11] Inst. IV.xiv-xix.
[12] Inst. IV.xx.

and the systematic context of this doctrine, and thereby the nature of Calvin's pneumatology.

2.i. Pneumatology as the Dogmatic Goal

i.1. Pneumatology and the Creed

The specific title, "The Knowledge of God the Sanctifier", is not found in Book III and IV of the 1559 *Institutes.* The titles are made to convey their major theological concerns. It is the way in which God the Holy Spirit appropriates the benefit of Christ's redemptive work (in the election or will of God the Father) in our faith.[13] H. Berkhof is mistaken to claim that "Calvin consciously puts the relationship of the Spirit to the individual first (*Inst* III)," and then to the community, the church.[14] Calvin never confines the theological scope of Book III to the relevance of the Holy Spirit to faith and its properties in the individual, as Berkhof claims. The central issue of Book III is the relevance of the Holy Spirit to faith and its properties to the elect,[15] namely all the Christian individuals

[13] The respective titles of Book III and IV are "The way in which we receive the grace of Christ" and "The external means or aims by which God invites us into the society of Christ and holds us therein".

[14] *Christian Faith*, trans. S. Woudstra, W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1976, p. 342. Berkhof's claim here leads his allegation that Calvin's treatment of "the church is secondary to the individual... If we should begin by describing the renewal of the individual, more or less detached from the community, it becomes difficult to assign the suprapersonal and institutional aspects of that community their organic slot." Ibid. Berkhof's allegation is untenable. The issue of Book III is not confined to the treatment of the faith of the individual person. The tenor of the Book is to highlight the fact that creation and sustenance of faith and the properties of the elect (namely every Christian member and community) are the principal work of the self-revelation of the Spirit of God. Calvin never supports the view that "the renewal of the individual, [is] more or less detached from the community," the church. Book IV deals with the way in which God the Holy Spirit creates and sustains the faith of the elect. Berkhof's false claim is rooted in his false view that the central concerns of Book III and IV are the faith of individual and community, the church. It is, however, the self-revelation (action) of the Spirit of God which creates, sustains and increases faith and the properties of the elect, namely every Christian individual and community and church, for salvation. Calvin never has difficulty in admitting the suprapersonal and institutional aspects of the church for herself and individual believer. The visible church is expressed as "Mother" or teacher of people of God the Father (Inst. IV.i.1). The admission here is possible. Calvin regards the Holy Spirit as the real internal Teacher and Governor of individual believer and of the community, the church, in and through the church and its properties (Inst. IV.viii.13).

[15] The doctrine of election in Book III.xxi.iv substantiates the point here beyond reasonable doubt; it is designed to demonstrate faith and its properties to all Christian individuals as well as community and church as the Holy Spirit's historical fulfillment and revelation of the eternal

and communities and churches.[16] It stresses that their creation, sustenance and increase occur through the appropriation of the redemptive will (election) of God the Father in the redemptive work of the Son in the man Jesus, and are the principal work of of the Holy Spirit in the triune God.[17] Book IV concerns external means of this appropriation, the church and its properties (e.g. its government, order, power, preaching and sacraments) as God the Holy Spirit's

> As explained in the previous book, it is by the faith in the gospel that Christ becomes ours and we are made partakers of the salvation and eternal blessedness brought by him. Since, however, in our ignorance and sloth... we need outward helps to beget and increase faith within us, and advance it to its goal, God has also added these aids that he may provide for our weakness. In order that the preaching of the gospel might flourish, he deposited this treasure in the church. He instituted 'pastors and teachers' (Eph. 4:11) through whose lips he might teach his own; he furnished them with authority; finally, he omitted nothing that might make for holy agreement of faith and for right order. First of all, he instituted sacraments, which we who have experienced them feel to be highly useful aids to foster and strengthen faith... Accordingly, our plan of instruction now requires us to discuss the church, its government, orders, and power; then the sacraments; and lastly, the civil order.[18]

The subject of inquiry of Book III and IV is the self-revelation (action) of God's Holy Spirit that creates, sustains and increases faith and its properties in the elect. Their formal theological issues are knowledge of God the Holy Spirit and the church, following the order of the Apostle's Creed.[19] It is nevertheless noticeable that Calvin does not take the formal order of the Creed as the determinative source of his pneumatology and ecclesiology. They are based in the self-revelation (action) of the Spirit of God. The creation and sustenance of the

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election of God the Father in Christ.

[16] Calvin defines the genuine reality of the church as the elect or God's children in faith by the sanctification and adoption of the Holy Spirit through God's Word in Scripture (Inst. IV.i.2 and 7).

[17] The relevance of the triune God to the existence of faith and its properties (i.e. election) will be dealt with in detail later.

[18] Inst. IV.i.1.

[19] T. H. L. Parker, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, pp. 8ff. E. Dowey, *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology*, pp. 41ff. O. Weber, *Foundations of Dogmatics*, Vol. I, pp. 394 and 141.

faith of the elect are the appropriation of the redemptive work and will of God the Father in Christ, and the principal and distinctive work of the self-revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Triune God.

> But faith is the principal work of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, the terms commonly employed to express his power and working are, in large measure, referred to it because by faith alone he leads us into the light of the gospel, as John teaches: to believers in Christ is given the privilege of becoming children of God... Paul shows the Spirit to be the inner teacher by whose effect the promise of salvation penetrates into our minds... he is briefly warning us that faith itself has no other source than the Spirit... Consequently, he may rightly be called the key that unlocks for us the treasures of the Kingdom of Heaven... no effect if Christ himself... did not by his Spirit draw to himself those given to him by the Father... We have said that perfect salvation is found in the person of Christ. Accordingly, that we may become partakers of it, "he baptizes us in the Holy Spirit and fire" (Luke 3:16). bringing us into the light of faith in his gospel and so regenerating us that we become new creatures... as temples holy to God (cf. Cor. 3-16-7; 6:19; II Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21).[20]

The ultimate systematic theme of the doctrine of faith and church in Book III and IV is pneumatology. Not only does the conceptual possibility of their doctrine rely on the self-revelation (action) of the Spirit of God, but they also illustrate the distinctive being of the Spirit of God from the distinctive quality of his self-revelation (action)[21] that creates and governs the elect's faith and its properties. Calvin presents the Spirit of God as the Giver of the eternal and heavenly life of the elect (including the Christian individual and community or church) in faith.[22] The creation and sustenance of their eternal and heavenly life in faith are the principal and distinctive work of the self-revelation (action) of the Holy Spirit in the triune God. The distinctive being of God in the Holy Spirit is presupposed as the Creator, Governor, Order and Power of the church

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[20] Inst. III.i.4.

[21] The distinctive quality of the self-revelation of the God in the Holy Spirit will be spelled out in detail later.

[22] Inst. III.i.2 and 3.

in faith. The genuine creation, government,[23] order,[24] power,[25] (sacraments[26] and liberty[27]) of the church in faith are the principal and distinctive work of the revelation (action) of God in the Holy Spirit.

i.2. Spirit and Word

Calvin's acceptance of the biblical treatment of pneumatology is responsible for the absence of the title, "The Knowledge of God the Holy Spirit," in Book III (and IV). He, like the biblical writers, discusses the distinctive being of the Spirit of God from his revelation (action) in communicating and actualising the benefits of the redemptive will and action of God the Father in the Son, Jesus Christ. It is nonetheless recognised that Calvin's pneumatology is based not in formal biblical and traditional principles and ideas of the Holy Spirit, but in his self-revelation to which the Bible attests.[28]

The outcome is this. Faith becomes indispensable for the noetic and conceptual possibility of the content of the revelation of the Spirit of God. The perspective of faith confines the conceptual possibility of pneumatology to God's Word in Scripture.[29] Faith is created and sustained by the Holy Spirit's revelation (illumination and persuasion) of God's Word in our subjectivity through

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[23] Calvin insists that the Holy Spirit governs the church through God's Word in Scripture in order to obviate any suggestion of his lawless government (Inst. IV.viii.6-13).

[24] The order of church depends on the gift of the Spirit of God to its each member (Inst. IV.i.3. cf. iv.1).

[25] Inst. IV.viii.2, 3, 6, 8 and 13).

[26] "As to the confirmation and increase of faith... I should therefore like my readers to be reminded that I assign this particular ministry to the sacraments... But the sacraments properly fulfill their office only when the Spirit, that internal teacher, comes to them, whose power alone hearts are penetrated and affections moved and our souls opened for the sacraments to enter in. If the Spirit be lacking, the sacraments can accomplish nothing more in our minds than the splendor of the sun shining upon blind eyes, or a voice sounding in deaf ears." Inst. IV.xiv.9.

[27] Calvin claims the liberty of church and believer (Inst. IV.xx.1 and 32) in the freedom of the Spirit of God (Inst. III.xix.15).

[28] Inst. III.i.1-4.

[29] Inst. III.ii.6, 13, 21 and 33. Calvin confines the hermeneutical and conceptual possibility of the biblical revelation (action) of the Holy Spirit in the believer or the church to God's Word in faith (Inst. IV.viii.2-14).

the human words of the Bible.[30] The perspective of faith provides Calvin dogmatic freedom and autonomy; it enables him to interpret and systematise the biblical revelation (action) of the Spirit of God in the light of God's Word as the revelation of the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit.[31] It brings forth a trinitarian interpretation and systematisation of the action (action) and being of the Spirit of God in Scripture.

The strength of this systematisation is that it resists a rigid and mere subjective rationalisation of the formal biblical or dogmatic ideas of the Holy Spirit. It refers to God's objective and living (and dynamic) Word in our subjective faith, and maintains a realistic (and objective and dynamic) view of the Holy Spirit in the apprehension of God's Word in faith. The perspective of faith avoids abstract speculation about the divine and eternal being (essence) of the Spirit.[32] It is the reality of God *in se*, and is thus transcendent and incomprehensible to the cognition of our faith.

Calvin declares two different kinds of relationship between the Holy Spirit and God's Word. The Word of God enables our faith to perceive and understand the biblical revelation of God in the Holy Spirit (and in the Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Father). This work of God's Word is regarded as Christ's continuous prophetic work.[33] The Spirit of God accommodates the Word through Scripture to the measure of our faith[34] for perceiving and understanding God's reality in him (and in the Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Father). For Calvin, the Word and the Holy Spirit are always as God the Father's. God the Father is the beginning (*principium*), the source and foundation of the beings and actions of the Son

[30] Inst. III.ii.6-8.

[31] Inst. III.i.2. cf. I.xiii.14-6.

[32] "In understanding faith it is not merely a question of knowing that God exists, but also—and this especially—of knowing what is his will towards us. For it is not so much our concern to know who he is in himself, as what he wills to be toward us." Inst. III.ii.6.

[33] Inst. III.i.2. cf. II.xv.1-2.

[34] Inst. III.xxiv.9.

or Word and the Holy Spirit.[35] Revelation always denotes the movement of the whole Trinity in the one God.[36]

The insistence on the indispensability of God's Word for his knowledge and revelation[37] does not lead to a proposal of the Word (the Son, Mediator, Jesus Christ) as the only content (and means) of God's self-revelation, as R. S. Wallace suggests.[38] Solely christocentric content (and means) of God's revelation is alien to Calvin. The Bible also upholds the self-revelation (action) of God in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit witnesses and reveals[39] (and illuminates, teaches[40] and quickens) God's Word and reality (about the redemptive will or promise and work of God the Father in the Son, Jesus Christ) in faith[41] through his sanctification.[42]

Calvin's notion of revelation is fundamentally trinitarian. The means and content of the self-revelation of the Spirit of God differ from those of the revelation of God the Father and the Son. The Spirit of God reveals in and through our subjectivity and the church, and creates and sustains our faith and the church for salvation. His revelation is the subject of inquiry of Book III and IV of the 1559 *Institutes.* They (including their treatment of the doctrine of Scripture and

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[35] Inst. I.xiii.18ff.

[36] Inst. I.xiii.16, 19 and 20.

[37] "Whether, therefore, God makes use of man's help in this or works by his own power alone, he always represents himself through his Word to those whom he wills to draw to himself." Inst. III.ii.6.

[38] *Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1953, pp. 8ff. cf. D. Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, p. 131.

[39] "And here it is useful to note what titles are applied to the Holy Spirit in Scripture, when the beginning and the whole renewal of our salvation are under discussion. First, he is called the 'spirit of adoption' because he is the witness to us of the free benevolence of God with which God the Father has embraced us in his beloved only-begotten Son to become a Father to us; and he encourages us to have trust in prayer. In fact, he supplies the very words so that we may fearlessly cry, 'Abba, Father!' (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6)." Inst. III.1.3. "Now we shall possess a right definition of faith if we call it a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our mind and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit." Inst. III.ii.7.

[40] Inst. III.i.3.

[41] Inst. III.ii.6-8.

[42] Inst. III.i.1 and 2.

revelation of God's Word[43])[44] are designed to unravel the distinctive action and being of the Holy Spirit from the revelation. The revelation of God the Father in creation (including our subjectivity) and of the Son or Word in the man Jesus do not create and sustain our faith and the church for salvation. Their revelation is the subject of inquiry of Books I and II, and assigned to unfold the distinctive action and being of God in the Father and in the Son.

i.3. Spirit and our Faith and Church in Christ.

Books III and IV do not suggest knowledge of ourselves, our faith and church as their central concern and theme, as T. H. L. Parker proposes.[45] Our faith and church have no autonomous value;[46] their true reality and existence depend on the ever-new revelation (action) of the Spirit of God in our subjectivity. They in themselves cannot be the thematic subject of Books III and IV.[47] Dowey argues that the knowledge of God the Redeemer in faith is the governing theme and subject of the doctrine of faith[48] (and church); that discussion of the Holy Spirit is a mere prologue to the doctrine of faith, and thus to the entire Book III;[49] and that pneumatology (in Book III) and ecclesiology (in Book IV) are treated in the context of the doctrine of faith. Dowey's argument is untenable. Calvin discusses the nature of our faith and the church, and their properties as witnessing to the

[43] Inst. III.ii. and IV.ii, iii and viii

[44] E. Doumergue argues that "the doctrine of the witness of the Holy Spirit is not for Calvin a special doctrine relating exclusively to the authority of Scripture. Far from it! There is for Calvin a general doctrine, that of the Teaching of the Holy Spirit, according to which the Spirit is the sole teacher capable of instructing us in all that concerns the Christian faith, true religious knowledge. And the doctrine of the Witness of the Holy Spirit is only a particular application of the general doctrine of the Teaching of the Holy Spirit." *Jean Calvin*, Vol. IV, p. 68. Here I use E. Dowey's translation (Op. cit., p. 175).

[45] Parker affirms that the central theme (and subject) of the *Institutes* is the *duplex cognitio*, knowledge of God and ourselves (*Calvin's Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, pp. 8ff).

[46] F. Wendel, *Calvin*, p. 240.

[47] W. Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, p. 121. E. Dowey, op. cit., pp. 148ff.

[48] Op. cit., p. 151. Dowey's argument stems from his conviction that the governing theme and subject of the 1559 *Institutes* is not the four divisions of Apostle's Creed, but the *duplex cognitio*, knowledge of God the Creator in (Book I-II.v) and the Redeemer (in Book II.vi-IV) from natural reason and faith (Ibid. pp. 41-9).

[49] Ibid. p. 152.

distinctive being of God in the Holy Spirit. Their creation and sustenance are the principal and distinctive work of God in the Holy Spirit. Pneumatology is thus the subject of inquiry of the doctrine of faith and church. The issue of redemption and the redeemer-God in the Son Jesus Christ is allotted to Book II.

Niesel is also misleading in claiming that the focal theme of Book III and IV[50] is Jesus Christ. Just this is so in Book II and I,[51] for they are designed to witness the revelation (action) or truth of God in Jesus Christ. The work of the Holy Spirit (discussed in Book III and IV) is the continuation of Christ's redemptive work.[52] The Spirit of God not only enables Christ to carry out his continuous threefold (prophetic, kingly and priestly) office (work),[53] but also unites us with Christ and appropriates the benefit of Christ's redemptive work in us for our faith and salvation.[54] Niesel proposes that pneumatology and ecclesiology (in Book III and IV) are viewed from their relevance and relation to christology.[55]

Calvin, however, deals with christology (the being and work of Christ) in the context of pneumatology (the being and work of the Holy Spirit) in Book III and IV. Christology is discussed in order to demonstrate the action (revelation) and being of the Holy Spirit in Scripture.

> But, in order to get a clearer notion of this matter, so well worth investigating, we must bear in mind that Christ came endowed with the Holy Spirit in a special way: that is, to separate us from the world and to gather us unto the hope of the eternal inheritance. Hence he is called the "Spirit of sanctification" (cf. II Thess. 2:13; I Peter 1:2; Rom. 1:4) because he not only quickens and nourishes us by a general power that is visible both in the human race and in the rest of the living creatures, but he is also the root and seed of heavenly life in us... Further, God the Father gives us the Holy Spirit for his Son's sake, and yet has bestowed the whole fullness of the Spirit upon the Son to be minister and steward of his liberality. For this reason, the Spirit is sometimes called the

[50] Ibid. pp.

[51] Op. cit., pp. 120-1 and 182ff.

[52] O. Weber, *Foundations of Dogmatics*, Vol. II, p. 244.

[53] Inst. III.i.2.

[54] Inst. III.i.1 and 3.

[55] E. D. Willis endorses this view (Op. cit., pp. 133-4).

> "Spirit of the Father," sometimes the "Spirit of the Son."... Also, we ought to know that he is called the "Spirit of Christ" not only because Christ, as eternal Word of God, is joined in the same Spirit with the Father, but also from his character as the Mediator. For he would have come to us in vain if he had not been furnished with this power. In this sense he is called the "Second Adam," given from heavenly as "a life-giving spirit" (I Cor. 15:45).[56]

The objectivity of the redemptive work and will of God the Father in the Son, Jesus Christ, is not the central concern (and subject and theme) of Book III and IV. It is the Holy Spirit's subjective appropriation of this objectivity in the faith of the believer (and the church).[57]

The trinitarian orientation of Calvin's doctrine of Christian faith (or life) and church is perceivable. Their doctrine is handled in the light of the distinctive works of the Trinity in the one God. Their trinitarian orientation relies not on the relationship of the Son (Jesus Christ) with God the Father and the Spirit, as E. D. Willis (and Niesel) proposes,[58] but on the relationship of the Holy Spirit with them. The creation and sustenance of Christian faith (or life) and church are the appropriation of the redemptive will and work of God the Father in the Son, Jesus Christ, and are the principal and distinctive work of the Holy Spirit in the triune God.

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[56] Inst. III.i.2.

[57] "We must now examine this question. How do we receive those benefits which the Father bestowed on his only-begotten Son—not for Christ's own private use, but that he might enrich poor and needy men?... It is true that we obtain this by faith. Yet since we see that not all indiscriminately embrace that communion with Christ which is offered through the gospel, reason itself teaches us to climb higher and to examine into the secret energy of the Spirit, by which we come to enjoy Christ and all his benefits." Inst. III.i.1. cf. IV.i.1.

[58] Willis advocates the trinitarian exposition of Christian life from its Christocentric orientation (Op. cit., p. 133). He believes that Calvin's doctrine of Christian life and church is based in the christological revelation and knowledge of God in and through his Word, Christ, (Son or Mediator). This revelation creates and sustains the salvation and enjoyment of Christian life and church in faith by the power of the Holy Spirit (p. 107). Willis' argument here stems from his christocentric interpretation of the means and content of God's revelation and knowledge (pp. 151-2). He overlooks that Calvin upholds the distinctive means and content of the revelation of God to be in the Holy Spirit, and attributes the creation and sustenance of Christian faith or life and church to this.

2.ii. Faith

ii.1. The Triune God as the Object of Faith

The doctrine of faith in Book III does not rely on an articulation and speculation of a formal principle and conception. It defines the reality of faith in the light of the ever-new revelation of the Spirit of God in our subjectivity. This revelation creates and sustains faith through the Word (or Son, Jesus Christ) of God the Father in Scripture.[59] The conceptual basis of the doctrine in revelation gives rise to a realistic and dynamic and existential view of faith. Faith occurs as a dynamic and existential event in our subjectivity by the Holy Spirit's illumination and persuasion of God's Word (about the redemptive will and work of God the Father in the Son, Jesus Christ) from Scripture.[60]

The orientation of Calvin's doctrine of faith is not bibliocentric, as well as strongly christocentric, as commentators (e.g. E. Dowey,[61] E. D. Willis[62]) suggest. The doctrine considers neither the Bible nor Christ alone as the determinative source, content and object of faith. Calvin's interpretation of the reality of faith is essentially trinitarian. Faith for salvation derives from the co-operative work of the Trinity in the one God; it occurs by the Holy Spirit's execution of the redemptive will and work of God the Father in Christ. The distinctive work of the Trinity in the one God is the foundation of our faith for salvation. Calvin advocates explicit knowledge of the triune God in revelation as the content and the object of faith.

> But now we ought to examine what this faith ought to be like... Indeed, most people, when they hear this term, understand nothing deeper than a common assent to the gospel history. In fact, when faith is discussed in the schools,

[59] Inst. III.ii.6 and 7.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Op. cit., p. 163. Dowey argues for Calvin's strong christocentric view of faith. "Calvin found Christ and not a book the real and object of faith". This christocentric view is "the strength of Calvin's theology". This "makes it all the more remarkable that he doctrine of faith depended upon the material rather than the formal principle". Ibid.

[62] Op. cit., pp. 133-4 and 151-2.

> they call God simply the object of faith, and by fleeting speculations, as we have elsewhere stated, lead miserable souls astray rather than direct them to a definite goal. For, since "God dwells in inaccessible light (I Tim. 6:16), Christ must become our intermediary... for no one comes to the Father, who is "the fountain of life" (Ps. 36:9) except through him alone (John 14.6)... Indeed, it is true that faith looks to one God. But this must also added, "To know Jesus Christ whom he has sent" (John 17:3)... For this purpose the Father laid up with his only-begotten Son all that he had to reveal himself in Christ so that Christ, by communicating his Father's benefits, might express the true image of his glory (cf. Heb. 1:3). It has been said that we must be drawn by the Spirit to be aroused to seek Christ; so, in turn, we must be warned that the invisible Father is to be sought solely in this image.[63]

The dependence of the reality of faith on the triune God in revelation entails Calvin's rejection of the mediaeval Catholic doctrine of implicit faith.[64] The doctrine proposes the basis of one's faith in the teaching of the church rather than God the Holy Spirit, and makes the church rather than the triune God as the mediator of faith. Calvin argues that faith never consists in reverence for the church, but for the triune God alone[65] who is the founder of the church in faith. The church's mediatorial role between God and man for faith and salvation is unacceptable. There is only the one Mediator, Christ, for this. Calvin shifts the source of true and saving knowledge of God in faith from the teaching of the church to the Spirit of the triune God. It depends not on the church's subjective interpretation of Scripture and tradition, but on the Holy Spirit's illumination and persuasion of the objective Word of God the Father from the human words

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[63] Inst. III.ii.1. "It is plain, then, that we do not yet have a full definition of faith, inasmuch as merely to know something of God's will is not to be accounted faith. But what if we were to substitutes his benevolence or his mercy in place of his will, the tidings of which are often sad and the proclamation frightening?.. Accordingly we need the promise of grace, which can testify to us that the Father is merciful; since we can approach him in no other way, and upon grace alone the heart of man can rest. On this basis the psalms commonly yoke these two, mercy and truth, as if they were mutually connected (Ps. 89:14, 24; 92:2; 98:3; 100:5; 108:4; 115:1; etc)... I pass over what we read in the Prophets along the same line, that God is kind and steadfast in his promise... Now we shall possess a right definition of faith if we call it a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our mind and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit." Inst. III.ii.7.

[64] Inst. III.ii.2ff.

[65] Inst. III.ii.3.

of the Bible (and the Christian tradition and church).[66]

Calvin's notion of the triune nature of God (i.e. in the doctrine of the Trinity) is crucial for his understanding of the precise involvement of the Trinity in the existence of faith. His doctrine of faith, like his doctrine of the Trinity, ascribes its initiation, mediation and execution for salvation, respectively, to the redemptive will of God the Father, to the reconciling work of the Son in Jesus Christ, and to the appropriation of their redemptive will and work.[67] The acting Subject of God in this initiation, mediation and execution is given to each individual person of the Trinity. Each person of the Trinity remains as the Initiator, as the Mediator and the Executor. We encounter each individual person of the Trinity in the event of his self-revelation in his distinctive work (of the initiation, the mediation and the execution). The one divine being (essence) of the Trinity is the reality of God *in se*, and is transcendent and incomprehensible to our cognition.

The formative influence of the revelation of the triune God in Calvin's trinitarian doctrine of faith is apparent. The trinitarian orientation of the doctrine rests on the individual action and being of the members of the Trinity in the one God. The co-operation of the Trinity neither nullifies, nor undermines each person's distinctive work for the existence of faith.[68] Calvin succeeds in defending the distinctiveness of each person of the Trinity from his distinctive work. The fullness of the doctrine is not the mediation of the redemptive will of God the Father in the redemptive work of the Son, Jesus Christ, but the Holy Spirit's communication and appropriation of them in our faith.[69] The subject of inquiry of the doctrine is pneumatology. The creation and sustenance of faith is the principal work of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity.[70]

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[66] Inst. III.ii.6ff.

[67] Inst. III.i.1-3 and 7-8.

[68] Calvin designates creation and sustenance of faith as the principal work of the Holy Spirit, even though he stresses the involvement of God the Father and the Son in this.

[69] Inst. III.ii.7.

[70] Inst. III.i.4.

The primary concern of Calvin's pneumatology is the distinctive and temporal action (revelation) and being of God in the Holy Spirit.[71] Calvin considers the Holy Spirit's final execution of the initiation and the mediation of salvation in the redemptive will and work of God the Father in the Son, Jesus Christ, and presupposes the distinctive temporality of God in the Holy Spirit as the end (and in the Father as beginning and in the Son as middle) of salvation (and all other things of God).[72] The doctrine of the Trinity (in Book I.xiii.14 and 15) deals with the eternal and divine action and being (essence) of the Holy Spirit in common with God the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ.

Calvin proposes the distinctive action and being of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity as the ending and the Ender of God's salvation. The acting Subject of God in executing salvation is given to the temporal person of the Holy Spirit. His eternal and divine action and being (essence) are the reality of God *in se*, and are transcendent and incomprehensible to the cognition of our faith.[73] Their affirmation is based in their revelation in the historical execution of the eternal will of God the Father in the Son. Calvin supports the self-conscious being and subject of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity by admitting his own rational judgement and wisdom in his teaching and sanctifying action.[74] This appears to be decisive in opposing any modalistic notion of the Holy Spirit as a mere power or presence of God.

ii.2. Faith as the Gift of God in the Holy Spirit

The implication of the affirmation of faith as the principal work of the Holy

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[71] "Earlier I discussed the eternal deity and essence of the Spirit. Now let us be content with this particular point: that Christ so 'came by water and blood' in order that the Spirit may witness concerning him (I John 5:6-7), lest the salvation imparted through him escape us." Inst. III.i.1.

[72] Inst. I.xiii.18ff.

[73] "In understanding faith it is not merely a question of knowing that God exists, but also—and this especially—of knowing what is his will towards us. For it is not so much our concern to know who he is in himself, as what he wills to be toward us." Inst. III.ii.6.

[74] Inst. III.iii.14.

Spirit is this. It defines faith as the super-natural or miraculous[75] and special gift[76] of God in the Holy Spirit, and highlights the indispensability of our total dependence on his mercy and grace for salvation in faith.[77] We cannot possess faith by our own natural effort and merit. Our mind has to go beyond and rise above itself by the Spirit of God in order to attain it.[78] For Calvin, faith is fundamentally receptive. It is the instrument by which the Spirit of God communicates the benefit of the redemptive work and will of God the Father in the Son, Jesus Christ, to our faith for salvation.[79]

Faith has a passive and active relation to true and saving knowledge of the triune God in revelation. This knowledge (*notitia*) which consists in assurance rather than in comprehension[80] is a *praeparatio fidei.*[81] Calvin also supports the generation of knowledge from faith, and uses the word, *cognitio*, for the knowledge which follows faith, as Parker points out.[82] This shows quite clearly Calvin's mind on "the relation of *notitia – fides – cognitio.*"[83] Once faith in the Son of God the Father, Christ, is established by the Holy Spirit, it enriches true knowledge of God (and ourselves) by the Spirit's continuous persuasion and illumination through the Christian Bible and traditions.[84]

The maintenance of the Augustinian and Anselmian doctrine of *fides quaerens intellectum* is apparent. For Calvin, faith is an active capacity for seeking, gaining and understanding the true knowledge of God (and ourselves) from God's Word in Scripture. We never possess its activity and freedom by our own power and

[75] Inst. III.ii.9 and 13.

[76] Inst. III.ii.8 and 33.

[77] Inst. III.xi.16.

[78] Inst. III.ii.14 and 33.

[79] Inst. III.ii.7.

[80] Inst. III.ii.14. Calvin views comprehension of the reality of the triune God as "the fruit of great assurance" by the continuous persuasion of the Holy Spirit (Inst. III.ii.16).

[81] T. H. L. Parker, op. cit., 132.

[82] Ibid. p. 132.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Inst. III.ii.14ff.

merit. They depend on the free movement and illumination of the Holy Spirit in our subjectivity. The active role of faith to true and saving knowledge of the triune God in revelation is vitally important for the formation of the 1559 *Institutes*. The perspective of faith enables Calvin to treat the *Institutes* under the distinctive action (revelation) of the Trinity in the one God.[85] It provides the conceptual and systematic possibility, freedom and autonomy of the trinitarian content and structure of the *Institutes* in the light of God's Word in Scripture.[86]

The grace of the Spirit of God does not destroy but restores our nature. It sanctifies and illuminates the existing faculties of our sinful soul (intellect and will) to perceive, understand and believe in the promise of salvation of God the Father in Christ.[87] Calvin stresses the qualitative discrepancy between our sinful nature and its restoration in faith by regarding the latter as new creature.[88] It provides the capacity for true and saving knowledge of the triune God from the revelation of the Holy Spirit in our subjectivity. This capacity is not intrinsic to our sinful nature. True and saving knowledge of the triune God in faith qualitatively differs natural knowledge of God (the *sensus divinitatis*) from his revelation in creation. The *sensus divinitatis* is false and unsaving knowledge of God, and leads to his condemnation.[89]

ii.3. Sanctification and Justification in Faith

The content of faith is not confined to a trinitarian knowledge or concept of God. It has other properties such as justification,[90] sanctification,[91] Christian

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[85] See this chapter 2.i.2.

[86] G. C. Berkouwer (*Faith and Justification*, trans. L. B. Smedes, W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1954, p. 29) and E. Dowey (Op. cit., p. 152) claim that faith is the center of Calvin's theology. His theology is drawn from God's Word in faith. They do not argue for its trinitarian structure and content from its perspective of faith, as I do.

[87] Inst. III.i.4 and ii.16. cf. III.iii.6 and 7. II.ii.20-1 and 26-7.

[88] Inst. III.i.4.

[89] Inst. III.ii.14ff.

[90] Inst. III.xi-xviii.

[91] Inst. III.iii-x.

liberty,[92] prayer[93] and calling or election.[94] Calvin ascribes the origin of every advancement of godly life (and action and thinking) in faith (piety) to the grace and the secret work of God in the Holy Spirit.[95] The properties of faith belong to the principal and distinctive work of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity. The inquiry into this doctrine is pneumatology. It is not only based in the revelation (action) of the Spirit of God in our subjectivity, but also is designed to witness his distinctive being as the author of the properties of faith from this revelation, he creates and sustains these properties.[96]

The way Calvin expounds the properties of faith is highly significant. He treats the doctrine of sanctification prior to justification,[97] even though justification is the principal ground of all properties of faith including sanctification.[98] The treatment highlights sanctification as intrinsic to faith, and actual change of our life in faith for good work,[99] and eliminates any suggestion of faith devoid of good works or sanctification. Calvin hammers out the nature of this actual change by treating conversion and regeneration in repentance of sins as the constitutive elements of sanctification in faith.[100] The beauty of Calvin's exposition

[92] Inst. III.xix.

[93] Inst. III.xx.

[94] Inst. III.xxi-iv.

[95] Inst. III.i.3 and 4. cf. xxiv.13.

[96] Calvin regards Christian liberty as a spiritual matter (Inst. III.xix.9), and defines it as spiritual conscience in faith by the Holy Spirit (Inst. III.xix.2), and appears to illustrates the Spirit of God as the author of Christian liberty (Inst. III.xix.15). The Spirit of God is considered as the author of our genuine prayer in faith (Inst. III.xx.5).

[97] W. Niesel asserts that Calvin's treatment here is the product of his polemic with Roman Catholics. It is designed to resist the accusation of Roman Catholics that the Reformer's doctrine of justification is fictitious, since it allegedly leaves the sinner unchanged (Op. cit., pp. 130-1). D. Willis opposes Niesel's assertion. The treatment, which endorses the doctrine of double acceptance or righteousness of faith and good works in Christ for salvation, "was, in fact, one point of contact between Calvin and the doctrinally reforming Roman Catholic theologians like Gasparo Contarini whom he met in discussion at the Conference at Ratisbon (1541). There, agreement on the article of justification was achieved precisely by the use of a doctrine of double justification." Op. cit., p. 139. Willis does not seem to take seriously the fact that Calvin not only differentiates his doctrine of sanctification and justification from Roman Catholics', but also renounces their doctrine (Inst. III.xi.15). I shall indicate the reason for Calvin's renouncement very soon.

[98] Inst. III.xi.1.

[99] G. C. Berkouwer, *Faith and Justification*, p. 100.

[100] Inst. III.iii-x.

of the properties of faith is this. It maintains the unity of sanctification and justification[101] without relinquishing their difference.[102] Calvin advocates a simultaneous occurrence of justification and sanctification in faith;[103] he grants no priority of chronology to either in analysing the Christian life.[104]

Justification is God's free and unconditional acceptance and absolution of us in Christ as righteous. It is the free and unconditional imputation of Christ's righteousness to us, consisting of the remission of our sins. The commencement of our justification relies solely on Christ's redemptive work in the redemptive will (election) of God the Father.[105] The whole tenor of Calvin's doctrine of justification is this. We are justified once for all[106] not by good works, but by faith. Our justification in faith relies on the free grace and revelation of the Spirit of God alone. Calvin sharply distances himself from the mediaeval Catholic doctrine of justification; he regards justification "as the decisive step which opens the entire way of salvation," whilst the latter regards it "only as an initial stage along the way, needing additional stages to supplement it."[107]

The grace of God in justification differs from that in sanctification. Calvin

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[101] "However, our immediate transition will be from faith to repentance. For when this topic is rightly understood it will better appear how man is justified by faith alone, and simple pardon; nevertheless actual holiness of life, so to speak, is not separated from free imputation of righteousness." Inst. III.iii.1.

[102] "Yet we must bear in mind what I have already said, that the grace of justification is not separated from regeneration, although they are things distinct. But because it is very well known by experience that the traces of sin always remain in the righteous, their justification must be very different from reformation into newness of life (cf. Rom. 6:4). For God so begins this second point [regeneration or sanctification] in his elect, and progresses in it gradually, and sometimes slowly, throughout life, that they are always liable to the judgement of death before his tribunal." Inst. III.xi.11. The bracket is mine.

[103] Inst. III.xi.6.

[104] D. Willis, op. cit., p. 138.

[105] Inst. III.xi.2-4.

[106] Calvin accentuates the complete allowance of justification in faith by claiming its forensic nature (Inst. III.xi.11). Calvin criticises Osiander's rejection of this forensic gift of our justification, for it jeopardises the free imputation of Christ's righteousness to us in justification for salvation. This is because Osiander fails to recognise the discrepancy between justification (and forgiveness) and regeneration or sanctification (Inst. III.xi.5-12).

[107] G. J. Spykman, *Reformational Theology*, W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1992, p. 492.

argues for the two kinds of God's grace in justification and in sanctification.[108] Sanctification in faith is an on-going process for salvation.[109] Its significance is that it enables our good work in order to confirm and consolidate our salvation in justification of faith. Calvin follows Augustine in opposing any doctrine of perfect holiness;[110] "we are besieged by many vices and much weakness as long as we are encumbered with our body."[111] But he criticises that Augustine and the mediaeval Augustinianism do not adequately demonstrate the discrepancy between justification and sanctification. They are inclined to interpret justification as the part of sanctification; they propose the dependence of salvation on our continuous good work in sanctification. This denies our salvation in justification by faith alone, and fails to obviate the Pelagian notion of the co-operation of our good work with the grace of God's justification in faith for salvation.[112]

It is vitally important to recognise the basis and the perspective of Calvin's doctrine of justification. Calvin views justification (and sanctification) not from its reality in the Son of God the Father, Jesus Christ, but from the Holy Spirit's appropriation of it in our faith.[113] The systematic context of the doctrine is the revelation (action) of God not in Jesus Christ, as W. Niesel claims,[114] but in the Holy Spirit. Justification (and sanctification) in faith is the principal work of the self-revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity. Their basis in this revelation is decisive in relating justification to sanctification in faith, and in obviating any suggestion devoid of good works in our sanctification in justification by faith. Good work in sanctification is intrinsic to the justification of our person and work as righteous in faith for salvation.[115] Their unity eliminates any suggestion of two

108 Inst. III.xi.1 and 6.

109 Inst. III.iii.9.

110 Inst. III.iii.13.

111 Inst. III.iii.14.

112 Inst. III.xi.15.

113 Inst. III.xi.1, 7, 13-20. cf. xiii.1.

114 Op. cit., p. 137-9.

115 R. S. Wallace, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1959, pp.

different and separate salvations; one from completed salvation in justification and the other from the on-going salvation in sanctification, and the problem of contradiction in this suggestion, as H. Bauke claims.[116] For Calvin, good work in sanctification is grounded in justification in faith for salvation.[117]

2.iii. Election

iii.1. The Basis of Election

The doctrine of election in Book III deals with the cause of salvation in faith and its properties (e.g. justification and sanctification). It demonstrates God's eternal election (will) as the direct cause, and opposes any suggestion that our good work meets salvation in faith.[118] Calvin strongly renounces God's foreknowledge of our good work in sanctification as the cause of our election and salvation in faith. We were elected to be holy by the sovereign will of God, not because we are already holy.[119] The remarkable fact is that the doctrine is based not in the eternal election of God *in se*, but in its historical fulfillment and revelation *ad extra*.[120] Calvin speaks of this fulfillment and revelation as our calling (and justification and sanctification)[121] as God's children in faith, and advocates this calling as the noetic and conceptual basis of God's eternal election (will).

23-7 and 302-3.

116 *Die Probleme der Theologie Calvins*, J. C. Hinrichs, Leipzig, 1922, pp. 16ff. Bauke's claim stems from his failure to appreciate the perspective of Calvin's doctrine of justification and sanctification in faith that resists their separation.

117 Inst. III.xi.1.

118 Inst. III.xxiv.3.

119 Inst. III.xxii.3.

120 Inst. III.xxi.1.

121 "As Scripture, then, clearly shows, we say that God once established by his eternal and unchangeable plan those whom he long before determined once for all to receive into salvation... Now among the elect we regard the call as a testimony of election. Then we hold justification another sign of its manifestation, until they come into glory in which the fulfillment of that election lies. But as the Lord seals his elect by call and justification, so, by shutting off the reprobate from knowledge of his name or from the sanctification of his Spirit, he, as it were, reveals by these marks what sort of judgment awaits them." Inst. III.xxi.7.

> Even though discussion about predestination is likened to a dangerous sea... Let this, therefore, be the way of our inquiry: to begin with God's call, and to end with it.[122]

The subject of inquiry of the doctrine of election in Book III is the self-revelation (action) of the Spirit of God in our subjectivity. The doctrine is based in this revelation. The revelation fulfills and reveals the eternal election of God the Father in Christ to us and for us through God's Word in Scripture, and brings forth our adoption or calling (justification and sanctification and regeneration) as God's children in faith for salvation. Calvin argues for God's election (salvation) and reprobation (condemnation) from the availability and unavailability of the revelation for our adoption and calling.

> Besides, even the very nature and dispensation of the call clearly demonstrate this fact, for it consists not only in the preaching of the Word but also in the illumination of the Spirit. When he shines with the light of his Word upon the undeserving, he thereby shows a sufficient clear proof of his free goodness. Here, then, God's boundless goodness is already manifesting itself but not to the salvation of all; for a heavier judgement remains upon the wicked because they reject the testimony of God's love. And God also, to show forth his glory, withdraws the effectual working of his Spirit from them. This inner call, then, is a pledge of salvation that cannot deceive us. To it applies John's statement: "We recognize that we are his children from the Spirit, which he has given us" (I John 3:24; cf. ch. 4:13). But lest the flesh boast... when he called and freely offered himself... it has no ears to hear, no eyes to see, unless he makes them.[123]

The basis of the doctrine in the self-revelation of the Holy Spirit determines it as a theology of revelation.[124] It enables Calvin to view election not from its

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[122] Inst. III.xx.iv.4.

[123] Inst. III.xxiv.2."But to make the matter clearer, we must deal with both the calling of the elect and the blinding and hardening of the wicked... God by his calling manifests the election, which he otherwise holds hidden within himself... Although in choosing his own the Lord already has adopted them as his children, we see that they do not come into possession of so great a good except when they are called; conversely Paul calls the Spirit, whom they receive, both "Spirit of adoption" (Rom. 8:15) and the "seal" and "guarantee of the inheritance to come" (Eph. 1:13-14; cf. II Cor. 1:22; 5:5). For he surely establishes and seals in their hearts by his testimony the assurance of the adoption to come." Inst. III.xxiv.1. cf. III.xxi.1-3, xxii.10 and xxiv.8.

[124] W. Niesel (Op. cit., pp. 160ff) and G. C. Berkouwer (*Divine Election*, trans. H. B. Bekker, W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1960, 16ff) also claim Calvin's doctrine of election as a theology of

hidden eternity in God, but from its revealed and fulfilled temporality in our calling in faith. It resists any presentation of election as a eternally completed and timeless event of God in the past. Calvin upholds its temporality and regards it as an on-going and eschatological event in the present time. God looks and discerns every thing (including his eternal election and decree) as an on-going present event before him and us.[125] We anticipate the eschatological fulfillment of election for our eternal salvation through our calling in faith here and now. Calvin treats eschatology in the context of the action of the Holy Spirit, and upholds the eschatological resurrection of our body for eternal salvation as the distinctive work of the Holy Spirit in the triune God.[126]

Moreover, the basis also resists a static and abstract notion of election, and offers a dynamic and realistic notion. The reality of election is something that dynamically and actually occurs in our adoption and calling as God's children in faith. Calvin opposes any actual allowance and effectiveness of election in us prior to this calling and adoption by the self-revelation of the Holy Spirit.[127] The elect do not differ at all from the reprobate before the actual calling, "except that they are protected by God's especial mercy from rushing headlong into the final ruin of death".[128]

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revelation. Their claim nevertheless differs from my way. Their claim stems from their conviction that the doctrine is based in the revelation of the Word or Son of God in Jesus Christ. It will be considered again later.

125 "When we attribute foreknowledge to God, we mean that all things always were, and perpetually remain, under his eyes, so that to his knowledge there is nothing future or past, but all things are present. And they are present in such a way that he not only conceives them through ideas, as we have before us those things which our minds remember, but he truly looks upon them and discerns them as things placed before us those things are present. And this foreknowledge is extended throughout the universe to every creature. We call predestination God's eternal decree, by which he compacted with himself what he willed to become of each of man. For all are not created in equal condition; rather, eternal life is foreordained for some, eternal damnation for others." Inst. III.xxi.5.

126 "God raised his Son from the death, not to make known a single example of his power, but to show toward us believers the same working of the Spirit, whom he calls 'life' while he dwells in us because he was given, to the end that he may quicken what is mortal in us (cf. Rom. 8:11)." Inst. III.xxv.3.

127 Inst. III.xxiv.10.

128 Ibid.

iii.2. The Link between God's Election and Nature

The major concern of Calvin's doctrine of election is not our election itself, but God's involvement in our election, as W. Niesel strongly argues.[129] K. Barth[130] is mistaken to dismiss the systematic link between Calvin's doctrine of election and God. Their link is apparent in the formative influence of God's characteristics in the nature of the doctrine of election and in the doctrine's witness to God's characteristics. Calvin endorses the Augustinian doctrine of reprobation and condemnation[131] in order to stress the genuine freedom, grace, mercy and love of God the Holy Spirit in election and salvation,[132] and ascribes the ultimate responsibility of evil (and sin) to God's eternal decree (will) alone in order to defend his sovereign lordship over all (good as well as evil) things. His doctrine of the double decree is part of the doctrine of God the Holy Spirit. He discusses the doctrine not from the hiddenness of the eternal election and reprobation in God the Father, but from their historical fulfillment and revelation to us and for us by the Holy Spirit's free (and gracious and merciful and loving) calling and adoption of us as God's children in faith.[133]

The endorsement of the Augustinian doctrine of double decree invites serious criticism. It not only fails to obviate favoritism in the inner nature of God, but also makes it difficult to identify the God of eternal reprobation with the God

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[129] Op. cit., pp. 159ff.

[130] "Calvin never connected the doctrine of predestination with that of God, whether directly and indirectly." CD II, 2. p. 86. Cf. F. Wendel, op. cit., p. 268.

[131] Calvin accepts Augustine's claim of the biblical basis of the doctrine of double predestination (Inst. III.xxi.2 and 4. cf. xxii.1 and 8. xx.iii.1 and 5.), and asserts the usefulness of the doctrine for understanding of the nature of faith and salvation, and insists on our positive attribute to defend and appreciate it (Inst. III.xxi.1 and 2).

[132] "We shall never be clearly persuaded, as we ought to be, that our salvation flows from the wellspring of God's free mercy until we come to know his eternal election, which illumines God's grace by this contrast: that he does not indiscriminately adopt all into the hope of salvation but gives to some what he denies to others." Inst. III.xxi.1. "But I had good reason to say that here we must note two degrees, for in the election of a whole nation God has already shown that in his mere generosity he has not been bound by any laws but is free, so that equal apportionment of grace is not to be required of him. The very inequality of his grace proves that it is free." Inst. III.xxi.6.

[133] Inst. III.xxi.1-3 and 7. cf. xxii.10 and xxiv.2, 7 and 8.

of love in Jesus Christ to which the New Testament attests. E. Brunner claims, therefore, that the doctrine is rooted not in the Bible, as Calvin claims,[134] but in "Calvin's erroneous opinion".[135] Brunner is right to say that Calvin's doctrine of double decree is not just following the Bible.[136] It is an interpretation of the revelation of God's eternal election (salvation) and reprobation (condemnation) in the Bible from the perspective of God's Word in faith. Brunner is, however, not right to insinuate that the doctrine stems merely from Calvin's own opinion. It relies on the Holy Spirit's internal teaching in faith through God's Word from Scripture.[137]

The ascription of the ultimate responsibility for evil (sin) to God's decree before creation[138] gives rise to Calvin's closer alliance with supralapsarianism than infralapsarianism explaining evil and sin from the will of God after creation. Calvin does not propose the problem of contradiction by attributing the responsibility of evil (sin) simultaneously to the will of God and man's corruption, as H. Bauke argues.[139] Calvin's assertion of justification for man's damnation from his own corruption and sin does not alter the fact that God is the author of the corruptible nature and corruption and condemnation of man.[140] The freedom of

[134] Inst. III.xxi.3.

[135] *The Christian Doctrine of God*, Vol. I, trans. O. Wyon, Lutterworth Press, London, 1949, p. 331. "Thus the Bible teaches that there will be a double outcome of world history, salvation and ruin, Heaven and Hell. But while salvation is explicitly taught as derived from the eternal Election, the further conclusion is not drawn that destruction is also based upon a corresponding decree of doom." p. 324. "The doctrine of the double decree is, however, not only not supported by the evidence of Scripture, it is also impossible to equate it with the message of the Bible... Essentially, it is impossible to regard the will which conceives this double decree as the same will which represented as *Agape* in the New Testament." p. 331.

[136] St. Paul does not actually develop the doctrine of double predestination out of the story of Jacob and Esau in the Old Testament in Romans 9, as Calvin argues. "From the example of Jacob and Esau, Paul then develops the matter further. For although both were sons of Abraham, enclosed together in their mother's womb, the honor of the first-born was transferred to Jacob. Here was a change like a portent, which, as Paul contends, testified to the election of Jacob and the reprobation of Esau." Inst. III.xxii.4. Paul here merely stresses the irrelevance of works for God's choice of Jacob rather than Esau as the real first-born or hire of God's blessed household and people. He does not actually regard Esau as the reprobate for God's eternal condemnation.

[137] Inst. III.xxi.1-3. cf. xxiv.1-5.

[138] Inst. III.xxiii.4.

[139] *Die Probleme der Theologie Calvins*, pp. 16ff.

[140] Inst. III.xxiii.3 and 4. It is worthwhile to notice the fact that that Calvin does not propose the

man is grounded in the freedom of God; the will of man does not contradict, but voluntarily fulfills the will of God.[141] God does not drag men against their will in order to fulfil his will.[142] The real weakness of Calvin's doctrine of election is that it ignores the serious problem of God's authorship of evil (sin), and consequently imperils the image of God's goodness and love. The reason for God's predestination of man's sinfulness and reprobation, he thinks, is hidden in God.[143]

iii.3. The Trinitarian Nature of Election

The systematic link between Calvin's doctrine of God and election is also noticeable from the formative influence of the triune nature of God in the nature of his election. His notion of the triune nature of God (i.e. in the doctrine of the Trinity in Book I.xiii) determines the trinitarian orientation of the doctrine The doctrine demonstrates the relevance of the Trinity in the one God to the reality of election. R. A. Muller does not seem to understand fully the trinitarian orientation of the doctrine, as he says that "there is no particular attempt to emphasize the trinitarian aspect of the doctrine."[144] Calvin considers our election as the product of the co-operation of the Trinity in one God. His doctrine of election, like of the Trinity,[145] ascribes the Initiator, the Mediator[146] and the Executor of election (and all other things),[147] respectively, to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The initiation, mediation and execution of election

existence of corruption (sin and evil) in the original nature of man in creation (Inst. I.xv.1). Man's corruption derives from his corruptible nature in creation by his free will (Inst. I.xv.1. cf. II.i.5).

141 Inst. II.iii.5.

142 D. A. Carson, *Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility*, Marshall, Morgan and Scott, London, 1981, pp. 13 and 208.

143 Inst. III.xxiii.4.

144 *Christ and the Decree*, Baker Book House, Michigan, 1986, p. 25.

145 Inst. I.xiii.18ff.

146 "Note that the Father's gift is the beginning of our reception into the surety and protection of Christ... The elect are said to have been the Father's before he gave them his only-begotten Son... Meanwhile, although Christ interposes himself as mediator, he claims for himself, in common with the Father, the right to choose... Form this we infer that none excel by their own effort or diligence, seeing that Christ makes himself the Author of election." Inst. III.xxii.7.

147 Inst. III.xxi.7.

(and all other things) are regarded as the principal and distinctive works of the Trinity, and are decisive in defending the distinctiveness of each being of the Trinity.

The trinitarian orientation of Calvin's doctrine of election is viewed not from the relationship of the Son with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, but from the relationship of the Holy Spirit with God the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ. The systematic context of the doctrine is not the action (revelation) of the Son of God in the man Jesus, as W Niesel (and F. Wendel)[148] advocates,[149] but the revelation (action) of the Spirit of God in our subjectivity. Calvin discusses the eternal election (will) of God the Father not from its mediation in and through the Son, Jesus Christ, but from its historical revelation and fulfillment in and through the Holy Spirit. This is the only way of discussing the eternal election (decree and will) without abstract speculation of its reality in God the Father himself.

The emphasis of Calvin's doctrine of election (and the Trinity) rests on the distinctiveness of each individual action and person of the Trinity in election. The participation of God the Father and the Son in election does not hinder the designation of its appropriation in our faith as the principal work of the Holy Spirit in the triune God. The acting Subject of God in the fulfillment and revelation of election in our faith is given to the individual person of the Holy Spirit. This is crucial for Calvin's successful declaration of the distinctive action and being of the Holy Spirit in the triune God. Calvin presents the Holy Spirit as the means and object as well as the Subject of the historical fulfillment and revelation of election in our faith.

K. Barth criticises Calvin's attribution of the initiation of election to God the

[148] "But in 1559 Calvin said that the question of predestination which might be raised in relation to the doctrine of God was inopportune. On the other hand, he connected predestination with the Christ and his work, in order to show more clearly that it is in Christ that election takes place." Op. cit., p. 268.

[149] Op. cit., pp. 165 and 180.

Father. It implies a separation of God the Father from Jesus Christ in election (decree), and supports for the doctrine of the *decretum absolutum* of God the Father *in se*.[150] "Christ is shut out not only from the decree, but also from the execution of the decree."[151] Calvin's doctrine of election cannot be therefore a theology of revelation; it views the electing God not from the *Deus revelatus* in Jesus Christ, but from a *Deus nudus absconditus*. J. K. S. Reid stresses that Calvin separates the election (and decree) of God the Father from his grace in Jesus Christ. Election precedes grace.[152] The weakness of Calvin's doctrine of election, Barth and Reid believe, stems decisively from the fact that he does not think through Jesus Christ as the Subject of election, the electing God, and as the sole source of assurance in election.[153] Christ is regarded as the means of election, and "is allotted no part in the decree of reprobation."[154]

The criticism of Barth and Reid is unbalanced and fails to appreciate the intention of Calvin's doctrine of election. Reid overlooks that Calvin declares the free grace and mercy of God the Father as the cause of his eternal election

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[150] CD II, 2. p. 75.

[151] J. K. S. Reid, "The Office of Christ in Predestination" in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, Vol. I, 1948, p. 17.

[152] "As one passes in review the various roles assigned to Christ in election, it is difficult not to despair. In every one, the function of Christ is to carry out something already fixed and definitive. At one end of the scale, Christ is merely the exhibitor of a decision already made in an eternity in which He has Himself been, even if existent, at least inoperative. At the other end, His role is to give effect to a decree in whose formation He has apparently had no hand. It is the *haereditas damnosa* taken over from Calvin himself: no less here than there, decree is prior to grace." Ibid. p. 16.

[153] "How can we have assurance in respect of our own election except by the Word of God? And how can ever the Word of God give us assurance on this point if this Word, if Jesus Christ, is not really the electing God, not the election itself, not our election, but only an elected means whereby the electing God—electing elsewhere and in some other way—executes that which He has decreed concerning those whom He has—elsewhere and in some other way—elected? The fact that Calvin in particular not only did not answer but did not even perceive this question is the decisive objection which we have to bring against his whole doctrine of predestination. The electing God of Calvin is a *Deus nudus absconditus*. It is not the *Deus revelatus* who is as such the *Deus absconditus*, the eternal God. All the dubious features of Calvin's doctrine result from the basic failing that in the last analysis he separates God and Jesus Christ, thinking that what was in the beginning with God must be sought elsewhere than in Jesus Christ. Thus with all his forceful and impressive acknowledgement of the divine election of grace, ultimately he still passes by the grace of God as it has appeared in Jesus Christ." CD II, 2. p. 111. cf. pp. 67, 75 and 87. Reid, op. cit., pp. 1-19.

[154] Reid, op. cit., p. 17.

and decree for our salvation.[155] He views the electing God not from *Deus nudus absconditus*, but from the *Deus revelatus* in Christ, and argues for the assurance of our election neither in God the Father nor in ourselves, but in Christ, and expresses Christ as "the mirror" of our election. Not only does God the Father elect us in Christ's merit, but the noetic and conceptual possibility of his election also rest on our faith and calling in Christ as God's children[156] by the adoption of the Holy Spirit.[157] Calvin explicitly opposes the doctrine of *decretum* or *potentia absolutum* that implies lawless execise of God's decree and power. God is perfectly righteous and just in all his action (including his eternal reprobation and condemnation),[158] even though the reason for it (i.e. his reprobation) is hidden in himself.[159]

Calvin eliminates any suggestion of a different electing God in the Father and in the Son, Jesus Christ, even though Barth and Reid[160] do not accept this. He considers the Son of God, Christ, like the Father, as the Subject or Author of election or as the electing God, from the perspective of his eternal and divine being (essence) in common with God the Father.[161]

> Meanwhile, although Christ interposes himself as mediator, he claims for himself, in common with the Father, the right to choose. "I am not speaking,' he says, "of all; I know whom I have chosen." (John 13:18.). If anyone ask whence he has chosen them, he replies in another passage: "From the world"

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155 Inst. III.xxi.1.

156 "First, if we seek God's fatherly mercy and kindly heart, we should turn our eyes to Christ, on whom alone God's Spirit rests (cf. Matt. 3:17)... Accordingly, those whom God has adopted as his sons are said to have been chosen not in themselves but in his Christ (Eph. 1:4)... But if we have been chosen in him, we shall not find assurance of our election in ourselves; and not even in God the Father, if we conceive him as severed from his Son. Christ, then, is the mirror wherein we must, and without self-deception may, contemplate our own election. For since it is into his body the Father has destined those to be engrafted whom he has willed from eternity to be own, that he may hold as sons all whom he acknowledges to be among his member... all those who have received him in faith." Inst. III.xxiv.5.

157 Inst. III.xxiv.1. cf. III.xxi.1-3, xxii.10 and xxiv.8.

158 Calvin argues that "the will of God is not only free of all fault but is the highest rule of perfection, and even the law of all laws." Inst. III.xxiii.2.

159 Inst. III.xxiii.3-5.

160 Op. cit., p. 12.

161 Inst. III.xxiv.7.

> (John 15:19), which he excludes from his prayers when he commends his disciples to the Father (John 17:9). This we must believe: when he declares that he knows whom he has chosen, he denotes in the human genus a particular species, distinguished not by the quality of its virtues but by heavenly decree. From this we infer that none excel by their own effort or diligence, seeing that Christ makes himself the Author of election... This refers only to the office of apostle... as Paul often acknowledge in his own person... still does not contain in itself the hope of eternal salvation.[162]

Calvin supports Christ's freedom of choice, like God the Father's, in election as well as reprobation, even though Reid unfairly dismisses this. This support is made from the perspective of the believer, more precisely his living faith in God's Word which the the Holy Spirit reveals through the Bible.[163]

The remarkable fact is that Calvin does not advocate a christocentric notion of election, as Niesel and Berkouwer propose. They believe that his discussion of the eternal election of God the Father does not go beyond Christ. For it is based in the revelation of the election in the Word of God in Christ to which the Bible attests.[164] They argue for the election of God *in se* from its revelation *ad extra*, and fail to grasp Calvin's distinction between them. His confining of the noetic and conceptual possibility of the election to faith in God's Word in Christ does not lead to denial of the election of God the Father *in se*. Calvin asserts the

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[162] Inst. III.xxii.7.

[163] Inst. III.xx.1-3.

[164] "Just in this discussion about God's eternal choice Calvin proves himself to be a theologian of the Word, but not simply in the sense that he derives his doctrine of election from the Bible but in the sense that he points to our connexion with the Word; with Christ manifested in the words of the Bible." W. Niesel, op. cit., p. 165. "The orientation of Calvin's theology towards the Incarnate God is unmistakable precisely in regard to election... Calvin's doctrine of election is intended to be nothing more than an expression of the glad tidings: in Christ God has elected us before the foundation of the world, so that we may be holy and blameless before Him in love." p. 169. "Calvin is strictly concerned with the theology of revelation and that his teaching is wholly centered on Jesus Christ." p. 180. "Calvin's warning to remain within the boundaries of Scripture was in full harmony with his argument to keep solely to Christ in the discussion of election, and not to go beyond Him... Luther and Calvin both gave solemn warning not to forget and neglect the Christological content of the boundary in order that precisely that content might protect us against all investigation beyond the simple Word of God." G. C. Berkouwer, *Divine Election*, p. 24. "Even Calvin, who so often has been accused of teaching an obscure, hidden election, spoke of the revelation of election." p. 105. "If the question concerns the hiddenness of God's will we shall have to remember that He has made it knowable to us by His Word, and for that reason Calvin repeatedly indicates to us a way which we must and can walk." p. 106.

election of God the Father *in se* prior to its mediation in Christ and its execution in the Holy Spirit.

The reason for this assertion, which commentators (e.g. Barth, Reid, Niesel, Berkouwer and E. Brunner) do not spell out, is this. The initiation of election is intrinsic to the nature of God the Father,[165] and is decisive in differentiating himself from the Son and the Holy Spirit.[166] The intention of the trinitarian orientation is not to undermine the distinctive actions and beings of the Trinity in election. Calvin explores the trinitarian nature of God's election essentially from the perspective of each individual action and being of the Trinity, for he attributes the acting Subject of God in election to an individual person. We encounter each individual person of the Trinity from the revelation of its word (i.e. initiation, mediation and execution) in Scripture.[167] The one eternal and divine action and being (essence) of the Trinity is the reality of God *in se*, and is transcendent and incomprehensible to the measure of our faith.

The implication of this attribution, which commentators (including Barth, Reid, Niesel, Berkouwer and Brunner) have hardly explored, is this. It determines the Trinity not only as the means and objects, but also the subjects of the initiation, the mediation and execution of election (and all other things). They are the Initiator, Mediator and Executor of election (and all other things). Calvin here presupposes the distinctive temporal actions and beings of the Trinity. Their action and beings as the initiation, mediation and execution and as the Initiator, Mediator and Executor can lead to viewing them as the beginning, the middle, and the end and as the Beginner, "Middler" and Ender of God's election (and

[165] "For what he [Christ] says elsewhere, 'Father,... of those... whom thou hast given me none... is lost but the son of perdition' (John 17:11-2), even though the expression is misused, involves no ambiguity. To sum up: by free adoption God makes those whom he wills to be his sons; the intrinsic cause of this is in himself, for he is content with his own secret good pleasure." Inst. III.xxii.7. The bracket is mine.

[166] Inst. I.xiii.18ff.

[167] Calvin argues for God the Father as the Initiator from his self-revelation in the initiation of election in the Bible (Inst. III.xxii.2).

all other things). Calvin appears to speak of the Trinity as the *temporal* means and objects as well as the subjects of the initiation, the mediation and execution of election (and all other things) of the one God.

The attribution here is the decisive reason that Calvin's persistent discussion of the involvement of the divine and eternal being (essence) of the Son and the Holy Spirit in election is absent. Calvin does not assert them as the eternal and divine Subject or Author of election or as the electing God, even though he never denies it. Calvin talks about the eternal and divine Subject or Author of election, the eternal electing God, chiefly as God the Father. Commentators (including Barth, Reid, Niesel, Berkouwer and E. Brunner) have ignored the reason and, purpose for this.

The persistent affirmation of God the Father as the electing God is because Calvin ascribes the eternal and divine will of God for his eternal election or decree solely to God the Father.[168] The purpose of this ascription, which the doctrine of the Trinity in Book I.xiii.18-25 vividly declares, is to assert the eternal and divine will of God the Father as the sole beginning (*principium*), source or foundation of the action of the Godhead (the Son and the Holy Spirit) in election (and in all other things such as creation and redemption and sanctification). The implication of this assertion is that it secures the unity of the actions and the beings of the Trinity in the one God. It proposes the derivation of their beings and actions from the eternal and divine will of the one God the Father. Calvin consequently asserts the divinity and eternity of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and implies thir place in election always from their ontological unity and identity with the one eternal God the Father.[169]

The noetic and conceptual possibility of the one eternal and divine being (essence) of God the Father is confined to the revelation of his eternal and divine

[168] Inst. III.xxii.7. cf. xxiv.7.

[169] Inst. I.xiii.7-15 and III.xxii.7.

will in our faith.[170] It is the only way of discussing the existence of the eternal and divine being (essence) of God the Father (and the Son and the Holy Spirit) without abstract speculation. The recognition of the eternal and divine will is vitally important for understanding the nature of the one eternal and divine being (essence) of God, although Calvin himself neither grasps, nor elaborate the full implications of this.

This presupposes the existence of the personal or self-conscious will and subject of the one eternal being (essence) of God, and resists any impersonal and modalistic suggestion that is a mere unifying mode (essence) of the Trinity. This is crucial for defending its genuine distinctiveness and involvement in action of God *in se* and *ad extra*. Moreover, the recognition provides a basis for proposing a rational and personal dialogue between the eternal and divine will (and being, subject and person) of God the Father and the temporal and human will (and being, subject and person) of the Son, Jesus, and for developing a rational and personal unity and relationship between the temporal (beginning, middle and ending) beings of the Trinity and its one eternal being (essence).

Conclusion

Pneumatology is the ultimate theme of the doctrine of faith and the church in Book III and IV of the 1559 *Institutes*. The central concern and subject of Calvin's development of the doctrine is the Holy Spirit's appropriation of the benefit of Christ's redemptive work in the faith of the elect (including Christian individuals, community and church). The doctrine is based in the self-revelation (action) of the Spirit of God in human subjectivity. The creation, sustenance and increase of the faith of the elect for salvation rely on this revelation (action), and are the principal work of the Holy Spirit in the triune God. The doctrine unravels the distinctive being of the Spirit of God as the Creator, Sustainer and

[170] Inst. III.ii.6.

Increaser of our faith from his distinctive revelation that creates, sustains and increases it.

The actual occurrence of the revelation is never denied by the confinement of its noetic and conceptual possibility to God's Word in faith. The chief function of God's Word is to provide freedom and autonomy in faith to interpret and systematise the nature and effect of the revelation of the Spirit of God as those of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. The perspective of faith in God's Word gives rise to Calvin's trinitarian interpretation of the action (revelation) and being of the Spirit of God in Scripture. The trinitarian interpretation is based on the individual and temporal being of the Holy Spirit. His eternal being (essence) in common with God the Father and the Son is the hidden and incomprehensible reality of God *in se*.

The basis of the doctrine of faith and its properties (e.g. sanctification, justification and election) in revelation determines the nature of their epistemology as well as their ontology. Calvin argues for their dynamic nature from their total dependence on the free grace and revelation (action) of the Spirit of God. The conceptual dependence of sanctification, justification and election on this revelation brings forth the perspective of their reality in faith, their treatment as properties of faith, and their realistic and dynamic view in the light of God's Word. It is the basis for their unity in faith, and for opposing any loss sanctification, good work and change in the justification by faith. It enables Calvin to present the reality of election not merely as a completed, static, and timeless eternal event of God in the past, but as an on-going, eschatological, dynamic and temporal event of God in the present. The on-going, eschatological, dynamic and temporal fulfillment and revelation of the eternal election and reprobation of God the Father in our faith is the principal work of the Holy Spirit in the triune God.

The chief concern of the doctrine of faith and its properties is not knowledge of our faith, sanctification, justification and election, but of God's involvement in

them. They have no autonomous value; their creation and sustenance depends on the free grace and action of God in the Holy Spirit. The systematic link between Calvin's doctrine of faith and election with that of God is arguable from the formative influence of the triune nature of God and his characteristics (e.g. grace, love, mercy, and freedom) in the reality of faith and election. The doctrine of faith and its properties is the essential part of the doctrine of God the Holy Spirit. Calvin advocates the reality of faith and its properties as the outcome of the free grace and work of God in the Holy Spirit. The initiation and the mediation of their reality, respectively, in God the Father and the Son are discussed in the context of the Holy Spirit's appropriation of them in our calling and adoption as God's children. Their appropriation is the principal work of the Holy Spirit in the triune God.

The doctrine of faith and its properties demonstrates the distinctive action and being of the Holy Spirit in the triune God as their final execution and Executor for salvation, and proposes his distinctive temporality. His distinctive action and being can be viewed as the ending and the Ender of the initiation and the mediation of salvation in our faith and its properties. They are the temporal means and object as well as the temporal Subject of creation and sustenance of our faith and its properties. The acting Subject of God in their creation and sustenance is given to the distinctive temporal being and person of God in the Holy Spirit. His eternal and divine action and being (essence) in common with God the Father and the Son is the hidden and incomprehensible reality of God *in se.*

Their noetic and conceptual possibility is confined to their revelation in the temporal and individual actions and beings of the Trinity. Calvin never speaks of the reality of God apart from the Trinity, and affirms the eternal and divine being (essence) of the Holy Spirit from God the Father's. This is to designate God the Father as the sole beginning (*principium*), source or foundation of the

temporal (end and middle) action and being of the Holy Spirit and the Son. Calvin here succeeds in defending the unity of their temporal and distinctive actions and beings in the one eternal God the Father. The eternal and divine being is mentioned solely from the revelation of the eternal will of God the Father in our faith. Calvin and his commentators do not recognise and elaborate the crucial importance of this connection for the nature of the eternal and divine being of God the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

The principal purpose of the 1559 *Institutes* is not to demonstrate our nature, but God's action. Our creatureliness, redemption and sanctification are not self-existent; their existence relies on the creative, redemptive and sanctifying action of God. Hence, the purpose of the *Institutes* is to witness to the biblical revelation of the trinitarian action and nature of the one God in creation, redemption and sanctification. There is a mutual relationship between knowledge of God and ourselves. Knowledge of ourselves relies on knowledge of God, or *vice versa*. Their mutual tie is designed to concentrate on the revelation of their relation in reality for our faith and for their realistic knowledge and conceptualisation. It is the basis of Calvin to resist abstract speculation about their absolute reality *in se*.

The *Institutes* is orientated to a trinitarian theology. It is not only geared to attest the trinitarian action and nature of the one God, but it is also based on their revelation in creation, redemption and sanctification. The one eternal being (essence) of God in his action is the transcendent and incomprehensible reality of God *in se*. Book I of the *Institutes* concerns the doctrine of creation and declares God the Father as the true Creator from his self-revelation in creation (and providence) and in Scripture. Christology and pneumatology are considered under soteriology in the rest. Book II explores the implications of the revelation (work) of the Son of God in Jesus Christ for the salvation of sinful mankind, and asserts him as the Redeemer. Book III stresses that the Holy Spirit's appropriation of the benefit of Christ's redemptive work is the faith and its properties (e.g. sanctification and justification) of the elect (every Christian individual and community or church) for salvation. Book IV deals with the external means of this appropriation in and through the church and its properties (e.g. government, preaching and sacraments). They are to witness God in the Holy Spirit as the Sanctifier from his revelation in the sanctification of the elect in faith for salvation.

The outcome of the basis of the *Institutes* in the trinitarian revelation (action) of God is this. The *Institutes* is free from a rigid biblical and dogmatic formalism. Calvin not only affirms the living being of the triune God in revelation, but also rejects formal ideas or principles of the Bible and the traditional dogmatics (including the Apostles' Creed) as the determinative source of the *Institutes*. Its basis also determines the ontology of God and ourselves and the nature of epistemology. Faith is indispensable for the noetic and conceptual possibility of the revelation of their reality in creation, redemption and sanctification. The basis opposes any idea of God as a solitary and unmoved static being in and for himself, and leads to the idea of God as a trinitarian, relational and dynamic being to us and for us. We are subsequently defined as dynamically related to God. Our existence (and that of all things in the universe) depends on the continuous provision of God. Our creatureness, redemption and sanctification derive from the creative, redemptive and sanctifying action of the triune God.

Calvin's trinitarian theology rests on his perspective of faith. The perspective provides him with hermeneutical and dogmatic freedom and autonomy; it enables him to interpret and systematise various biblical and traditional teachings of God's creation, redemption and sanctification as the principal work of God in the Father, in the Son and in the Holy Spirit. Faith identifies God the Father as Creator, the Son or Word as Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit as Sanctifier, from the revelation in creation, redemption and sanctification. Calvin succeeds in eluding a rigid subjective rationalisation by subjecting his systematisation to the authority of the objective Word of God in faith. Faith derives from God's objective Word for which the Holy Spirit illuminates and persuades our subjectivity from the biblical and traditional teachings of the church. He speaks of a realistic, dynamic and objective view of God and ourselves in the light of God's Word in faith, and maintains theological realism, dynamism and objectivism. This offers a positive and reliable basis for theological formulation of God and ourselves, and resists

scepticism towards their theological statement.

The conceptual confinement of God to faith in Christ, the Word of God, never leads to denial of the actual occurrence of the trinitarian revelation of God Calvin's notion of revelation is not christocentric, but fundamentally trinitarian. He never considers the revelation of God in the Son or Word, Jesus Christ, as its only means and content. Rather, the distinctive means, contents and effects of the revelation of God are seen to occur through in each individual action and person of the Trinity. The revelation of the Spirit of God in sanctification creates the faith of the elect for salvation, whilst the revelation of God the Father in creation and the Son or Word in the redemptive work of the man Jesus do not. The function of God's Word is to provide for the noetic and conceptual possibility of the trinitarian action and nature of God from the revelation in creation, redemption, and sanctification. This enables the trinitarian theology of the *Institutes.*

The trinitarian interpretation found in this thesis is a fresh constructive reading of the *Institutes.* It argues for the trinitarian orientation of the *Institutes* from its basis in the trinitarian revelation of God, and for its systematic centre, consistence and unity from its trinitarian orientation. This argument offers a perspective for a critical evaluation of the Barthian and Brunnerian interpreters. E. Dowey, like E. Brunner, highlights Calvin's systematic disunity and inconsistence, for Calvin views the action and being of God without consistent reference to Christ. Book I-II.vi and the rest of the *Institutes* are based, respectively, in general (or natural and unsaving and nontrinitarian) and special (saving and trinitarian) revelation of God in creation and in Jesus Christ. Their judgement of Calvin's systematic disunity and inconsistence relies on their overemphasis of a christocentric perspective. They recognise his systematic unity only from the

role of the natural subject or responsibility[1] and the conscience[2] of man in his theology. Their roles are indispensable for general (unsaving and nontrinitarian) and special (saving and trinitarian) knowledge of God from his revelation in creation and in Christ. They overlook that God's super-natural gift of faith is the basis of the trinitarian unity and consistency of the *Institutes*, and that Calvin never suggests either natural (or general or nontrinitarian) revelation of God (in creation), or any natural theology that regards natural (or general or nontrinitarian) knowledge and revelation of God as the conceptual source of the Christian God.

The Barthian interpreters (e.g. W. Niesel, T. F. Torrance and D. Willis), like Barth, oppose Calvin's support for natural theology and natural (or general or nontrinitarian) revelation of God, but interpret his notion of revelation as christocentric. Christocentricity is their criterion for Calvin's systematic unity and consistency. They suggest the christological unity of the *Institutes*; its principal purpose is to witness to the biblical revelation of God's reality and truth in Jesus Christ. The serious problem of their christocentric interpretation is this. It marginalises Calvin's discussion of natural knowledge of God and his revelation in creation in Book I.iii-v from the rest of the *Institutes*. Book I.iii-v does not view the reality and truth of God without reference to their revelation in Christ to which the Bible attests, as the rest does. The Barthian interpreters do not perceive the discussion here as part of Calvin's doctrine of creation. Its central purpose is to demonstrate our natural knowability and knowledge of God as the gift of the creator-God the Father of the Son, Jesus Christ. The reference to Christ is made in this discussion. It is based on the relationship of the creator-God the Father with Christ, not *vice versa* as the Barthian and Brunnerian interpreters customarily assume.

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[1] Brunner, *Natural Theology*, pp. 23ff.

[2] Dowey, op. cit., pp. 64ff.

The fundamental weakness of their christocentric view of the systematic unity and consistence is that it fails to appreciate the trinitarian unity and consistency of the *Institutes*. It considers the witness of the revelation of God's reality and truth not only in the Son, Jesus Christ, but also in the Father and in the Holy Spirit, as its central purpose. Calvin never endorses noetic (or dogmatic) and ontic inferiority and superiority in the trinitarian revelation and in the action of God in creation, redemption and sanctification. Their noetic and conceptual possibility is confined solely to faith. They are the different actions of the same God in the Trinity, and are intrinsic to the trinitarian nature of God; they are indispensable for the assertion of the distinction of each action and person of the Trinity in the one God.

The trinitarian theology of the *Institutes* relies neither on a christocentric perspective of God, namely the perspective of Christ's relationship with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, nor on the unity of the triune God, as the Barthian interpreters (i.e. D. Willis) suggest. Calvin does not view the reality and truth of the triune God always from revelation in Christ. The trinitarian knowledge of God does not depend necessarily on christocentric revelation and knowledge of God, as Willis claims. Calvin's trinitarian theology is rooted in a trinitarian revelation and knowledge of God. It stems from the trinitarian perspective, namely each person's relationship with the other two of the Trinity. Its one eternal unity is the transcendent and incomprehensible reality of God *in se*. Calvin's affirmation of the christological reality and truth of God stems from the trinitarian perspective of God, his trinitarian revelation and knowledge.

The emphasis of Calvin's trinitarian theology rests on each individual action and person of the Trinity in its one eternal being (essence). Each distinctive being is never undermined by his unity with the other two. His distinctive action is also never denied by the participation of the other two in his principal action. The beauty of this emphasis is that it provides a successful basis for the distinctive

actions and beings of the Trinity without relinquishing their mutual relation and unity. Their distinction entails subordination in the trinitarian actions and beings of God. The Son or Word, Jesus Christ, is generated from God the Father. The Holy Spirit proceeds from God the Father *filioque*. The initiation and the Initiator, the mediation and the Mediator and the execution and the Executor of all things (including creation, redemption and sanctification) are ascribed, respectively, to the distinctive action and being of the one God in the Father, in the Son, and in the Holy Spirit. This ascription is made in the doctrine of the Trinity in Book I.xiii, and is effective throughout the *Institutes*. It supports the distinctive temporal actions and beings of the Trinity as the beginning and the Beginner, the middle and the "Middler", and the ending and the Ender of all things.

The attribution of the active Subject of God in revelation and action to each individual person of the Trinity gives rise to Calvin's trinitarian emphasis. It permits each individual person of the Trinity to be the means and object as well as the Subject of revelation and action of God. Each individual action and being of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are the revelation as well as the Revealer in creation, redemption and sanctification. The attribution is decisive in presenting each principal and distinctive being as the Creator, as the Redeemer and as the Sanctifier from the revelation in creation, redemption and sanctification. It is based not on a logical priority of the trinitarian and temporal nature of God over his one eternal being (essence), but on epistemological actuality. We encounter each individual person of the Trinity from the revelation of God in creation, redemption and sanctification. The one eternal being (essence or unity) of the triune God is the hidden reality of God *in se*. This fact is crucial for Calvin's ontology of God. It affirms the temporal Trinity as the active Persons and Subsistences in the one eternal being (essence) of God, and rejects the one eternal being (essence) of God as the active Person and Subsistence in the

temporal Trinity.

The trinitarian theology of the 1559 *Institutes* never discusses the reality of God apart from the Trinity. The one eternal action and being (essence) of God is viewed from their revelation in the threefold temporal (beginning, middle and ending) actions and beings of the Trinity. Calvin speaks of the one eternal will of God always as the Father's, and of the one eternal action and being (essence) of the Son and the Holy Spirit always from their ontological unity and identity with God the Father. There is no suggestion of subordination, order and distinction in the one eternal being (essence) of the triune God. The purpose of this way of speaking is to stress the Father as the one true eternal God, and to designate him, more precisely his free eternal will as the source of the threefold temporal (beginning, middle and ending) action and being of the Trinity. It is necessary to secure the unity of the actions and beings of the Trinity in the one eternal God the Father and his free eternal will.

The affirmation of the eternal will of God the Father is vitally important for understanding the nature of his one eternal being (essence). It presupposes the existence of the personal and rational or self-conscious will and subject of the one eternal being (essence) of God. Calvin does not realise that the assertion of its existence is crucial not only for resisting any modalistic suggestion as if it were an impersonal eternal mode or essence of the Trinity, but also for defending its genuine distinctiveness and involvement in action of God *in se* and *ad extra*. It could lead to suggestion of the possibility of a rational and personal dialogue between the one eternal and threefold temporal wills and subjects (beings and persons) of the one God. Their rational and personal dialogue can be the basis for developing a rational and personal mode of their relationship and unity. This development appears to be crucial for defending the genuine distinction of the oneness and the threeness of God in their unity as well as the full personal nature and rational nature of God.

The trinitarian theology of the 1559 *Institutes* is indifferent to this development. This is chiefly because Calvin is not willing to go beyond traditional trinitarian conception and formula. He uses three persons (or subsistences) and one essence for the threeness and oneness of God, and, like the Cappadocian fathers, regards the Trinity as the acting persons (or subsistences) of God in his one essence of God. He consequently neglects to develop the personal nature of the one eternal being of God and its personal unity. The *Institutes* fails to elaborate the biblical witness to a rational and personal dialogue between the divine (and eternal) person of God the Father and the human (and historical) person of his Son, Jesus Christ, as the basis for its trinitarian theology.

Part II The Revelation of the Triune God in the *Church Dogmatic*

Introduction

Barth's *Church Dogmatics* is a theology of revelation or the of Word. The *Dogmatics* "learned its content, its method, and its very form of language from revelation itself."[1] The revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ to which the Bible and the church attest is the criterion and determinative source of the *Dogmatics.*[2] The chief purpose of the *Dogmatics* is to unfold and witness the diverse contents of this revelation.[3] Its basis in the christocentric revelation of the triune God gives rise to Barth's christocentric orientation.[4] He regards the Word of God in Jesus Christ as the only means and content of his revelation,[5] and expounds all doctrines in the light of this revelation. Christology which is rooted in the revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ is the formative and hermeneutical basis for the *Church Dogmatics.*[6]

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[1] *Reformation Old and New*, ed. F. W. Camfield, Lutterworth, London, 1947, p. 18. cf. T. H. L Parker, "Barth on Revelation" in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 13, 1960, pp. 366-382.

[2] Barth considers the church's proclamation of God's Word in the Bible as the material of his *Dogmatics* (CD I, 1. pp. 47ff and 2. pp. 844ff). His use of biblical stories and exegesis for theological construction is illustrated and assessed by D. H. Kelsey (*The Use of Scripture in Recent Theology*, SCM Press, London, 1975, pp. 39-50), D. Nineham (*The Use and Abuse of the Bible*, Macmillan Press, London, 1976, pp. 86-93), D. F. Ford (*Barth and God's Story: Biblical Narrative and the Theological Method in the Church Dogmatics*, Verlag Peter Lang, Frankfurt, 1981) and C. A. Baxter (*The Movement from Exegesis to Dogmatics in the Theology of Karl Barth*, Ph. D. Thesis, Durham University, 1981).

[3] CD I, 2. pp. 797ff. cf. I, 1. pp. 3ff.

[4] D. M. Mackinnon points out the subordination of Barth's theology to Christology ("Philosophy and Christology," in *Essays in Christology*, ed. T. H. L. Parker, Lutterworth, London, 1956, p. 286). "In his theology there is no element of philistinism, only the intellectual achievement of a profound Christocentric self-discipline." (p. 285). cf. H. U. von Balthasar, *Theology of Karl Barth*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1971, pp. 100-108.

[5] Barth upholds God's Word in Jesus Christ as the only objective reality and possibility of revelation (CD I, 2. pp. 1-44).

[6] "A church dogmatics must, of course, be christologically determined as a whole and in all its parts, as surely as the revealed Word of God, attested by Holy Scripture and proclaimed by the Church, is its one and only criterion, and as surely as this revealed Word is identical with Jesus Christ. If dogmatics cannot regard itself and cause itself to be regarded as fundamentally Christology, it has assuredly succumbed to some alien sway and is already on the verge of losing its character as church dogmatics... As a whole, i.e., in the basic statement of a church dogmatics, Christology must either be dominant and perceptible, or else it is not Christology." CD I, 2. p. 123.

This thesis confirms the systematic centre, unity and consistency in Barth's christological orientation. The christocentric interpretation of his theology in this thesis follows his own method. It presents his christocentric theology as the outcome of his basis in the christocentric revelation of the triune God. The virtue of this interpretation is that it highlights well Barth's central concern and intention, which commentators often fail to stress.

G. C. Berkouwer[7] and H. U. von Balthasar[8] argue that the theme of victorious grace and analogy is central in Barth's theology. The problem of their argument is that they unintentionally presuppose these themes as Barth's systematic basis and pivot.[9] Barth never suggests any doctrinal and biblical theme or principle (including revelation)[10] as his systematic basis, however. Rather, he explicitly forbids any interpretation of his theology merely within the schema of the triumph

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[7] "Barth unquestionably wishes to place central in theology and in proclamation, namely the *triumph of grace*. To illustrate the centrality of this theme in the theology of Barth we shall quote him extensively and endeavour to trace the manner in which it functions in the whole of his dogmatic system." *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, ed. H. R. Boer, Paternoster Press, London, 1956, pp. 22 and 52.

[8] "Analogy develops more and more with each succeeding volume, to become the central theme in his treatment of creation (1945), human nature (1948), and providence (1950)." *The Theology of Karl Barth*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1971, p. 94.

[9] T. H. L. Parker interprets Berkouwer's and Balthasar's treatment of Barth's theology in this way. "There is no magic key to unlock all the doors to Barth's theology, for he is not a systematic theologian in the sense that he works out his ideas from a single principle or even a group of principles. This is a weakness in two of the best books on Barth. G. C. Berkouwer sees all his theology in terms of victorious grace, and H. U. von Balthasar tends to make the concept of analogy into the be-all and end-all in Barth's thinking... I do not think we can do justice to Barth by trying to explain his whole theology by one principle." Op. cit., p. 368. It is fair to say that Berkouwer and Balthasar do not regard the aspects of the triumph of grace and of the *analogia fidei* as a single static principle to 'unlock all the doors to Barth's theology.' The true intention of their works is to illustrate how important are these themes in the changes of Barth's theological emphasis.

[10] H. Ott follows D. Bonhoeffer in defining Barth's theology as "revelational positivism", and criticises it as a legalistic system based on an axiomatic principle of revelation (*Reality and Faith: The Theological Legacy of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, Lutterworth, London, 1971, pp. 121ff. cf. J. Bowden, *Karl Barth*, SCM Press, London, 1971, p. 110). S. Fisher is sceptical of the verdict of Bonhoeffer and Ott on Barth's theology. "After reviewing the voluminous secondary literature which interprets Barth in the light of Bonhoeffer's criticism, it is easy to gain the impression that Bonhoeffer's 'revelatory positivism' offers no real key to an understanding of Barth's theology and that the critical impact of the charge depends rather upon reading one's own evaluation of Barth's theology into Bonhoeffer's words." *Revelatory Positivism*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1988, p. 311.

of grace (or *analogia fidei* or eternity) over nature (or *analogia entis* or time[11]). It undermines his intention to stress the control of the objectivity of God's living Word in our subjective theological enquiry and statements.[12] The rationality[13] of God's living Word in revelation is the systematic basis and criterion of the *Church Dogmatics*. Its central task and goal is not to explore any biblical and dogmatic theme and principle, but to unfold and witness the living reality and truth of God in revelation to which the Bible and the church attest.[14]

The basis in the christocentric revelation of God of Barth's methodological determination is decisively[15] crystallised[16] by his study of Anselm.[17] It is designed to stress the prevenience of the being of God in revelation for theological inquiry and postulation in faith.[18] Barth here not only eludes abstract speculation about the incomprehensible reality of God *in se*, but also nullifies the possibility of general revelation of God in natural man and history. This would lead to a natural theology that claims natural knowledge and revelation of God as the conceptual source of the Christian God. Barth sharply differentiates his theology from Romanism and new-old Protestantism. They fail to accept the objectivity of God's Word as their determinative source, and therefore alienate the church from the truth of God in revelation and distort its talk about God.[19] Romanism and old Protestantism (including Calvin's theology) regard

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[11] R. H. Roberts claims that the pivotal and unifying theme of the *Church Dogmatics* is eternity and time (*A Theology On Its Way*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1991, pp. 1-58).

[12] CD IV, 3. pp. 173-80.

[13] CD I, 1. p. 135.

[14] CD I, 2. pp. 797ff. cf. I, 1. pp. 3ff.

[15] T. F. Torrance, *Karl Barth: An Introduction to his Early Theology, 1910-1931,* SCM Press, London, 1962, p. 182. cf. H. U. von Balthasar, op. cit., p. 80.

[16] T. H. L. Parker, *Karl Barth*, W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1970, p. 81.

[17] Barth admits Anselm's influence in his theological method (*Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum*, SCM Press, London, 1930, p. 11. cf. CD I, 1. p. 230. II, 1. p. 4). C. E. Gunton elaborates this influence (*Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1978).

[18] E. Jüngel, *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, trans. H. Harris, Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1976, xix-xx.

[19] See Barth's indication of the problem of dogmatics (CD I, 1. pp. 5ff and 248ff).

formal ecclesiastical and scriptural teachings and principles as their *principium cognoscendi*,[20] whilst neo-Protestantism (including Schleiermachian theology) deploys modern (e.g. philosophical, historical and psychological) consciousness as the hermeneutical basis and criterion of the Christian truth.[21]

Barth, like Anselm, considers theological activity as *fides quaerens intellectum* based on its object, the self-revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ. It is only in and through Jesus Christ, who is truly God and truly Man, that we can have true knowledge of the uncreated truth of God and of the created truth of ourselves and the world. The development of the doctrine of the analogy of God and man in Christ provides a positive theological ground for the *Church Dogmatics*,[22] and surpasses Barth's early dialectical theology and the possibility of dogmatic scepticism. It stresses the qualitatively absolute difference between God and man and the noetic and conceptual difficulty of God.[23] The possibility of the analogical orientation of the *Church Dogmatics* in Christ relies on faith[24] which God the Holy Spirit creates and sustains through his Word in Scripture.[25] That is the subject-matter of the church, actual knowledge of God's Word in faith,[26] which follows Kant's teaching that each discipline should explore its subject within the limit of its own subject-matter alone.[27]

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[20] CD I, 1. pp. 300-1.

[21] CD I, 1. pp. 251ff.

[22] H. U. von Balthasar asserts the gradual development of the doctrine of analogy in the *Church Dogmatics*. The full development of the doctrine is not found in volume I (Op. cit., pp. 93ff).

[23] *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. E. C. Hoskyns, Oxford Univ. Press, London, 1933, pp. 99, 297, and 258ff.

[24] Barth regards Christian dogmatics as an act of faith (CD I, 1. pp. 17ff).

[25] The Holy Spirit is considered as the subjective reality and possibility of the revelation of God's Word, Jesus Christ, (CD I, 2. 203ff. cf. I, 1. pp. 111ff). R. Swinburne misunderstands Barth in saying that "he seems to be saying, the Bible must be interpreted in the light of the record of church doctrine. But Barth does not seem to carry this programme, at which he hints, though thoroughly." *Revelation*, Oxford Univ. Press, London, 1992, p. 229. Barth, in fact, insists on the interpretation of the Bible in the light of the illumination of the Holy Spirit for God's Word in faith.

[26] CD I, 1. pp. 85-7.

[27] Barth's interpretation of Kant's axiomatic statement of "religion within the limits of reason alone" in this way is apparent (*Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. J. Bowden, SCM Press, 1959, London, p. 306). G. S. Hendry argues that Barth finds the possibility of

The process of gaining theological knowledge corresponds to that of gaining scientific knowledge.[28] Barth depends totally on the the inherent rationality of God in revelation for true knowledge of his nature,[29] just as modern sciences rely on the inherent intelligibility of an object in presenting itself for true knowledge of its nature.[30] Barth opposes the subjection of theological activity to subjective pre-conceived (e.g. philosophical, historical and psychological) presuppositions.[31] They directly undermine the scientific character which limits theological investigation to its particular object, the living Word of God in revelation.

We cannot categorise Barth's theology as a new philosophical modernism, as Van Til claims.[32] The assertion of Barth's theology as Kantian phenomenalism, Heideggerian existentialism and Kierkegaardian dialecticism[33] (and as Hegelian

presenting Christian truth in terms of *analogia fidei* from Kant's philosophical transcendental method ("The Transcendental Method in the Theology of Karl Barth" in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 37, 1984, pp. 213-227). The constant requirement of the transcendental condition of a connection between *a priori* sensuous premises and objects for the emergence of knowledge in Kant's transcendental philosophy is repeated in Barth's theological method, in the sense that it also requires the transcendental condition of a connection between the obedience of faith and the revelation of God's Word.

[28] Barth explicitly states his intention of depicting Christian dogmatics as a scientific discipline (CD I, 1. pp. 1-11 and 275-92).

[29] CD I, 1. p. 135.

[30] T. F. Torrance elaborates this point that Barth's insistence on the actual knowledge of God in revelation rather than on pre-conception of him for the possibility of theology is methodologically paralleled by "what Einstein was doing in natural science, when he questioned the validity of schematising physics to the rigid framework of Euclidean geometry, that is of an independent and antecedent conceptual system detached from actual experience, and set about dismantling the rational superstructure of mathematical time and space which the Newtonian system clamped down upon the universe of bodies in motion and thereby distorted knowledge of it." *Transformation and Convergence in the Frame of Knowledge,* Christian Journals, Belfast, 1984, ix-x. cf. pp. 281ff.

[31] Barth categorizes a theology based on man's subjective presuppositions (or *analogia entis*), rather than the objective revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ, as a natural theology, and rejects it mainly because of its unscientific method (CD II, 1. pp. 81ff). T. F. Torrance confirms this point that "we would fail to understand Barth quite seriously if we did not appreciate that his struggle with the problem of natural theology is also a struggle for rigorous scientific method in theology." *Transformation and Convergence in the Frame of Knowledge*, p. 292. "Barth's exclusion of an *independent* natural theology assumes a formidable scientific character, for surely no genuinely scientific inquiry can let itself be controlled by an independent logical structure even by conceding to it any claim to constitute an indispensable precondition or precomprehension for the inquiry in question." (p. 295)

[32] *The New Modernism*, James Clarke, London, 1946.

[33] Ibid. pp. 143-5, 146-7 and 157-8. The reason for Van Til's assertion is this. Barth views God's inner being (noumenon) from his revelation (phenomenon) to us and for us. The authentic being

idealism) stems from a purely formalistic and logical interpretation, and fails to appreciate Barth's central concern and intention.[34] Balthasar appears to commit the same sin by stating that "Barth seems to force his data into an *a priori* [christocentric] framework."[35] Barth's basis in the ever-new revelation of God s Word in Jesus Christ resists the deductive method of which Balthasar accuses him, and employs an intuitive method. It opposes biblical, dogmatic and rational (philosophical) logicalism or formalism, and gives rise to a theological dynamism, realism and objectivism.[36] Barth derives great dogmatic freedom and autonomy from the freedom of God's Word in revelation.[37] The church can freely use formal biblical and dogmatic and philosophical ideas and insights for her doctrine under obedience to God's Word in faith. This obedience liberates theological reasoning and formulation from a dangerous domination of pre-conceived (e.g. biblical, dogmatic, philosophical, historical and psychological) presuppositions of other scientific disciplines.

The rejection of Barth's basis in the christocentric revelation of God comes from John McIntyre.[38] His rejection is inspired by F. G. Downing's work, *Has Christianity a revelation?*,[39] even though he opposes Downing's dismissal of Barth's method as non-biblical.[40] The deployment of non-biblical concepts and terms is

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of man and God is determined by man's existential response to God's revelation. He stresses the qualitative distinction between God and man as dialectical. Van Til's reason will be critically assessed later.

[34] G. C. Berkouwer criticises that "Van Till's analysis does not correspond to the deepest intents of Barth's theology." Op. cit., p. 388. "He denies all that, and never once to enter upon Barth's expressed defence. This seems to me to be an elementary requirement of scholarship, and when we attack each other in such a way, the attack, as I see it, fruitless." (p. 387). Cf. H. U. van Balthasar, op. cit., p. 45.

[35] Op. cit., p. 199. The bracket is mine. I will assess the reason for Balthasar's statement.

[36] Barth's intention to maintain a theological dynamism, realism and objectivism by allowing the objective Word of God in revelation as the determinative source of his theology is plainly expressed in CD I, 2 pp. 853ff.

[37] CD I, 2. pp. 585-661 and 695-740. J. Macken articulates Barth's advocacy, and argues that Barth is free from the domination of German (e.g. Hegelian) idealism (*The Autonomy Theme in the Church Dogmatics: Karl Barth and His Critics*, Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge, 1990).

[38] *The Shape of Christology*, SCM Press, London, 1966, pp. 145-171.

[39] SCM Press, London, 1964.

[40] Ibid. pp. 21ff. cf. Werner Elert, *Der Christliche Glaube*, Furche Verlag, Hamburg, 1956, pp.

a necessary part of theological construction (e.g. in the Nicene and Chalcedonian formulas).[41] The major reason for McIntyre's rejection is that a range of soteriological variation [e.g. the relationship between God's love and the manner of Christ's death for salvation of sinner] should not and cannot be expressed and comprehended within one phrase,[42] revelation. The revelation model is not self-sufficient;[43] the possibility of the doctrine of revelation relies on the doctrine of the triune God. Christ's deity is the datum for the possibility of the self-revelation of God in him. M. Wiles persistently stresses the unacceptability of the model mainly because we are incapable of gaining explicit knowledge of God's revelation for theological construction.[44]

Wiles appears to be wrong. The possibility of theological construction should be based on the reality of God in his self-revelation, even if knowledge is fallible and imperfect.[45] Moreover, it cannot be based on our mere natural and rational observation from the biblical and dogmatic teachings, as Wiles implies.[46] Rather, it should rely on the rationality of God's Word in revelation. This is the only thing that accommodates the true reality of God (and his creation) to and for the rational cognition of our faith through the biblical and dogmatic teachings.[47]

134-5. Gustaf Wingren, *Theology in Conflict*, Muhlenberg, Philadelphia, 1958, pp. 23-44, 79-82 and 108-128. James Barr, *Old and New in Interpretation*, SCM Press, London, 1966, pp. 65-102. D. Nineham, op. cit., pp. 86-93. D. H. Kelsey, op. cit., pp. 49 and 136.

[41] Op. cit., pp. 146, 153 and 162.

[42] Ibid. p. 166. The bracket is mine.

[43] Ibid. pp. 167-9. cf. W. Pannenberg, *Basic Questions in Theology*, Vol. III, SCM Press, London, 1973, p. 101. M. Wiles, *Working Papers in Doctrine*, SCM Press, London, 1976, p. 16.

[44] *The Remaking of Christian Doctrine*, SCM Press, London, 1974, pp. 23-5. *What is Theology?*, Oxford Univ. Press, London, 1976, 45-6. "Does Christianity Need a Revelation?", in *Theology*, SCM Press, London, 1980, p. 111. cf. Downing, op. cit., p. 229.

[45] D. Brown, *The Divine Trinity*, Duckworth Press, London, 1985, p. 53. Barth never claims that knowledge of the revelation of God's Word in faith is perfect and infallible, even though he stresses its worthiness for theological construction (CD I, 2. pp. 850 and 878).

[46] *Working Papers in Doctrine*, pp. 3ff. Wiles appears to prove the reality and being from the biblical and doctrinal language of God, and inappropriately ignores Barth's emphasis on their qualitative difference.

[47] CD I, 2. p. 884. D. W. Hardy illustrates that Wiles participates in an English theological tradition which stresses one's own rationality as the hermeneutical basis of theology ("Theology through Philosophy", in *The Modern Theologians*, ed. D. F. Ford, Blackwell, Oxford, 1989, pp. 30-71); this gives rise to his rejection of Barth's emphasis on God's Word in revelation as the

McIntyre overlooks that the noetic and conceptual possibility of the divine and triune nature of God depends solely on its revelation in faith. Barth consequently regards the revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ as the root of the doctrine of the Trinity.[48] There is no intention in Barth's theology to undermine the manner of Christ's death for God and sinful men. He explores the manner of his death as a means of the revelation and action of God's love for the salvation of sinners.[49]

The principal purpose of this part of thesis is to clarify the relationship between the theology of revelation in the *Church Dogmatics* and in the 1559 *Institutes*. The investigation of their relation is carried out by comparing their view of the ontology of God and ourselves (and the world), their epistemology, and their link. Barth's relationship with the Reformers (including Calvin) has been recognised by Catholic and Protestant interpreters (e.g. H. U. von Balthasar,[50] H. Bouillard[51] and H. Küng,[52] G. C. Berkouwer,[53] T. F. Torrance[54] and T. H. L. Parker[55]).[56] They believe that Barth's embracing of the theological method of St. Anselm fulfills and perfects the Reformers' principle of justification through faith by the grace of God alone. None of them, however, questions the tenability of Barth's interpretation of Calvin[57] or succeeds in demonstrating their precise

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criterion of Christian theology ("The English Tradition of Interpretation and the Reception of Schleiermacher and Barth in England," in *Barth and Schleiermacher: Beyond the Impasse?*, ed. J. O. Duke and R. F. Streetman, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1988, pp. 161-162).

[48] CD I, 1. p. 314.

[49] CD IV, 1. pp. 283-357.

[50] Op. cit., p. 9 and 19.

[51] *Karl Barth*, Vol. I, Aubier, Paris, 1957, pp. 18 and 30.

[52] *Justification: The Doctrine of Karl Barth and a Catholic Reflection*, ed. T. Collins, Burns and Oates, London, 1964.

[53] Op. cit., pp. 14-15.

[54] *Karl Barth: An Introduction to his Early Theology, 1910-1931*, p. 54. *Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, p. 27. *Theological Science*, Oxford Univ. Press, London, 1969, pp. 7-8. *Theology in Reconstruction*, SCM Press, London, 1965, pp. 161-2.

[55] *Karl Barth*, pp. 66, 80-2 and 112.

[56] J. McConnachie, "Reformation Issues To-Day," in *Reformation and Old and New*, pp. 103-120. E. Busch, *Karl Barth*, SCM Press, London, 1976, p. 277 and 246.

[57] H. U. von Balthasar evaluates Barth's interpretation of Roman Catholicism, and criticises that he fails to appreciate the diversity of Roman Catholicism (Op. cit., pp. 39-40 and 207). S. W. Sykes opposes Barth's generalization of Schleiermacher's theology as a sum of mere human

relationship. They are inclined to accept Barth's verdict on Calvin's theology without critical assessment.

The Calvinistic scholars, Parker and Torrance, like Barth,[58] affirm that Calvin does not think through the principle of justification in faith consistently in his *Institutes*. They suggest that he discusses the revelation of God and his characteristics in creation from the perspective of natural knowability (in Inst. I.iii-v), and makes use of natural theology as a starting point of the *Institutes*, even though "it was a negative use [which has only one purpose, that is, to stress inexcusability of men for their unfaithfulness to their Creator] in that the validity of natural theology [which claims natural knowledge of God as the source of Christian conception of God] was at once denied."[59] Parker and Torrance do not take seriously Calvin's emphasis on the indispensability of the living faith (piety) for the discussion[60] in its beginning[61] and end.[62] Calvin does not support a positive as well as negative use of natural theology.

They, as Barth,[63] argue for the christocentric means of God's revelation in Calvin's thought. Calvin views God's Word in Jesus Christ as the only means and reality of his revelation.[64] Calvin's notion of God's revelation is nonethe-

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self-consciousness, and indicates that it is certainly not the case in Schleiermacher's treatment of the Redemption, in which an experience of faith by the grace of the Holy Spirit is indispensable. ("Schleiermacher and Barth on the Essence of Christianity—an Instructive Disagreement," in *Barth and Schleiermacher: Beyond the Impasse?*, ed. by J. O. Duke and R. F. Streetman, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1988, pp. 98-99)

[58] Barth regards the first ten chapters of Calvin's 1559 *Institutes* as an exposition of formal scriptural principle apart from the actual content of faith (CD I, 1. p. 35 and 300, cf. 2, p. 460).

[59] Parker, "Barth on Revelation," in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 13, 1960, p. 367. The brackets are mine. cf. *Calvin's Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, p. 54ff. Torrance, *Calvin's Doctrine of Man*, pp. 154ff. *Theology in Reconstruction*, p. 111.

[60] See the Chapter I.1.ii of this thesis.

[61] Inst. I.ii.2.

[62] Inst. I.v.14.

[63] *Natural Theology*, pp. 108-9.

[64] Parker, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, pp. 36 and 93. Torrance, *Theology in Reconstruction*, pp. 87-99 and *Calvin's Doctrine of Man*, pp. 35-46.

less fundamentally trinitarian.[65] The Reformed theologians (e.g. E. Brunner,[66] J. Baillie[67] and D. Cairns[68]) argue for Barth's unfaithfulness to Calvin's biblical concept of revelation. Barth denies Calvin's recognition of general (or nontrinitarian) revelation of God in creation and its natural knowability in the light of the biblical and dogmatic tradition.[69] The ground of their argument is untenable Calvin never admits and suggests general (or nontrinitarian) revelation of God as the source of natural knowledge of him, although he upholds natural knowability and knowledge of God as the gift of God in creation. They, like the Barthian interpreters, overlook that Calvin defines the revelation of God in creation as the triune God the Father's, and declares this trinitarian revelation as the source of natural (or nontrinitarian) knowledge of God from the perspective of faith.[70]

The sharp difference between Barth and Calvin emerges in their understanding of the personal subject of God in revelation (and action of creation and salvation). They attribute the acting subject of God to the one personal being (essence) of God in the Trinity, and to each individual person of the Trinity in the one God, respectively. The three distinctive persons (and subjects) of the Trinity exist and subsist and act in the one eternal being (essence) for Calvin. Barth argues for the existence and subsistence and action of the one personal God in the Trinity.[71] The emphasis of Barth's ontology of God rests on the one personal being (subject) of God in his trinitarian actions. It stems not from a

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[65] The argument of Calvin's trinitarian notion of revelation was one of the major concerns of the first part of this thesis.

[66] *Natural Theology*, pp. 19-50.

[67] *Our Knowledge of God*, Oxford Univ. Press, London, 1939, pp. 17-27.

[68] *The Image of God in Man*, SCM Press, London, 1953, pp. 180-205.

[69] Complain of Barth's narrow interpretation of the diverse views of God's revelation in the biblical and dogmatic tradition is not new. See D. Nineham, op. cit., pp. 86-93. D. H. Kelsey, op. cit., p. 136. A. A. Fairweather, *The Word as Truth*, Lutterworth, London, 1939. J. Baillie, *The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought*, Oxford Univ. Press, London, 1956. W. Pannenberg, *Basic Questions in Theology*, Vol. III, pp. 100-101. F. G. Downing, op. cit., p. 24. J. McIntyre, op. cit., pp. 155 and 167.

[70] See chapter I.1.ii and iii.

[71] C. Welch, *The Trinity in Contemporary Theology*, SCM Press, London, 1953, pp. 190-191.

Hegelian logical priority of the one absolute subject of God, as J. Moltmann asserts,[72] but from the epistemological actuality of God in faith. We encounter the one personal subject of God in the event of his trinitarian revelation to which the Bible attests. This thesis investigates the tenability of the distinctiveness of the Trinity in Barth's strong emphasis on its unity. The remarkable studies of Barth's trinitarian theology (e.g. by C. Welch and E. Jungel[73]) do not pay serious attention to it, but accept Barth's assertion of its tenability.

The investigation of the *Church Dogmatics* and its relation to the 1559 *Institutes* follows Barth's own methodological procedure. It deals with Barth's doctrine of revelation, the Trinity, election, creation and reconciliation. The primary concern of the doctrine of revelation, the Trinity and election is the relation of the trinitarian action and nature of God to himself. The basis in revelation entails the initial treatment of the doctrine of revelation. The definition of revelation is vital for understanding the nature of the whole *Dogmatics.* The doctrine of the Trinity and election demonstrates the triune ontology of revelation and its cause. Barth's biblical understanding of the will (decree) and the triune nature of God sharply distances him from the Hegelian idea of the triune being and action of absolute spirit (God). The doctrine of creation and reconciliation concentrates on the relevance of the trinitarian action and nature of the one personal God to us and for us.

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[72] *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, SCM Press, London, 1981, pp. 139ff. cf. W. Pannenberg, 'Die Subjektivitat Gottes und die Trinitatslehre, *Grundfragen Systematischer Theologie, Gesammelte Aufsatze 2,* Göttingen, 1980, pp. 96-111 and *Grundfragen Systematischer Theologie*, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Gesammelt Aufsatze Band 2, Göttingen, 1967, pp. 101ff. The Hegelian interpretation of Moltmann and Pannenberg will be evaluated in due course.

[73] *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, trans H. Harris, Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1976. cf. C. Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles and Karl Barth*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1978. T. Bradshaw *Trinity and Ontology*, Rutherford House Books, Edinburgh, 1988.

Chapter III The Doctrine of God *In Se*

Barth's *Church Dogmatics* concerns the doctrine of God *in se* (Volumes I and II) and then *ad extra* (in Volumes III and IV). The doctrine of the Trinity is considered as prolegomena of *Dogmatics*. Barth refuses to follow Calvin's procedure of exploring the creative action of God prior to the question of who he is (his being) in the doctrine of the Trinity.[1] The question of who God is (his being *in se*) is logically prior to the question of what he does (his action *ad extra*). The former is necessary in answering the latter. The being determines the action of God. Calvin never separates the question of the being from the action of God, as Barth implies,[2] for he illustrates who God is from what he does. Barth, like Calvin, never discusses the being of God apart from his revelation and action. The treatment of the doctrine of revelation (God's Word) also as prolegomena of *Dogmatics* demonstrates this fact vividly. This chapter examines Barth's doctrine of God *in se* by exploring the doctrine of revelation and the Trinity (in volume I), and of election (in volume II). Its chief purpose is confined to unravelling the implications of basing their doctrine in revelation, and thereby understanding Barth's precise relationship with Calvin.

III.1. Revelation as Prolegomena of *Dogmatics*

Introduction

The true criterion, source and possibility of Christian dogmatics and life are the persistent concern of the theologies of Barth and Calvin. They deal with them, in particular, in the doctrine of Scripture and revelation. Barth's doctrine of revelation and Scripture is the Prolegomena of his *Church Dogmatics*. It establishes God's Word in revelation as the basis, criterion, source and possibility of the *Dogmatics*. Barth's relationship with Calvin will be investigated by exam-

[1] CD I, 1. pp. 300-1.

[2] Barth's suggestion here will be expounded and assessed in due course.

ining their ontology and epistemology of revelation, and their interaction. The investigation requires exploring the relationship of God's Word in revelation with Scripture, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

1. Scripture as a Witness of Revelation

1.i. Inherent Distinction between Scripture and Revelation

Barth's interpretation of the relationship between Scripture and revelation maintains the Calvinistic emphasis of an inherent difference between the reality of creature and the Creator. Christology (i.e. the divine and human relationship in the person of Jesus Christ) plays an important role for the interpretation of their relationship. Calvin's differentiation of human from divine natures in the person of Christ is taken as an analogy in order to illustrate the inherent difference between divine revelation and human Scripture in their relation.[3] Barth regards revelation as the Word of the creator-God himself, and Scripture as a human word (i.e., of Moses, the prophets, the evangelists and the apostles) and stresses its anthropological, historical and creaturely character[4] and its fallibility as such.[5]

The maintenance of their inherent difference successfully evades a pantheistic and a docetic interpretation of Scripture. It eliminates any possibility of the materialistic possession of the divinity of God's Word in the human words of Scripture by a means of transmutation or admixture.[6] Barth, like Calvin,[7] refuses to view Scripture in itself as a self-authenticated book of the divine revelation. The concept of divine revelation and inspiration is not a static one that admits the material investment of their divine objectivity in the human words of Scripture once and for all. For any acceptance of a static notion leads to a sub-

[3] CD I, 2. p. 499.

[4] Ibid. pp. 467ff.

[5] Ibid. p. 529.

[6] Ibid. p. 449.

[7] See Chapter I.2.i.1 and 2.

stantial containment of the revelation of the creator-God in the created human words of Scripture. It directly contradicts the unpossessive nature of God (e.g his sovereign freedom and transcendent hiddenness).[8] Barth and Calvin[9] take seriously God's particular nature in the interpretation of the precise relationship between revelation and Scripture. There is a hermeneutical relevance of God's particular nature for their doctrine of Scripture and revelation.

1.ii. God's Word as the Subject of Inquiry

Barth's interpretation of Scripture is anti-Ebionitie as much as anti-Docetic. It argues for its indissoluble link with the revelation of God's Word. Their unity in faith is essential for understanding the true nature of revelation as the Word of God the Father and the Holy Spirit.[10] The assertion of Ronald F. Thiemann that Barth's doctrine of revelation denies any contribution of the human word to our understanding of God's Word is untenable.[11] Barth, in fact, stresses this contribution in the treatment of the human word of the Bible and church as the form of God's Word in revelation.[12] What he denies is any autonomous capacity of their fallible human word for God's infallible divine Word. The possibility of divine revelation and the use of a human vehicle for our understanding of it depends solely on God himself.

The subject of inquiry of Barth's and Calvin's doctrine of Scripture is God's Word in revelation. Their doctrine focuses on showing in what sense the human word of Scripture bears witness to God's Word. The possibility of their theological activity relies on God's Word. They regard God's Word in revelation as the real

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[8] "That the Bible is the Word of God cannot mean that with other attributes the Bible has the attribute of being the Word of God. To say that would be to violate the Word of God which is God Himself—to violate the freedom and the sovereignty of God." CD I, 2. p. 513.

[9] See Chapter I.1.iii.2 and 2.iii.1.

[10] CD I, 2. pp. 462ff.

[11] *Revelation and Theology*, Notre Dame Univ. Press, Indiana, 1985, pp. 95-6 and 179.

[12] CD I, 1. pp. 72-110.

substance[13] and source[14] of the Bible, and categorize all divine oracles in the Bible as the Word of God in Jesus Christ. The assertion of the unity of the Old and New Testaments is rooted in their witness to the revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ.

The chief concern of their exegesis is shifted from exploring the literal, grammatical and historical context of the biblical materials to their witness to the revelation of God's Word.[15] Barth, like Calvin,[16] adopts a mode of narrative reading of the Bible to show God's Word in it for theological construction.[17] The real substance of the Old and New Testaments is God's Word in the story of God's salvation in Jesus Christ. H. W. Frei argues that their narrative structure does not make the mistake of identifying the literal, grammatical and historical reference of the Bible with its spiritual and theological reference, God's Word.[18] Barth follows Calvin's truly historical understanding of the Bible from its actual linguistic and factual context.

> Under the caption of a truly "historical" understanding of the Bible we cannot allow ourselves to commend an understanding which does not correspond to the rule suggested: a hearing in which attention is paid to the biblical expression but not to what the words signify, in which what is said is not heard or overheard; an understanding of the biblical words from their immanent linguistic and factual context; an exposition of the biblical words which in the last resort consists only in an exposition of the biblical men in their historical reality... Therefore Calvin is really right from this, the historical point of view (let alone any other), when he believes that the Bible itself excludes any interpretation of the Bible which puts biblical man in the centre of consideration... Paul undoubtedly subordinates himself completely to the Word which he preached... Luther and Calvin... have at this very point shown a real

[13] CD I, 2. p. 469.

[14] CD I, 1. pp. 115 and 300.

[15] CD I, 2. p. 463.

[16] H. W. Frei notices the importance of Calvin's narrative reading of the Bible for theological construction (*The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative*, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1974, pp. 31 and 40).

[17] D. F. Ford, *Barth and God's Story: Biblical Narrative and the Theological Method in the Church Dogmatics*, Verlag Peter Lang, Frankfurt, 1981.

[18] Op. cit., vii-viii and pp. 19-20 and 192.

historical understanding for the Bible.[19]

All biblical materials (i.e. in the Old Testament) do not refer directly and indirectly to the revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ.[20] A figural or typological interpretation is used for transition from the literal (grammatical and historical) to the explicative (spiritual) reading of of the texts. Barth, like Calvin, interprets the story of angel of God and sacrificial atonement in the Old Testament as a prototype and prefiguration of Christ and the manner of God's salvation in the New Testament. The narrative structure of their exegesis, instead of an extension of the literal, grammatical and historical sense of the Bible,[21] is ultimately of doubtful value and pays insufficient attention to the question of the historical accuracy of biblical materials. It sees the spiritual Word of God as the real substance and object of the Bible; it is geared to find this spiritual Word from the Bible to enable theological construction.

1.iii. The Theocentric and Dynamic Unity

The human word of the Bible and the church is considered as God's Word only in their unity.[22] In itself it cannot contribute to our understanding of God's Word in revelation. The unity of human and divine words which Barth advocates is theocentric. The human word becomes God's Word, only when God reveals his Word in the subjectivity of our faith through the human word. The possibility of God's Word in our faith which the Bible and the church attest rests solely on his self-revelation.[23] Barth, like Calvin, regards Scripture as superior to the church's official teachings or proclamation. The latter depends on the former in

[19] CD I, 2. pp. 466-8.

[20] CD I, 2. pp. 457ff.

[21] Han W. Frei, op. cit., p. 40. D. Nineham, *The Use and Abuse of the Bible*, Macmillan Press, London, 1976, p. 90. D. F. Ford, "Barth's Interpretation of the Bible," in *Karl Barth: Studies of his Theological Method,* ed. S. W. Sykes, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1979, pp. 82-87.

[22] CD I, 1. pp. 95ff. and I, 2. pp. 492, 499 and 535.

[23] "It is only by revelation that revelation can be spoken in the Bible and that it can be heard as the real substance of the Bible." CD I, 2. p. 469.

its witness.[24]

Barth wholly agrees with Calvin that a verdict of Scripture as revelation and inspiration of God's Word belongs to the judgement of God, more precisely, the *testimonium Spiritus sancti internum*, but never to man or the Church.[25] They discuss and assert the divine inspiration and revelation of the Bible and its infallible and ultimate authority[26] solely on the basis of its position as the self-authenticated verdict of God in the Holy Spirit,[27] and oppose any prior (philosophical, psychological and historical) presuppositions for its exegesis. The "true exegesis has no presuppositions".[28] It allows the sovereign freedom of God in his revealing Word to lead and control our investigation of the real meaning of the human word of the Bible.

The unity of divine and human words in our faith which Barth and Calvin propose is dialectical. God's self-unveiling and veiling is the direct cause of the affirmation and negation of their unity. Their dialectical unity gives rise to a dynamic rather than a static unity. The basic framework of their unity is Chalcedonian. Barth (and Calvin) stresses their inherent distinction in their human and divine unity,[29] just as the Chalcedonian formula does with the human and divine distinction in the one person of Jesus Christ. They both advocate their unity in terms of the assumption of God's Word in the human words of the Bible

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[24] CD I, 1. pp. 89ff and I, 2. p. 457.

[25] CD I, 2. p. 536. The treatment of the reality and possibility of the subjective revelation of God is designed to demonstrate the relevance of the *testimonium Spiritus santi internum* for the revelation of God's Word in the subjectivity of our faith (CD I, 2. pp. 203-279).

[26] Ibid. pp. 473ff. Inst. I.vii.4.

[27] "We have thought of the divine inspiration of the Bible as an actual decision which takes place in the mystery of God as His word and miracle, and which has to be recollected and expected in faith and obedience and in faithful exegesis... We do justice to it by believing and maintaining of His Church, with which we have to do in the inspiration of the Bible, is objective enough to emerge victorious from all the inbreaks and outbreaks of man's subjectivity. To believe in the inspiration of the Bible means, because of and in accordance with its witness, to believe in the God whose witness it is." Ibid. p. 534.

[28] Ibid. p. 470. The bracket is mine.

[29] "When... we confess that the Bible is the Word of God... we have to think of a twofold reality... God Himself now says what the text says. The work of God is done through this text. The miracle of God take place in this text formed of human words." Ibid. p. 532.

or in the man Jesus Christ.[30] The fundamental difference is that God's Word newly occurs in faith in the subjectivity of man,[31] whilst the divine and human union in Jesus Christ permanently exists objectively apart from man's faith

1.iv. The Systematic Context and Purpose

The divergence between Calvin and Barth emerges in the systematic context and purpose of their doctrine of Scripture. Calvin treats the doctrine (in Book I.vi-xi of the 1559 *Institutes*) as part of the doctrine of creation and Creator. The doctrine demonstrates God's Word in faith by the Holy Spirit as the noetic and conceptual possibility of the revelation (communication) of the creative action and being of God the Father in and through Scripture. Calvin shows the source from the possibility of his *Institutes*. God's Word in faith is not the source, but the possibility of the doctrine of creation and Creator. The source of their doctrine is the revelation (communication) of the creative action and being of God the Father in and through Scripture.

The doctrine of Scripture and revelation belongs to the prolegomenon of Barth's *Dogmatics*. It establishes the revelation of God's Word as the possibility as well as the source of his whole *Dogmatics*. We cannot interpret the prolegomenon as a mere form or method separate from the content. It is already Barth's essential doctrine of Scripture and revelation. The central point of the *Dogmatics* is, in fact, given in this prolegomenon. It determines the manner and character of the whole *Dogmatics*. "There are no real pro-legomena to dogmatics"[32] for Barth as well as Calvin. Book I.i-ii, the prolegomena of Calvin's 1559 *Institutes*, stresses the possibility and basis of Christian theology as actual in the knowledge of the revelation of the reality of God and ourselves in faith (piety). The discussion of its possibility and basis is repeated in each doctrine of the

[30] Ibid. p. 499.

[31] Ibid. p. 506.

[32] O. Weber, *Foundations of Dogmatics*, trans. D. L. Guder, Vol. 1, Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans, 1981, p. 5.

Institutes. It is not a separate part, but the central part of the *Institutes.*

Barth refuses to follow Calvin's rational argument[33] of the credibility of Scripture, and confines it to the perspective of God's self-verdict in faith. The remarkable fact is that Calvin's rational argument here is not independent and autonomous. The possibility, usefulness and validity of the argument rely on God's self-witness in faith.[34] Calvin explicitly rejects the argument as the ground of faith,[35] and, like Barth, he never considers anything other than the self-authenticated verdict of God in faith as the ultimate proof of divine revelation and inspiration in the Bible and its infallible credibility and authority. Barth endorses this final analysis.

> Attention was usually drawn to the antiquity of the Bible, its miracles and prophecies, its decisive and victorious role in the Church history. Calvin thought it necessary to devote a whole chapter of the *Institutes* to these considerations as they throw light on the existence of the Bible... But he himself calls them *secundaria nostrae imbecillitatis adminicula* and warns us in every possible way against thinking that we can regard and apply them as the ground of faith... The verdict that Scripture is the Word of God is not a human but a divine judgment, and only as such can it be adopted and believed by us... Unfortunately, Calvin found many later imitators in the enumeration and the development of these secondary grounds, but not in his definitely expressed perception of the abysmal difference of these grounds from the one primary and real ground, not in his awareness of the superiority and self-sufficiency of that one ground. The *testimonium Spiritus sancti internum*, on which alone he and the Reformation as a whole based faith in the Bible as the Word of God, at a later date gradually but irresistibly became one ground with others, and the other grounds gained an interest and acquired an importance as though they were, after all, autonomous... But on this understanding, it could not have the force of a real ground. Calvin had seen in it only the power of an objective proof. But it was now suspected to be only subjective and in the strict sense not a proof at all. Therefore the witness of the Holy Spirit necessarily retired and finally disappeared behind the rational proofs which Calvin had treated

[33] "We are not to try to show that the Bible is a credible and commendable book from various human standpoints, as was usually done in the age of orthodoxy and the Enlightenment (unfortunately even Calvin did something of the same incidentally in *Instit.*, I, 8), and as has been attempted with all the tools of historical thinking from the days of Herder." CD I, 1. p. 168.

[34] Inst. I.viii.1.

[35] Inst. I.viii.13.

only as luxuries.[36]

Van Til argues that Barth departs from the tradition of the Reformers (i.e Calvin). Calvin, unlike Barth, teaches the possibility of a true knowledge of God directly from the Bible itself, he says.[37] The argument is based on a static interpretation of divine revelation and word in Scripture. It fails to appreciate Calvin's assertion of a dynamic unity of Scripture and revelation in faith by the Holy Spirit.[38] As Barth rightly interprets,[39] Calvin never identifies divine revelation and Word directly with the human word of Scripture. The human word of the Bible has to be constantly and dynamically verified as the revelation of God's Word in the subjectivity of faith by the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit. Van Til overlooks that Calvin, like Barth, argues for true knowledge of God in faith solely from God's Word in revelation.

2. The Objective Revelation in Jesus Christ

2.i. Revelation from God's Act in Christ

The significant discrepancy between Calvin and Barth is arguable from their ontology of revelation which commentators have neither attempted nor succeeded to unravel. Barth confines the biblical concept of revelation to God's Word in Jesus Christ,[40] and refuses to differentiate revelation or communication from the Word of God in Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity.[41] The revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ is both the source and the possibility of the

[36] CD I, 2. pp. 536-7.

[37] "Calvin and the other Reformers, no less than later orthodoxy, with one voice affirm the direct revelation of God in history... Scripture speaks with such plainness of the direct historically redemptive work of God that he who runs may read it. But it is this, which Calvin so constantly and so stoutly affirms, that Barth with equal vigour denies... His reflection upon the words and works of God, directly presented to him externally and internally, enabled him to obtain a true, though finite, knowledge of God." *The New Modernism*, James Clarke, London, 1946. p. 140.

[38] See Chapter I.2.i.2.

[39] "Calvin, too, declares most emphatically that God is certainly not bound to the human word about Him and can draw His own to Himself by some direct way." CD I, 1. p. 96.

[40] Ibid. p. 107.

[41] Ibid. pp. 229.

Church Dogmatics. The basis of the *Dogmatics* in the christocentric revelation of the triune God gives rise to its christocentric orientation, unity and consistency. Barth stresses the relevance of the revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ for every one of doctrines of his *Dogmatics.*[42] He and his commentators (e.g T. F Torrance, T. H. L. Parker, H. U. von Balthasar, G. C. Berkouwer and O. Weber) fail to recognise the basis of Calvin's 1559 *Institutes* in the trinitarian revelation of God. The major reason for their failure is their identification of revelation with the Word of God in Jesus Christ (the second person of the Trinity) which hinders them from thinking through a trinitarian notion of divine revelation and communication.

Calvin's trinitarian notion of revelation attempts to accommodate the biblical witness to the revelation (communication) of the one true God in each individual person and action (e.g. creation, redemption and sanctification) of the Trinity. The basis of the *Institutes* in this trinitarian revelation brings forth its trinitarian orientation, unity and consistence.[43] Calvin differentiates revelation and communication and the Word of God in Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity. God's Word in faith provides the noetic and conceptual possibility of the trinitarian revelation (communication) of God to which the Bible attests. This trinitarian revelation is the source of the *Institutes.* Barth differs from Calvin in regard to their theological source. God's Word in faith is the systematic possibility of the *Institutes.* Calvin's theological source and possibility are inseparable; they occur simultaneously in the subjectivity of faith.

The claim of Barth that "we must return to the method of... Calvin... the only truly scholarly method in dogmatics",[44] must be understood in the light of their identical assertion of God's Word in faith as a proper theological possibility. It is noticeable that Calvin advocates faith rather than God's Word as the theological

[42] Ibid. p. 44.

[43] The assertion of this point is the major burden of the first part of this thesis.

[44] CD I, 2. p. 870.

possibility of the treatment of the revelation of the creator-God the Father in creation (in Inst. I.iii-v).[45] He, however, never speaks of faith apart from God's Word which the Holy Spirit reveals and illuminates in our subjectivity through the human word of the Bible. It seems therefore to be tenable to regard God's Word in faith as the only theological possibility for the treatment here. This is something that Barth fails to grasp. He considers the treatment as an exposition of formal scriptural principle apart from the content of faith, the revelation of God's Word.[46]

The way in which Barth handles the doctrine of revelation is remarkable He explores the nature of God's Word in revelation prior to its epistemology. The purpose of this is not to discuss the ontology apart from the epistemology of revelation in faith. The material basis of Barth's doctrine of revelation is the Word of God which the church proclaims in faith by the Holy Spirit from the Bible.[47] The conceptual possibility of revelation depends on its epistemological actuality, even though its ontology precedes and enables its noetic and conceptual actuality and possibility in faith.[48] Rather, Barth's way is to stress the absolute objectivity of God's revelation in the subjectivity of our faith. This is an alteration of Barth's earlier procedure (i.e. in his *Christliche Dogmatik*) of treating the nature of revelation in the context of its hearer and preacher.[49] As a result, the definition of revelation which is the subject of inquiry appears to be an appendix to the analysis of the hearer and preacher of God's Word. Barth does not fully succeed in distancing himself from anthropological or philosophical existentialism. He deduces the nature of revelation from an analysis of the self and existential understanding of the hearer and preacher of God's Word, and includes the existential hearer (and preacher) of God's Word in the definition of

[45] See Chapter I.1.ii.

[46] CD I, 2. p. 460. cf. I, 1. p. 300.

[47] CD I, 1. pp. 47-124 and I, 2. pp. 743-884.

[48] Ibid. pp. 1-46 and I, 2, pp. 844-884.

[49] Ibid. pp. 126-131.

its nature.[50]

Van Til defines Barth's theology as a new Heideggerian (or philosophical or anthropological) existentialism (or modernism).[51] This definition is untenable It ignores not only Barth's persistent rejection of anthropological or philosophical formulation of theological truth, but also the sharp difference between Heideggerian existential philosophy and Barth's "existential" theology. It is wrong to identify them on the basis of their existential logic or theme or character, as J. Smart argues.[52] The object of Barth's existential theology, God, differs from the object of the Heideggerian existential philosophy, man. Their different object gives rise to the incompatible nature of their existentialism.

Martin Heidegger claims the possibility of existential awareness in the becoming of our authentic being (*Dasein*) within the horizon of our own time.[53] Our true existence (*Dasein*) is always ours.[54] Barth and Calvin oppose this possibility, since it fails to take seriously the sinfulness of man which nullifies his autonomous capacity. Sinful man's existential awareness and the becoming of his authentic (sinless) being depends solely on the grace of God within the time constituted by God's vertical revelation to our faith restoring our created image of God. Barth uses existential philosophical themes to express the theological re-

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[50] *Christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf*, Zollikon-Zurich, Munchen, 1927, pp. 111ff.

[51] "The similarity of Barth's thought to that of Heidegger is striking indeed. As already indicated, Barth's method is virtually that of Heidegger. According to both of these men, method is identical with being. Reality is that and only that which is ever on the move. For Barth as for Heidegger, reality is reality unto death and unto beginning. It ever dies and ever starts *de novo*. It is such because it is primarily taken by man rather given to to man. It is the autonomous man who is thought of as the true and ultimate source of predication. This autonomous man sets himself up as the source of the significantly possible." *The New Modernism*, p. 158. "The rationalism of Barth is greater than the rationalism of Schleiermacher for it includes the more basically irrational... But the same must be said for the Theology of the Word as set forth in the *Dogmatics*. This theology is still nothing but an anthropology and that an anthropology of the autonomous man." (p. 159)

[52] "Metaphysics, Logic and Theology," in *New Essays in Philosophical Theology*, ed. A. Flew and A. MacIntyre, SCM Press, London, 1955, pp. 12-27.

[53] *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1962, p. 39. Heidegger advocates "the *existential analysis* of Dasein" as the basis for understanding all other ontologies (including of God). (p. 34)

[54] Anthony C. Thiselton, *The Two Horizons*, Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1980, p. 148.

ality of the noetic and ontic coincidence of the authentic being of man in faith.[55] Its use is necessary to communicate theological reality to modern people who are familiar with existential philosophical thought. The dogmatic freedom in doing so recapitulates the Reformers' (e.g. Calvin's) dogmatic freedom in faith (which the Holy Spirit creates and sustains through the illumination of God's Word from Scripture).[56]

In order to resist any neutralisation of the objectivity of revelation in the process of knowing, Barth explains it in accordance with the classical distinction between the being of God *in se* and his action *ad extra*. The revelation of the Word of God in himself is distinguished from that towards us. They are respectively categorized as the primary (direct) and secondary (indirect or creaturely) objectivity of God.[57] The objectivity of the latter is hammered out on the basis of its continuity with the objectivity of the former.[58] The assertion of the objectivity of revelation of God *in se* beyond the decision of faith evades Barth's early error of including the hearing of man in its concept.[59] The intrinsic constitution of the self-luminous reality of the triune God *in se* not only generates his revealing action *ad extra* and makes it known to us,[60] but it also preserves its objectivity in our knowing process.

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[55] The intention of this use is apparent (CD I, 1. p. 125).

[56] CD I, 2. pp. 208-9. Barth claims that Calvin is a classical Platonist from a philosophical point of view (CD I, 2. p. 728). Calvin endorses Plato's suggestion of the twofold constitution of man's nature (namely a body and a soul) rather than its twofold constitution (a body, a soul and a spirit) in the Bible (Inst. I.xv. 2 and 6). D. Cairns argues that "this whole line of thought in Calvin brings him very closely to modern Christian existentialism, which pictures man's being as a life of decision in response". *The Image of God in Man*, SCM Press, London, 1953, p. 131.

[57] CD II, 1. pp. 16-7.

[58] "In His triune life as such, objectivity, and with it knowledge is, divine reality before creaturely objectivity and knowledge exist. We shall call this the primary objectivity of God, and distinguish from it the secondary, i.e., the objectivity which He has for us too in His revelation, in which He gives Himself to be known by us as He knows Himself... His secondary objectivity is fully true, for it has its correspondence and basis in His primary objectivity." Ibid. p. 16. cf. p. 10.

[59] The inclusion here, as H. U. von Balthasar correctly observes, is "only *de facto* not *de jure*. Man is not necessarily included, as Schleiermacher's God is in the feeling of absolute dependence"(Op. cit., p. 186). Cf. T. F. Torrance, *Karl Barth: An Introduction to His Early Theology*, SCM Press, London, 1962, p. 141.

[60] "In His essence, as it is turned to us in His activity, He is so constituted that He can be known by us." CD II, 1. p. 65. cf. p. 49.

The incarnation of the Word of God in the historical man Jesus to which the Bible attests is Barth's hermeneutical basis of the nature of revelation. The revelation of God in himself is transcendent and incomprehensible to our cognition. The human and temporal nature of the Word of God *in se* is argued from its revelation in the historical man Jesus of Nazareth.[61] Barth affirms the creaturely human and historical existence of God in his Word, Jesus Christ, as the only objective reality[62] and possibility[63] of revelation. The objective possibility is viewed from the objective reality of revelation rather than *vice versa*, despite their inseparability. This obviates any ground of *a priori* or abstract speculation of its objective possibility without actual knowledge of its actuality.[64]

2.ii. Revelation as a Purposive and Historical Event

Revelation means the condescension of the creator-God to the creaturely man Jesus Christ in time.[65] It is not an inevitable self-impulsive movement of God.[66] Barth follows Calvin in seeing revelation as God's free movement in love for man.[67] It is purposive;[68] it is the eschatological fulfillment of God's eternal decision for the salvation of man.[69] The power of revelation restores our true creaturely being and image of God in faith not only for our anticipation of final salvation, but also for the true noetic and conceptual possibility of God and ourselves (and the world).[70] The efficacy of this purposiveness is not restricted to a single time, but opened to all times. The revelation of God's Word is "contingent contemporaneity".[71]

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[61] CD II, 1. p. 17.

[62] Ibid. pp. 1-24.

[63] CD I, 2. pp. 25-44.

[64] Ibid. p. 28.

[65] CD I, 1. pp. 324-8.

[66] CD II, 1. p. 74.

[67] CD I, 2. pp. 1-202.

[68] CD I, 1. p. 143.

[69] The whole content of CD II, 2. consists of an explanation of this point.

[70] CD I, 1. pp. 143-162.

[71] Ibid. p. 145.

Barth develops the dynamic concept of revelation as a historical event and the being of God, which Calvin supports in the recognition of Jesus Christ as the self-revelation (event and being) of the Word of God in concrete time and space.[72] God is in becoming something other than himself in the historical event of his self-revelation in the man Jesus.[73] Revelation denotes the identification of the eternal being of the creator-God with the creaturely historical man Jesus.[74] God is no longer seen as a timeless and static unmoved being, but the temporal and dynamic self-moved Being *in se*.[75] The expression of the eternal truth and being of God as a historical event and process of his self-revelation resonates with the insight of Hegel's philosophy,[76] which identifies absolute and eternal spirit with concrete historical events and the process of its self-revelation.[77] The sharp difference is that Barth does not, like Hegel, regard the historical event and process of any man (and the world) as the self-revelation of God. He, like Calvin, upholds the unique historical man, Jesus Christ, to which the Bible attests as God's self-revelation.[78] They are biblical rather than philosophical theologians, as T. F. Torrance rightly advocates,[79] for they use philosophical insight for an effective expression of the biblical reality of God and ourselves.

2.iii. Revelation in Hiddenness

God's temporal becoming in Jesus Christ denotes neither an actual change of

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[72] See chapter II.1.i.

[73] CD II, 1. pp. 200-1.

[74] Ibid. p. 271.

[75] Ibid. pp. 268ff.

[76] *Phänomenologie Des Geistes*, Felix Meiner Verlag, Hamburg, 1952, pp. 559-564.

[77] C. Gunton stresses that Barth's historical expression of the eternal truth of God has certainly learned from Hegel (*Theology Beyond Christendom*, ed. J. Thompson, Pickwick Press, Pittsburgh, 1986, p. 294). W. Pannenberg argues that Barth learned Hegel's concept of self-revelation through P. Marheineke (*Jesus-God and Man*, trans. L. L. Wilkins and D. A. Priebe, SCM Press, London, 1968, P. 127).

[78] Barth stresses the unique historical event of God's revealing action in the unique person of Jesus Christ (CD II, 1. p. 271). The emphasis of such a uniqueness of historical event, and of such a personalised orientation, is not found in Hegel's philosophy.

[79] *Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1990, p. 76.

his nature *in se*,[80] nor a dissolution of his incomprehensible nature.[81] The incomprehensible nature of God *in se* is never affected or changed. Rather, for Barth and Calvin, it is confirmed by the temporal becoming of his revealing action *ad extra* in Jesus Christ.[82] The hiddenness (or veiling, freedom and transcendence) of God *in se* and his revealedness (or unveiling, form or love and immanence) *ad extra* cohere in the revelation of God's Word in the flesh of the man Jesus Christ. The decisive reason for this coherence is that the omnipresence of the eternal Word cannot be wholly contained in the temporal and human form of Jesus Christ. Barth affirms the Calvinist recognition of the divine existence of God's Word outside (*extra*) the flesh of Jesus Christ, and criticizes the Lutheran insistence on the divine existence of the Word solely in the human existence of Christ. The former is faithful to the traditional (e.g. Athanasian, Cappadocian and Augustinian) Christology, while the latter is a theological innovation.[83]

The link between the concept of God's revelation (immanence) and his hidden (transcendent) nature resists any static or possessive notion of revelation. Revelation of God *ad extra*, for Barth and Calvin, never refers to total revealedness of his nature *in se*, but to the revelation of the hiddenness of God *in se*. In other words, revelation (immanence) is understood from the perspective of the hiddenness (transcendence) of God, or *vice versa*. The one-sidedness, God's self-unveiling or veiling always remains on our side,[84] but never on God's part.[85] For God inherently knows himself by his self-revelation in himself.[86] The link is the basis of preserving the dynamic concept of revelation. It presents it as an ever-

[80] "His revelation does not mean in the slightest a loss of His mystery. He assumes a form, yet not in such a way that any form will compass Him... His 'second time in a different way' does not really prevent Him from remaining the same." CD I, 1. p. 324.

[81] CD II, 1. p. 199.

[82] Ibid. pp. 273 and 316.

[83] CD I, 2. pp. 168-170.

[84] CD I, 1. pp. 174-5 and 315-330.

[85] CD II, 1. pp. 183-8.

[86] Ibid. pp. 16-7.

new and dynamically occurring event out of hiddenness of God. The dynamic concept of revelation of God results from his being. God is seen as becoming what he actually is in himself through his revelation in the subjectivity of man [87]

Van Til is mistaken in saying that Barth's doctrine of revelation is a Kantian "phenomenalism in which 'the *thing-in-itself*' of Kant is lifted out of the noumenal into the phenomenal".[88] It is naturally true that Barth's theology constantly corresponds to Kant's philosophical axiom that we know God as he appears to us in his revelation (phenomena), rather than as he is in himself (noumena). It, however, never undermines the transcendent and hidden nature of God *in se* by its treatment of the epistemology of his revelation *ad extra* us, as Van Til in accurately proposes. The proposal derives directly from the misjudgement that "Barth works on the critical assumption that it is man rather than God who ultimately makes the differentiations of the surface-phenomenal".[89] It fails to grasp Barth's emphasis on the one-sidedness of God's revelation, either human unveiling in its divine veiling or divine veiling its human unveiling, and the mysterious nature of this revelation.[90] As a matter of fact, Barth consistently recognises the objectivity of God *in se* (noumena) as the condition for his revelation (*ad extra*) to us (phenomena).[91] God's being *in se* (noumena) is real for us in his action *ad extra* (phenomena). Barth's interpretation of reality seems to protest against Kantian's dualistic interpretation of reality.[92]

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[87] "In His revelation He is considered and conceived by man. Man knows God in that he stands before God. But this always means: in that God becomes, is and remains to him Another, One who is distinct from himself, One who meets him." Ibid. p. 9. The interrelation between the revelation of the triune God and his being will be dealt with in more detail, as the doctrine of the Trinity is considered.

[88] Op. cit., p. 143.

[89] Ibid. p. 145.

[90] See the definition of God's Word in revelation as the mystery of God (CD I, 1. pp. 162-186) and the assertion of limits of the knowledge of God (CD II, 1. 129ff).

[91] CD II, 1. pp. 268ff.

[92] CD I, 1. p. 329.

2.iv. Revelation as a Personal Speech of God in Christ

Barth follows Calvin in refusing to separate the personal being (noumena) of God from his self-revelation or Word (phenomena), as T. F. Torrance points out.[93] God's Word in revelation is God's own personal and rational speech[94] and action[95] in Jesus Christ. It is neither idle nor empty or abstract talk and idea.[96] Torrance does not appear to realise, however, that Calvin does not consider the Word or Son of God in Jesus Christ as his only self-revelation, as Barth does. Barth proposes the Word (Son) of God as the objective Revelation, the Father as the Revealer, and the Holy Spirit as the subjective Possibility of this objective Revelation, Jesus Christ, in our faith.[97] The one God in the Trinity is subject, act and effect of revelation. Barth shows revelation as the one trinitarian event of God in order to accentuate the unity of the triune God.[98]

Calvin's notion of revelation is fundamentally trinitarian. God in each person of the Trinity reveals himself and communicates his will through each person's distinctive work. Each action and person of the Trinity is considered as the object or act as well as the subject of revelation; they are revelation and Revealer.[99] The revelation of God the Holy Spirit in the sanctification of faith differs from the revelation of God the Word in the redemptive work of the man Jesus and the Father in creation. The former creates and sustains sanctification in faith for salvation, whilst the latter do not. Calvin defends the presence of the whole triune God in his self-revelation in the context of its knowability. The Word (Son) and the Holy Spirit of God in faith are indispensable for the noetic and conceptual possibility of his revelation the Father in Creation (and the Son in

[93] *Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, pp. 43 and 46.

[94] CD I, 1. 132-143.

[95] Ibid. pp. 143-162.

[96] Ibid. p. 136.

[97] CD I, 2. pp. 203-279.

[98] CD I, 1. p. 353.

[99] The substantiation of this point is the major concern of the first part of this thesis.

the man Jesus and the Holy Spirit in the life of believer or church).

Barth, like Calvin, exploits the nature of the revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ in the light of the Chalcedonian emphasis on his divine and human distinction.[100] The creaturely[101] (the secondary[102] or sacramental[103]) objectivity of God in his Word, Jesus Christ, is neither identified nor mixed with his divine (primary) objectivity in his inner triune life. Their relationship is purely representative.[104] The representativeness of the divinity by the humanity of God in Jesus remains as the archetypal partnership of God and man. It provides the ground of the possibility of representation of the divine Word by human words (e.g. Scripture, church proclamation and dogmatics).[105] Barth and Calvin establishes the mediatorial role of Jesus between God and man as a positive ground for theological activity. We never realistically know the transcendent nature of God *in se* unless he accommodates himself to our human cognition by his human nature.

The development of the doctrine of analogy (similarity) of God and man in Jesus Christ for theological possibility is gradual.[106] Barth certainly mentions the doctrine and its implication for the possibility of positive theological activity from the first part of Volume I.[107] One can, however, notice their more lucid treatment in the epistemology of God in Chapter V in Volume II, and in the doctrine of creation and reconciliation in Volume III and IV of *Church Dogmatics.* The explicit development of the doctrine is not found in Barth's early dialectical theology. A negative attitude towards our talk about God is dominated there (e.g. in the

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100 CD I, 2. pp. 132ff.

101 Ibid. p. 35.

102 CD II, 1. p. 16.

103 Ibid. p. 52.

104 Ibid. p. 17.

105 CD I, 1. p. 109.

106 H. U. von Balthasar, op. cit., pp. 93-5.

107 See the relationship between God's Word in Jesus Christ and faith (CD I, 1. pp. 227-247).

commentary on *Romans*) by the influence of the Kierkegaardian dialectic absolutism.[108] It stresses the infinitely and absolutely qualitative distinction between God and man, and natural man's noetic and conceptual incapacity for God. It is one of the major faults of Van Til's interpretation of Barth's theology that he completely ignores Barth's methodological shift from a dialectic absolutism to an analogical relativism.[109] He considers Barth's theology as Kierkegaardian philosophical dialecticism.[110]

1.v. Revelation as a Fulfilling and Real Time

The element of crisis and dialectic in Barth's early theology reappears in the exposition of the time of revelation in *Church Dogmatics*. The exposition is designed to participate in the past (e.g. Augustine) and present (e.g. Heidegger) discussion[111] of the relationship between temporality (humanity) and eternity (divinity) from the perspective of Boethius.[112] It highlights the wholly otherness and the particularity of God's revelation in the creaturely humanity of Christ. Barth regards the time of revelation as God's time for us. It differs from our time. It is right, genuine and real time[113] which is the archetype of our authentic time (being). Our timeless crisis is noticeable here. Barth's real intention is not to deny the actual existence of our past, present and future time (humanity and image of God). Rather, it is to stress the fact that our time (humanity and image

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[108] *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. E. C. Hoskyns, Oxford Univ. Press, London, pp. 99, 297, and 258ff.

[109] H. U. von Balthasar argues that Barth intends to make his theology much more theological than philosophical through the replacement of the emphasis of a dialectic absolutism with analogical relativism (*The Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 188).

[110] Op. cit., p. 143.

[111] Barth distances himself from Augustine and Heidegger. Their concept of real time is based in man's self-determination (CD I, 2. p. 46).

[112] The rejection of the Augustinian and Anselmian concept of time and eternity is apparent. It is "far too occupied with the confrontation between eternity and time" (CD II, 1. p. 610). Barth upholds Boethius' suggestion of the ground of time in eternity by treating eternity as "the now," the total simultaneous and complete present of God's life (Ibid. p. 611). W. Kneale ("Time and Eternity in Theology," in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. 51, 1961, pp. 87-108) and R. Roberts (*A Theology On its Way?*, T and T Clark, Edinburgh, 1991, pp. 71ff) articulate this point.

[113] CD I, 2. p. 55.

of God) is sinful, is not our real (sinless) time (humanity and image of God) in creation that was lost by the Fall.[114] We meet our real and sinless time in creation only in the event of God's revelation in Christ.

One can complain that Barth neglects to stress the gravity of our ordinary (sinful) time (and humanity and image of God) for our continuous relationship with the eternal creator-God (i.e. in Volumes I and II of *Church Dogmatics*). He merely admits the possibility of the creature-creator relationship in and through our created humanity (time) and image of God, and refuses to explore its significance for the relationship. This is because he wants to concentrate on demonstrating our real time (and humanity and image of God) and relationship with God[115] in Christ, the revelation of God's Word. The positive recognition of our sinful time (image and humanity) for our continuous relationship with God appears in the doctrine of creation and reconciliation in Volumes III and IV. Barth is much closer to Calvin's theology when he elaborates this relationship in his later rather than the early volumes of *Dogmatics*. The difference is that Calvin's *Institutes* does not explicitly articulate the sinful and sinless humanity of man and Jesus in the light of time.

Barth defines God's revelation in Christ as a third time. It fully participates both in the sinful and sinless time.[116] The possibility of their unity in the person of Jesus Christ is constantly dialectical. The distance is transcended, rather than dissolved, by the free and loving miracle of God.[117] He declares the time of revelation as the indestructible contemporaneous reality, and attempts to break the vicious circle of the Platonic idealistic tendency of dissolving temporal into eternal reality. However, he does not seem to be entirely free from it;[118] temporal

[114] Ibid. p. 47.

[115] CD I, 1. pp. 239-40.

[116] CD I, 2. p. 58.

[117] CD II, 1. p. 264. cf. CD I, 2. pp. 63ff.

[118] R. Prenter, "Karl Barths Umbildung der traditionellen Zweinaturlehre in lutherischer Beleuchtung," *Studia Theologica* 11, 1957, pp. 40ff. H. Bouillard, *Karl Barth*, Vol. II, Aubier, Paris,

reality is viewed as a shadow, or more precisely an assumption[119] or manifestation or repetition[120] of eternal reality. The eternity of God's Word implants its durational simultaneity into the succession and division of time of Jesus of Nazareth There is no successive history of past, present and future, but their simultaneity in eternity.[121] The concept of time becomes ambiguous, for it is claimed in terms of the eternal 'Now'.[122] The ambiguity disappears in volume IV (the doctrine of reconciliation) by stressing Christ's sinful time (humanity) for our reconciliation with God in and through it. The doctrine of creation in volume III dissolves the crisis of our timelessness by affirming our sinful time (humanity and image of God).

1.iii. The Subjective Reality of Revelation in Faith

iii.1. Epistemological Justification in Faith

The conceptual possibility of God's Word in revelation is confined to faith. Barth follows Calvin in persistently renouncing man's natural capacity for this possibility. God the Holy Spirit alone creates and sustains faith by the illumination of his Word in the subjectivity of man from Scripture.[123] The noetic and conceptual possibility of the revelation of God's Word in faith rests on the illumination of the Holy Spirit. This leads Philip J. Rosato to assert that Barth's *Dogmatics* is a pneumatocentric theology.[124] The illumination of the Holy Spirit

1957, p. 162. H. G. Pöhlmann, *Analogia entis oder analogia fidei? Dei Frage der Analogie bei Karl Barth*, Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1965, pp. 111ff. R. Jenson, *God After God*, Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis, 1969, p. 152. C. E. Gunton, *Becoming and Being*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1978, p. 183. R. H. Roberts, "Karl Barth's Doctrine of Time: Its Nature and Implication," in *Karl Barth: Studies of His Theological Method*, ed. by S. W. Sykes, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1979, p. 101.

119 CD I, 1. p. 50.

120 CD II, 1. p. 61.

121 CD I, 2. p. 52.

122 The exposition of Barth's doctrine of the Trinity later considers the major reason for Barth's ambiguous concept of God's time in revelation.

123 CD I, 2. pp. 206-9. cf. II, 1. pp. 14 and 31.

124 *The Spirit as Lord: The Pneumatology of Karl Barth*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1981, pp. 38-43.

is the determinative source and hermeneutical key of his theology. J. Thompson is right to criticise Rosato that "pneumatology is a very important aspect of theology... but is never its primary thrust."[125]

Rosato overlooks Barth's basis in the christocentric revelation that gives rise to his christocentric theology. Barth does not introduce the illumination of the Holy Spirit as an additional or second revelation to its objective reality in Jesus Christ. It is the subjective reality and possibility of this objective revelation, Jesus Christ, the source of his *Dogmatics.*[126] "It would then be fitting to state almost the opposite of Calvin," says O. Weber. "The Spirit effects revelation 'objectively,' encountering us in our 'subjectivity.' Without him, Christ would be 'nothing' for us."[127] Barth's divergence from Calvin is far more radical and substantial than Weber admits here. Weber does not realise that Calvin, unlike Barth, proposes the objective reality and possibility of the revelation of God the Holy Spirit in sanctification.

The nature of faith determines the possibility of theology according to it. The possibility of theology relies on faith. Barth does not deal with the doctrine of faith under the doctrine of the soteriological action of God, as Calvin does, as he implies in the beginning of his *Dogmatics.*[128] Faith is not just certain and true knowledge of the triune God in Christ. Faith has diverse properties such as justification, sanctification, hope and so on. Barth distances himself from Calvin, for he stresses that the basis of our hope (and faith) for salvation is in the action of God not in Christ[129] but in the Holy Spirit.[130] Their common ground lies in the discussion of faith and its properties as the free and gracious gift of God

125 *The Holy Spirit in the Theology of Karl Barth*, Pickwick, Pennsylvania, 1991, p. 8.

126 CD I, 2. pp. 203ff.

127 *The Foundations of Dogmatics*, Vol. II, p. 134.

128 CD I, 1. Preface, xvi.

129 CD IV, 3. pp. 915.

130 Inst. III.ii.41-43.

the Father in Christ by the Holy Spirit.[131] The recognition of Calvin's influence upon Barth is apparent in his emphasis on the inseparability of justification and sanctification.[132] They occur simultaneously in faith, although justification in Christ is the basis for sanctification.

T. F. Torrance emphatically asserts Barth's recapitulation of the epistemology of the Reformers (including Calvin). They apply the Pauline doctrine of principle of justification of faith to their epistemology.[133] Their epistemology is rooted not in their self-justification, but in justification of faith by the grace of God alone. The possibility of theology shows the radical epistemological relevance of justification of faith by the grace of God alone. It opposes any natural theology that is based on man's capacity—philosophical, anthropological, historical and psychological—or man's justification of theological capacity.

iii.2. Epistemological Actualism and Objectivism

The limitation of theology to faith is the corner-stone of Barth's epistemological actualism. It refuses to conceptualize revelation behind its ontological actuality in faith. The question of the actuality of revelation precedes that of epistemological (conceptual and theological) possibility.[134] The ontological actuality of revelation precedes and causes its epistemological actuality as well as its possibility.[135] In the event of revelation, the actual being of God encounters us

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131 CD IV, 1. pp. 61ff.

132 CD IV, 2. pp. 507-511.

133 *Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, p. 87. Torrance claims that the basis of Barth's epistemology on the principle of justification of faith appears also in his early commentary of *Romans* (*Karl Barth: An Introduction of his Early Theology, 1910-1931*, p. 176).

134 "Where God is known He is also in some way or other knowable. Where the actuality exists there is also the corresponding possibility... Just as the reality of the Word of God in Jesus Christ bears its possibility within itself, as does also the reality of the Holy Spirit, by whom the Word of God comes to man, so too the possibility of the knowledge of God therefore the knowability of God cannot be questioned *in vacuo*, or by means of a general criterion of knowledge delimiting the knowledge of God from without, but only from within this real knowledge itself." CD II, 1. p. 5. cf. p. 86. See Inst. I, 2. The subsequent movement from the question of epistemological actuality to that of its possibility is noticeable.

135 E. Jungel explicitly points out the prevenient character of the ontology of the triune God to our theological inquiry (*The Doctrine of the Trinity*, trans H. Harris, Scottish Academic Press,

and determines the content of our theological language about him and his revelation.[136] "Revelation has its reality and truth wholly and in every respect—both ontically and noetically—within itself."[137]

"Like Calvin and contrary to Luther, Barth turned away from the disposition of faith and focused on its content," God's Word in revelation.[138] The commitment to a scientific method for theological construction (the doctrine of revelation)[139] is apparent. He allows the rational objectivity of God's Word to determine theological investigation, knowledge and conceptualisation of the nature of revelation, just as a scientific investigator depends on the inherent intelligibility of the object for knowledge of its true nature. The scientific method decisively refuses to impose any *a priori* philosophical and theological presupposition for knowledge of the true nature revelation. It achieves a strong epistemological and theological objectivism; it affirms the presence of the objectivity of God's revelation in the subjectivity of faith. Epistemological objectivism is designed to affirm the basis for positive theological activity and veracity and credibility.[140]

Calvin himself does not explicitly express his commitment to a scientific method, as Barth does. The scientific character of his theology is nevertheless demonstrable, as Torrance explicitly articulates,[141] as it designates the rational and personal objectivity of God's revelation in faith as the determinative source of our rational and personal investigation and knowledge of him. Michael Polanyi argues[142] that "this rationality of nature objectively transcends our experience of

Edinburgh, 1976, pp. 8-9).

136 CD II, 1. p. 181.

137 CD I, 1. p. 305.

138 H. U. von Balthasar, op. cit., p. 23.

139 CD I, 1. pp. 275-87.

140 CD II, 1. pp. 206-9.

141 *Theological Science*, Oxford Univ. Press, London, 1969, pp. 7-11 and 29. cf. *Theology In Reconstruction*, SCM Press, London, 1965, pp. 76ff. *God and Rationality*, Oxford Univ. Press, London, 1971, pp. 31ff.

142 *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1962, pp. 5, 15f., 37, 63f., and 103f.

it and so commands our respect for it that we are ready to *let it speak for itself*, so to say, and to subject our formulations and apprehensions to its criticism and guidance."[143]

iii.3. Epistemological Dynamism and Dialecticism

The presence of God's Word in the subjectivity of man does not denote any material identification and mixture of the former with the substance of our knowledge of it.[144] For both Calvin and Barth, the objective revelation of God is not a transferable thing substantially to creaturely reality (whether Scripture or man) once and for all. Rather it refers to impartation (communicated knowledge) of it.[145] There is a deliberate effort to hammer out the genuine humanness and temporariness of our knowledge of it in order to evade epistemological docetism.[146] Theology (the doctrine of revelation) is a reflective activity in that it looks back upon experiences of our faith as the data it seeks to interpret in understandable ways.[147]

The deployment of the divine hiddenness (or miraculous transcendence) in the notion of revelation decisively eliminates any static possession of it and its knowability in us. Kern R. Trembath opposes this deployment.[148] It jeopardizes our noetic and conceptual decision and orientation to revelation in faith, and creates some hidden ambiguity in the conceptual process of revelation and its effect. In order to avoid this "some form of prior agreement to this effect must be secured."[149] Trembath fails to grasp the fundamental fact that "revelation,

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143 *Theological Science*, p. 30.

144 CD II, 1. p. 17.

145 CD I, 1. p. 330.

146 "It is still the case that the subjective possibility of revelation is God's possibility, just as its objective and subjective reality is God's reality... It is a frightful misunderstanding to try to interpret it along the lines of a possession or a trance... the doctrine of the Holy Ghost must not lay itself open to a charge of Docetism." CD I, 2. p. 266.

147 Kern R. Trembath, *Divine Revelation*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1991, p. 53.

148 Ibid. p. 111.

149 Ibid. p. 67.

revelatio, ἀποκαλυψις, means the unveiling of what is veiled."[150] Revelation cannot be a revelation at all if the totality of its nature and effect is known from faith or apart from faith. Trembath's seeking for prior agreement to this effect is totally unacceptable. It is impossible for us to know the hidden and transcendent nature of God in revelation, and the total nature and effect of his revelation He completely ignores the sovereign freedom of God in revelation that can bring about our new knowledge of, and our new attitude towards, God and humanity and the world.

The deployment of God's sovereign freedom in the definition of revelation is decisive in defending its dynamic and unpossessable position in the subjectivity of man. There is a constant dialectic of negation and affirmation of the noetic and conceptual possibility of revelation. This dialectic preserves epistemological and theological dynamism. It differs from the Hegelian dialectic, which presupposes possessive knowability in the synthesis of self-unveiling and veiling of God (absolute spirit) in man,[151] by regarding the free movement of God's self-unveiling and veiling as the cause of its affirmation and negation.[152] Barth and Calvin do not suggest man's co-operative merit for knowability of God. It occurs as a dynamic event in his subjectivity, as God stimulates or confronts man's intellect to correspond to his free revelation in hiddenness.[153] Man is utterly passive to knowability of God's revelation, and cannot have an *a priori* presupposition of it and its effect.

Rolf Ahlers highlights Barth's presuppositionless epistemology and its resonance in Hegel's philosophy.[154] Hegel considers man's thought itself as the direct

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150 CD I, 1. p. 118-9.

151 "The fact that the *Deus revelatus* is also the *Deus absconditus* and the *Deus absconditus* the *Deus revelatus*... is not self-evident, i.e., intelligible *per se*, as the immanent dialectic of this or that sphere of human life, or perhaps a dialectic like the Hegelian In itself and For itself, is intelligible *per se*, i.e., resolvable into a third." Ibid. p. 330.

152 CD II, 1. pp. 74-5.

153 Ibid. pp. 128ff.

154 *The Community of Freedom*, Peter Lang, New York, 1989, pp. 35-46. Cf. C. Gunton, *Theology*

or presuppositionless revelation of absolute being in time and space. There is thus no room for any *a priori* presupposition in it. Despite this, there is serious doubt over the genuine validity of this comparison. It does not take seriously the correspondence of the noetic and ontic reality of God's revelation. Without the latter, the genuine claim of the former is not valid.[155] God or the absolute spirit to whom Hegel refers is not the presuppositionless living God whom Barth and Calvin refer to from the Bible, but a presupposed being of man's thought Hegel's epistemology (philosophy) is not presuppositionless. It is rooted in the presupposed reality or being of man. Hegel's epistemology (philosophy) is very much under the spell of Kant's axiomatic teaching, 'religion within the limits of reason alone'. "Hegel's argument always presupposes a prior movement from infinite to finite,"[156] however it is intended to be based on the movement from infinite (divine) to finite (human). The identification of man's thought with God or absolute being seems to be highly abstract rather than realistic. This is precisely what Barth (and Calvin) protests against, for it illegitimately anthropologizes God.[157] They insist on the movement from the infinite God to the finite man for the availability of God's objective reality in revelation, and preserves their theocentric and presuppositionless epistemology (theology).

iii.4. Epistemological Analogy

The question arises how God's Word makes contact with man. Barth (and Calvin)[158] knows so well that "there can be no receiving of God's Word unless there is something common to the speaking God and hearing man in this event,

Beyond Christendom, p. 293.

155 CD I. 1, p. 303.

156 Dale M. Schlitt, *Hegel's Trinitarian Claim*, E. J. Brill, Netherlands, 1984, p. 7.

157 CD I, 1. p. 330. Barth characterizes anthropologization as the major tendency of 19th-century Liberalism, and considers the influence of Cartesian and Kantian, and Schleiermacherian subjectivism as one of the major encouraging factors of this tendency (CD I, 1. pp. 20ff and 193ff).

158 Calvin persistently insists on the indispensibility of God's mediation in and through his human Word, Jesus Christ, for our reconciliation with God and our true knowledge of him in faith. Without the mediation, the transcendent and holy God can never be realistically reconciled and known to sinful man.

a similarity for all the dissimilarity implied by the distinction between God and man".[159] They never argue for the similarity from man's natural similarity with his Creator (the *analogia entis*), but from God's similarity with us in the man Jesus Christ for our contact with God's Word.[160] God's Word can only be realistically known by man in and through God's own mediation and reconciliation with us in the man Jesus Christ. The mediation and reconciliation is God's free readiness in Christ for man, our reconciliation and contact with God [161] Faith in this by the free grace of God the Holy Spirit[162] is our free readiness in Christ for God's reconciliation and contact with us.

Barth and Calvin advocate *analogia fidei* or *gratiae*,[163] (our similarity with the humanity of God's Word in faith by the grace of the Holy Spirit) as the basis of our reconciliation and contact with God in revelation. The possibility of their reconciliation and contact in revelation rests on the miraculous[164] and free decision[165] of God alone. The noetic and conceptual possibility of God's miraculous revelation is rooted in the miracle, witness and verification of God the Holy Spirit in faith.[166] Barth and Calvin oppose any deployment of divine miracle in the doctrine of revelation or intervention on the basis of man's own argument and justification of the biblical or dogmatic witness to God's miraculous revelation or intervention. Such argument[167] loses the ground for a realistic view of God's

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159 CD I, 1. p. 238.

160 "But in this sense the mutual indwelling and indeed the union of the divine and human logos in faith cannot be ignored or denied. This mutual indwelling or union is the knowability of the Word of God, the possibility of Church proclamation whether from the preacher's standpoint or the hearer's, and therefore the possibility of dogmatics too." Ibid. p. 242.

161 CD II, 1. pp. 63ff.

162 Ibid. pp. 128ff.

163 J. McIntyre, "Analogy," in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 12, 1959, pp. 1-20.

164 CD I, 1. pp. 93-4 and 241.

165 Ibid. pp. 117-8.

166 "We must believe in our faith no less than in the Word believed, i.e., even if we think we can and should regard our attitude to God's Word as positive, even if we thus confess our faith, we can regard it as positive only as it is made possible and actual by God, only as the miracle of the Holy Ghost and not as our own work." CD I, 1. p. 182.

167 The conservators of the deployment of divine miracle in the doctrine of revelation or intervention,

miraculous revelation or intervention, because one's own personal experience of it in faith is not a connect basis for their argument.

The remarkable difference between Barth and Calvin appears in their assertion of unitary (saving) and twofold (saving and unsaving) knowability in the Bible. Barth refuses to follow Calvin by denying natural (unsaving) knowability of God's revelation in creation, so as to eliminate any possibility of natural theology from it.[168] A declaration of Christian truth based on this knowability inevitably results in the destruction of God's truth in the *analogia fidei* or *gratia*.[169] He meanwhile shows his coherence with the Calvinistic tradition by regarding knowledge of God from the *analogia entis* and *fidei* as contradictory and unbridgeable.[170] Knowledge of God from the former is false, rebellious and idolatrous, and leads man into condemnation of God. It can never be a necessary condition for true and saving knowledge of God's Word in faith.[171] H. U. von Balthasar is seriously mistaken in arguing for a reconcilability from the irreconcilability of the *analogia entis* and *fidei* in Barth's theology.[172]

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e.g., Basil Mitchell ("Does Christianity need a Revelation?" in *Theology*, 1980, pp. 111-4.), William J. Abraham (*The Divine Inspiration of Holy Scripture*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1981. *Divine Revelation and the Limits of Historical Criticism*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1982, pp. 120ff.) and David Brown (*The Divine Trinity*, Duckworth, London, 1985, pp. 52-98.) follow this line of argument. The strength of their approach appears to be their persistent endeavour to clarify the biblical and dogmatic concept of revelation (and other things) from their own intellectual or philosophical analysis and standard. They seem, however, to dismiss the forceful teaching of modern philosophers (e.g. R. Descartes, I. Kant, S. Kierkegaard and M. Heidegger) that we should rely on actual experience of object for its conceptual possibility. They naturally regard experience as important for their argument, but the experience to which they refer is not a direct and personal experience of God's miraculous revelation or intervention in faith to which the Bible attests, but the experiences of others (e.g. biblical or dogmatic writers).

168 CD II, 1. pp. 123ff.

169 "If grace is alongside nature, however high above it it may put, it is obviously no longer the grace of God, but the grace which man himself ascribes to himself. If God's revelation is alongside knowledge of God proper to man as such, even though it may never be advanced except as a prolegomenon, it is obviously no longer the revelation of God, but a new expression (borrowed or even stolen) for the revelation which encounters man in his own reflection." Ibid. p. 139.

170 CD II, 1. p. 86. See chapter I.1.iii.1.

171 CD I, 2. pp. 306-7.

172 "Barth's acceptance of obediential potency shores up the validity of the analogy of being within the broader framework of the analogy of faith." Op. cit., p. 150. Eduard Wildbolz also criticises that Balthasar interprets the irreversible relationship between the *analogia entis* and *fidei* in Barth's theology as reversible (*Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 7, 1954, p. 111).

Barth interprets the biblical statement about natural and unsaving knowability (e.g. in *Romans* I: 18-20) as a fragment of a Stoic author's independent witness to the truth of God. In other words, it is purely a product of man in the cosmos. The Bible does not actually claim natural and unsaving knowability of the true God. Its statement about natural and unsaving knowability is viewed from the perspective of the saving knowability and knowledge of God in faith in order to attest them in the revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ.[173] It is a part of the statement of *kerygma*. Barth is subjected to the criticism of H. Bouillard that he fails to take seriously the distinction between the original occurrence and the reflection of natural and unsaving knowability and knowledge of God [174] Paul does not deny their original occurrence in the event of God's revelation in creation from the denial of its self-validity for true knowledge of God,[175] as Barth does.

The denial of the actual occurrence of natural knowability and knowledge of God leads to the dismissal of their constructive use for theology. Barth does not realise, as Calvin does, that they could provide the basis for theological justification of the undiminishable relationship between the creator-God and every (saved and unsaved) creature. They are essential to defend the sovereign lordship of the creator-God over all his creation. Barth's doctrine of revelation (in Volumes I and II of *Church Dogmatics*) does not take into account God's dynamic government of and involvement in natural (or philosophical, socio-political and scientific) knowledge, man and society. The recognition of God's relationship with all human beings as their Creator appears in the doctrine of creation in Volume III that recognises man's natural knowledge and image of God. Barth here continues to reject nature as a necessary condition for the grace of God's

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[173] CD II, 1. pp. 123ff.

[174] *The Knowledge of God*, trans. S. D. Femiano, Burns and Oates, London, 1969, p. 199.

[175] C. E. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1975, pp. 114ff.

Word in revelation.

Conclusion

Barth is not much different from Calvin in regarding their understanding of the relationship between Scripture and revelation for theological construction. They qualitatively differentiate the written scripture (creaturely reality) from the revelation of God (divine reality). This is to stress their dynamic unity and relationship in the subjectivity of our faith by God the Holy Spirit alone The human word of Scripture becomes as God's Word only in this unity. They consider the Bible as the story of God's salvation in Christ, and propose the real substance and object of the Bible as God's Word in this story. God's Word in revelation becomes the subject of inquiry of their doctrine of Scripture Their doctrine focuses on showing in what sense the human word of Scripture bears witness to God's Word in revelation. The possibility of theology relies on the revelation of God's Word in faith.

The significant divergence of Barth and Calvin occurs in their ontology of revelation. Barth identifies the revelation and communication of God with God's Word in Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, and upholds the christocentric revelation as the source and possibility of *Church Dogmatics.* The basis in the christocentric revelation paves the way for Barth's christocentric theology. Calvin's notion of revelation is fundamentally trinitarian. The one true God reveals and communicates himself in and through each individual action and person of the Trinity. Calvin does not identify revelation and communication of God with his Word in Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity. The trinitarian revelation of God is the source of the 1559 *Institutes.* God's Word in faith is the noetic and hermeneutical and conceptual possibility of the trinitarian revelation and communication. The basis in the trinitarian revelation gives rise to the trinitarian orientation of the *Institutes.*

The assertion of the objectivity of God's Word *in se* is vital to eliminate any suggestion of its neutralisation in the process of knowing. It emancipates Barth's doctrine of revelation from attachment to philosophical and anthropological existentialism. Barth followed Calvin in exploring its nature on the basis of the incarnation of the Word in the man Jesus to which the Bible attests. The creaturely historical and human nature of God's Word is viewed from that of the man Jesus. Barth appears to use contemporary (e.g. Hegelian) expression of revelation as a historical event and process of the eternal God This is, however, to express the biblical reality of the historical life and action of the eternal Word of God in the man Jesus of Nazareth. Barth's whole emphasis here is that revelation is not a mere communication of God. He, like Calvin, refuses to separate the revealing or speeching action from the personal being of God in Christ, and claims revelation as God's rational and personal speaking and act in Christ. There is also a great emphasis on the particular otherness of God's Word in revelation. It is the eschatological fulfillment of the eternal decision of God, and God's time that negates our sinful time (humanity) and restores and affirms our sinless time (humanity) in faith. It is not exhaustive. There is a constant dialectic or one-sidedness of revelation in hiddenness or hiddenness in revelation to us, but never to God himself.

The noetic and conceptual possibility of receiving God's Word in revelation is confined to justification of faith by the grace of God alone. Barth and Calvin persistently oppose the natural capacity of human beings for this possibility. The confinement provides a realistic, objective and dynamic view of God's Word; it denies its accessibility apart from actual and dynamic knowledge of its objectivity in the subjectivity of our faith by the free grace of God the Holy Spirit. Barth, like Calvin, deploys the biblical notion of the creature-creator relationship, and accentuates their inherent qualitative distinction and discontinuity in his epistemology. This allows God's sovereign freedom and grace as the direct cause

of the knowability of revelation, and resists any possession of its knowability in man—as the Hegelian philosophy presupposes in the ontological similarity and continuity of man and God (*analogia entis*). Barth and Calvin confine the noetic and conceptual possibility of God's Word to the *analogia fidei* or *gratiae*, and advocate God's reconciliation with us in Christ as the only point of contact for this possibility. Their noticeable difference is that Barth's doctrine of revelation (in Volumes I and II.1) insists on a unitary (saving) knowability of God in faith from his revelation in Christ, and opposes Calvin's assertion of a twofold (saving and unsaving) knowability of God from his revelation in Christ and in creation. Barth nonetheless recognises the natural knowability of God and its theological significance for the doctrine of creation in Volume III of *Church Dogmatics*

III.2. Trinity

Introduction

The doctrine of the Trinity answers the specific question of who the Christian God is. It is inseparable from the doctrine of revelation in Barth's *Church Dogmatics*. It is not only developed within the doctrine of revelation by illustrating who the revealed and revealing God is, but it also determines the very nature of revelation. Here we explore the relationship between the doctrine of the Trinity and revelation, their link with the rest of *Dogmatics*, and the significance of the basis of the doctrine of the Trinity in the biblical revelation of the triune God. The unity of the Trinity, the distinctions and their relationship are considered to unravel Barth's trinitarian definition and its relationship with Calvin's.

2.i. Revelation as the Root of the Trinity

i.1. A Hermeneutical Decision

The doctrine of revelation in *Church Dogmatics* entails an inquiry of that of the Trinity. We face the problems of the doctrine of the Trinity in the event of revelation to which the Bible attests. The biblical revelation presents the one God as the three elements and modes of Revealer, Revelation and Revealedness[1] (or "unveiling, veiling and impartation, or form, freedom and historicity, or Easter, Good Friday and Pentecost, or Son, Father and Spirit").[2] It presupposes the unimpaired unity of God in his single event of revelation, and his unimpaired differentiation in the threefold structure of revelation. Barth explores the nature of the biblical revelation in terms of its oneness and threeness, and interprets it as the manifestation and exercise of the sovereign lordship of God.[3] God alone is the one who exercises free control in revelation; he reveals himself through himself

[1] CD I, 1. p. 299.

[2] Ibid. p. 332.

[3] Ibid. p. 386.

without the aid of any other creaturely reality.[4] He is the subject, predicate (act) and object (effect) of revelation. The doctrine of the Trinity is considered an analytical judgement and statement of the biblical witness to the sovereign lordship of God in his threefold revelation.[5] This revelation is upheld as the basis and root of the doctrine.[6]

The development of the doctrine of the Trinity within that of revelation is highly significant. It is "a *hermeneutical* decision of the greatest relevance."[7] It establishes the doctrine of the Trinity as the prolegomenon of *Church Dogmatics* along with that of revelation, and enables us to see the doctrine as the normative[8] and hermeneutical source of the rest of the *Dogmatics.* The doctrine is determinative[9] for Christian concept of the being and action (revelation) of God in the *Dogmatics.* Putting the doctrine of the Trinity at the head of all dogmatics, Barth claims, is something new which is not found in Roman Catholic theology or in the old and new Protestant dogmatism, except Peter Lombard's *Sentences* and Bonaventura's *Breviloquium.*[10]

The significance of this is that it not only recovers the constitutive and relational character of the doctrine to and for Christian theology and life,[11] but also

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[4] Ibid. p. 296.

[5] Ibid. pp. 305-308.

[6] "What we do in fact gather from the doctrine of the Trinity is who the God is who reveals Himself, and this is why we present the doctrine here as an interpretation of revelation. We are not saying, then, that revelation is the basis of the Trinity, as though Gos were the triune God only in His revelation and only for the sake of His revelation. What we are saying is that revelation is the basis of the doctrine of the Trinity; the doctrine of the Trinity has no other basis apart from this. We arrive at the doctrine of the Trinity by no other way than that of an analysis of the concept of revelation." Ibid. pp. 312.

[7] E. Jüngel, *The Doctrine of The Trinity*, trans. H. Harris, Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1976. p. 4.

[8] Op. cit., p. 301.

[9] "In giving this doctrine a place of prominence our concern cannot be merely that it have this place externally but rather that its content be decisive and controlling for the whole of dogmatics". Ibid. p. 303.

[10] Ibid. pp. 300-1.

[11] Claude Welch stresses the importance of this recovery. The prominent tendency of the nineteenth century liberalism was to reduce the doctrine of the Trinity to a doctrine of the second rank by regarding it as speculative and irrelevant to Christian life (*The Trinity in Contemporary Theology*,

renounces any religious quest for God antecedent to the actual knowledge of the being of God through his trinitarian revealing actions.[12] Barth directly challenges Schleiermacher's dogmatic procedure[13] which begins with universal religious consciousness of our God without referring to his trinitarian nature, and treats the doctrine of the Trinity in the appendix at the conclusion of his dogmatic.[14] The doctrine of the Trinity which deals with the question of who the Christian God is should be dealt with prior to any general discussion of God's existence and nature and attributes from his action. The being of God presupposes and determines the precise nature of his action.[15] Barth stresses the being of God in his action as well as the action of God in his being; he insists on the noetic and conceptual basis of his being (the doctrine of the Trinity) in his action, the revelation of God's Word in the man Jesus Christ (the doctrine of revelation).[16]

Barth rightly observes that Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity is antecedent to the discussion of the revelation of the creator-God's nature and characteristics in creation. The discussion never supports a dualistic treatment of the being (the question of who the Christian God is) and action (the question of what he does) of God, as he implies.[17] Calvin is, in fact, not different from Barth in the insistence on the inseparability of the being from the action of God. He views the creative being of the one true God the Father from the revelation of his creative action, and the revelation of his creative action for his creative being;[18] he stresses both the being of God in his action and the action of God in his being. This view is at odds with T. F. Torrance's assertion of Calvin's sole emphasis on the action

SCM Press, London, 1953, pp. 1-41).

[12] R. Jenson, *God After God*, Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis, 1969, p. 108.

[13] CD I, 1. p. 303.

[14] *The Christian Faith*, trans. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1928, pp. 738ff.

[15] Op. cit., p. 301.

[16] Ibid. pp. 314-5.

[17] Ibid. pp. 301-2.

[18] See Chapter I.1.iii.2.

of God in his being, and Barth's combination of it with the Patristic emphasis on the Being of God in his action.[19]

Barth is inaccurate in categorising Calvin's discussion of the creator-God (i.e. in Book I.iii.v of the 1559 *Institutes*) as non-trinitarian. There is in it no reference to the trinitarian and Christian notion of God in faith.[20] The *Institutes* is, however, not different from the *Church Dogmatics* in the faithfulness to the trinitarian and Christian notion of the being and action (revelation) of God. The doctrine of the Trinity is constitutive for the whole *Institutes*, even though Barth fails to appreciate this. It assigns and clarifies the distinctive (creative, redemptive and sanctifying) action and being of the one God to the persons of the Trinity, and their relationship. Their exposition is the form and content of the *Institutes*. Calvin defines the creator-God as the Father of the Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit from the perspective of God's Word in faith, and affirms the trinitarian and Christian notion of God the Father in the discussion of the creator-God.

i.2. A Rejection of *Vestigium Trinitatis*

Barth follows Calvin in opposing the Augustinian *vestigium trinitatis* and imposing the biblical revelation of the triune God as the material basis of the trinitarian definition.[21] The *vestigium trinitatis* is a genuine doctrine of *analogia entis*. It argues the trinitarian nature of the creator-God from its likeness in creaturely being distinct from him, although its original intention is not to do so. Augustine did not explain the Trinity from the created man and world, but the created man and world from the Trinity, in order to speak about the revelation of

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[19] *Transformation and Convergence in the Frame of Knowledge*, Christian Journals, Belfast, 1984, Preface, viii. Cf. *Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, pp. 194-5.

[20] CD I, 1. pp. 300-301.

[21] "Barth materially we are not diverging from the intention of that age [of Calvin and his followers] when we point out that revelation attested in the Bible, is the basis of the doctrine of the Trinity, or that the doctrine of the Trinity is the appropriation of this revelation as such." Ibid. p. 311. The bracket is mine.

the triune God in them.[22] Nevertheless, the *vestigium trinitatis* has been taken as the basis for man's actual manifestation of the triune nature of the creator-God. It leads to the suggestion of the possibility of representation of the being of the triune God in human nature, philosophical thought and language The development of speculation of the triune God in anthropology is evident from Descartes and Kant to Schelling and Hegel.[23] It[24] completely ignores the fact that the mystery of the triune God can never be self-evident in sinful man.[25]

The noetic and conceptual possibility of the triune God is confined to the revelation of his own Word in faith. Barth is therefore not saying that the doctrine of the Trinity is a mere interpretation or exegesis of the biblical revelation of the triune God, "for revelation is the self-interpretation of this God."[26] The basis in revelation means that we deal with the being of the triune God himself in revelation. The doctrine of the Trinity is our interpretation of God's self-interpretation and verification of his triune nature in our faith.[27] The operative role of the Trinity in faith is Barth's ground for affirming a realistic and dynamic view of the triune God. The methodological commitment to the *analogia fidei* creates conceptual positivity of the triune nature, and overcomes conceptual scepticism about it (e.g. in Schleiermacher's theology by categorizing its conceptualisation as abstract speculation).[28]

The basis and root of the doctrine of the Trinity in revelation, Barth thinks, is "technically doing something that was not done in this way four hundred years ago"[29] by Calvin (and other Reformers). "It was found for the first time not that

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[22] Ibid. p. 341.

[23] Ibid. p. 343.

[24] See F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. III, trans. E. B. Speirs and J. B. Sanderson, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1895, pp. 1ff.

[25] CD I, 1. p. 321.

[26] Ibid. p. 311.

[27] E. Jüngel, op. cit., p. 17.

[28] *The Christian Faith*, pp. 738ff.

[29] CD I, 1. p. 311.

the language could grasp the revelation, but that revelation... could grasp the language".[30] The revelation of God's Word determines our noetic and conceptual possibility of his triune nature. W. Pannenberg interprets Barth's basis in self-revelation as the outcome of Hegel's influence,[31] for "the restriction of the concept 'revelation' to the strict sense of self-revelation is modern."[32] It "goes back to German Idealism, especially to Hegel... Hegel's concept of revelation may well have been mediated to Barth particularly through Marheineke."[33] Pannenberg does not take seriously the irreconcilable difference of self-revelation as found in the thought of Barth and Hegel. Barth's concept of self-revelation is not based on self-evidence in man, like Hegel's; it is not man's inherent knowledge on the basis of an ontological continuity between God and man.[34] Hegel's concept is not based on the biblical witness that stresses the qualitative distinction and discontinuity between God and man, as is Barth's. The operative role of faith in the latter is therefore absent in the former.

Barth criticizes Calvin, with the other Reformers, for allying himself with the early Fathers and the mediaeval Augustinian Schoolmen, and not stressing enough the character of the Trinity as *the* mystery of the faith. As a result, he says, they never speak so impressively of the need for the revelation of God's Word in faith as the only noetic and conceptual possibility of the mysterious Trinity.[35] The biblical witness to the revelation of the triune God, rather than the being of the triune God himself whom the Bible attests, becomes the *princip-*

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[30] CD I, 1. p. 340.

[31] *Jesus—God and Man*, trans. L. L. Wilkins and D. A. Priebe, SCM Press, London, 1968, pp. 127 ff. Cf. H. U. von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, pp. 51 and 58. J. Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, SCM Press, London, 1981, pp. 139ff. W. Hill, *The Three-Personed God*, Catholic Univ. Press, Washington, 1982, pp. 113-4. R. Ahlers, *The Community of Freedom*, pp. 35ff.

[32] Ibid. p. 127.

[33] Ibid.

[34] CD I, 1. pp. 330 and 338.

[35] Ibid. p. 303.

ium cognoscendi (or the determinative source) of their doctrine of the Trinity.[36] The problem with their doctrine is that it could not successfully renounce the *vestigium trinitatis* or *analogia entis*, which argues for the creator-God's triune nature from creaturely biblical language on the basis of the attestation of the former in the latter.

Barth's argument is untenable regarding Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity. He fails to observe the fact that Calvin's doctrine of Scripture is designed to establish God's biblical Word in faith as the only possibility of the doctrine.[37] The doctrine is asserted as an interpretation of the self-revelation of the triune God in the light of his Word which the Holy Spirit reveals and illuminates in the subjectivity of our faith from Scripture.[38] Barth follows Calvin identifying the Word or Son of God with the man Jesus Christ. The revelation of God's Word in this man to which the Bible attests is the criterion of the epistemology and ontology of the triune nature of God. It is the historical and human life of God the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit, and is the only way that God "makes himself the object of human contemplation, human experience, human thought and speech."[39] The Sonship is the primary reference of God's lordship in the biblical revelation.[40] "The doctrine of the Trinity is simply a development of the knowledge that Jesus is the Christ or the Lord."[41]

The systematic context and purpose of Barth's doctrine of the Trinity differ from those of Calvin. Barth explores the biblical revelation of the triune nature of God in the Son, Jesus Christ, from the doctrine. The subject of its inquiry is the second mode of the Trinity, the Son (Word), Jesus Christ. The treatment of the question of God the Father and the Holy Spirit is "a necessary counterpart to the

[36] Ibid. p. 300.

[37] See Chapter I.2.i.3.

[38] See Chapter I.2.ii.1.

[39] CD I, 1. p. 315.

[40] Ibid. p. 319.

[41] Ibid. p. 334.

question of the Son".[42] The christocentric revelation is the source and possibility of Barth's doctrine. This basis for the doctrine gives rise to its christocentric character. Calvin's doctrine demonstrates the triune nature of the creator-God as the Father of the Son (Word), Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. The creator-God the Father, the first person of the Trinity, is the subject of inquiry of the doctrine.[43] Christological and pneumatological knowledge of God is discussed in the context of the trinitarian knowledge of the creator-God as the Father of the Son, Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit. Calvin's doctrine is not christocentric, but fundamentally trinitarian. It is based in the trinitarian revelation of the creator-God as the Father of the Son and the Holy Spirit in Scripture. The Word (the Son) of God the Father in Jesus Christ is the noetic and conceptual possibility of this trinitarian revelation.

2.ii. The One God in the Trinity

ii.1. The Unity of God in his Self-Repetition

The prime concern of Barth's doctrine of the Trinity differs from that of Calvin. It is the unity of the Trinity in its distinction[44] while Calvin's is the distinction of the Trinity in its unity. Barth sees God the Father as Revealer, the Son as Revelation and the Holy Spirit as Revealedness, and affirms the unity of the threefold structure of revelation as the basis for the unity of the Trinity.[45] There can be no suggestion of separation in this. The threefold revelation is the one action of God. This understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity is determinative for Barth's christocentric concept of revelation, his doctrine of revelation.

This is elaborated by deploying the doctrine of the threefold *repetitio aeterni-*

[42] Ibid. p. 314.

[43] See Chapter I.2.ii.1.

[44] "The claim that the Church with its doctrine of the Trinity was defending the recognition of God's unity". Ibid. p. 351.

[45] Ibid. pp. 229-332.

tatis in aeternitate (repetition of eternity for eternity).[46] Barth defines the Trinity as the threefold repetition and revelation of the one eternal God in and by himself, but never *extra se*.[47] The Trinity is the threefold repetition and revelation of the same being rather than the different beings of God; they are *alius-alius-alius*, not *aliud-aliud-aliud* of the same God.[48] The doctrine accentuates the immutability[49] and indissolubility of the one eternal being and subject of God in its threefold repetition and revelation in time and space, and confirms the unity of the Trinity in the unity of the eternal being of God. The indissoluble subject of God is decisive in preserving the indissoluble objectivity of revelation in the subjectivity of our faith in the process of knowing.[50]

Barth, like Augustine, postulates the oneness of God from the perspective of a numerical unity or identity of the three different elements of the Trinity,[51] although Augustine, unlike Barth, does not oppose its postulation from a constitutive (or generic) unity of the three different elements (persons) of the Trinity.[52] This fact distances him from Calvin who upholds their constitutive (or generic) unity or identity in the one God,[53] as the Cappadocians do.[54] The unity of the Trinity is the basis for Barth (and Calvin) to renounce subordination and modalism. "The Son and the Spirit are of one essence with the Father"[55] in its unity. This unity undercuts the Platonic dualistic interpretation of reality of God *in se*

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[46] R. D. Williams, "Barth on the Triune God," in *Karl Barth: his Theological Method*, ed. S. W. Sykes, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1979, p. 166.

[47] Op. cit., p. 349.

[48] Ibid. p. 350.

[49] Ibid. p. 350.

[50] Ibid. p. 382. James Brown articulates this point (*Subject and Object in Modern Theology*, SCM Press, London, 1955, pp. 140).

[51] Ibid. p. 350.

[52] See *On the Trinity*, trans. Marcus Dods, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1873, VII-XI.

[53] See Chapter I.2.ii.4.

[54] D. Brown argues for the generic (or constitutive) and numerical analysis of the Trinity, respectively, from the Augustinian and Cappadocian tradition (*The Divine Trinity*, pp. 242-4 and 292), and Barth's coherence with the Augustinian tradition of numerical analysis (Ibid. p. 244).

[55] CD I, 1. p. 393.

for himself and *ad extra* for us,[56] and thereby the resultant subordinationism and modalism. Modalism and subordination ignore the revelation of the total being of God in each mode (person) of the Trinity to us.[57]

The emphasis of Barth's doctrine of the Trinity is on the one essence of God in the Trinity. The acting subject and personhood and personality are attributed to the one essence of God (the divine $ουσια$). The attribution attempts not only to accommodate the modern perception of the person as a self-conscious independent individual subject, but also to resist modern naturalistic and pantheistic interpretation of God[58] (e.g. in Hegelian philosophy).[59] Understanding the personhood of God in this way leads to rejection of the traditional designation of the Trinity as three persons, which implies tritheism that proposes three independent divine beings. Barth redefines the concept of person as mode or way of being (*Seinsweise*), and regards the Trinity as three different modes (or forms or ways) of the one being of God.

The major thrust of Barth's doctrine of the Trinity is to advocate the self-repetition and revelation of God in three different modes of one eternal and personal being with three different times (beginning for the Father, middle for the Son and end for the Holy Spirit), so that it may highlight the immutability of this being in order to defend the unity of the Trinity in one personal and eternal being. The traditional doctrine of coinherence or cicumincession or perichoresis ($περιχωρησις$) is deployed to stress a dynamic nature of unity of the Trinity.[60] It upholds the simultaneous movement of all three modes of God's being in his action and being, and eliminates any suggestion of a fourth reality of God, which proposes a quaternary rather than a trinitarian God.

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[56] Ibid. p. 374.

[57] Ibid. p. 381.

[58] Ibid. p. 349.

[59] Ibid. pp. 330 and 343.

[60] Ibid. pp. 370, 375, 394 and 396.

ii.2. The Rejection of Ontological Plurality

The radical aspect of Barth's redefinition of the traditional concept of person for the Trinity is this. It negates the distinctive being (quality) of each mode of God in the Trinity, as differing from that of the two others in their common unity. There is no attempt to argue for it from the external distinctive work of each mode of God in the Trinity. The rejection of the distinctive individual beings (qualities) of the Trinity entails rejection of the distinctive work of each member of the Trinity. The different works of God (e.g. creation, reconciliation and redemption) are no longer considered as the works of the three distinctive persons, but of the one personal God, namely as the co-operative works of the whole Trinity.

> God is one both in His eternal truth and also in the truth assigned and appropriate to us. It would be pagan mythology to present the work of God in the form of a dramatic entry and exist of now one and now another of the divine persons, of the surging up and down of half or totally individualised powers or forms or ideas, of a shifting coexistence and competition of the three hypostases... But the line has been drawn; to the involution and convolution of the three modes of being in the essence of God there corresponds exactly their involution and convolution in His work... Just as Scripture is to be read in context as the witness to God's revelation, just as, e.g., Good Friday, Easter and Pentecost can only say together what they have to say, so we must say that all God's work, as we are to grasp it on the basis of His revelation, is one act which occurs simultaneously and in concert in all His three modes of being... *Per appropriationem* this act or this attribute must now be given prominence in relation to this or that mode of being in order that this can be described as such. But only *per appropriationem* may this happen, and in no case, therefore, to the forgetting or denying of God's presence in all His modes of being, in His total being and act even over against us.[61]

Barth violates the intention of the traditional (i.e. Calvin's)[62] doctrine of appropriation, that is, to recognise the distinctive (or appropriate) work of each member of the Trinity (e.g. the Father's creation, the Son's reconciliation and the Spirit's redemption) in order to emphasize its distinctive beings (qualities). The denial

[61] Ibid. pp. 374-5.

[62] See Chapter I.2.ii.2.

of distinctive works and beings (personal qualities) of the Trinity invites a serious accusation that Barth's doctrine of the Trinity is "Christian monotheism"[63] or "neomodalism".[64]

The reason for this accusation is not that Barth's doctrine of the Trinity falls into the ancient kind of modalism. In fact, it opposes the ancient modalism which treats the three modes of God's one being merely as his reflections or aspects, suggesting a fourth reality behind the revelation of these three modes.[65] The entire being of the personal God, for Barth, is revealed or presented in each mode of his being. The three modes are not something which is alien, but essential or proper to God's personal being by his eternal decree[66] both in himself and in relation to the world and man.[67] The endorsement of both the essential and economic Trinity is apparent here. The former is always argued from the latter,[68] but not *vice versa* due to its incomprehensible and transcendent nature [69]

Barth defends his use of the concept of mode or way of being (*Seinsweise*) in the light of its traditional Cappadocian use, and identifies his use of this concept, for instance, with Calvin's use of subsistence (*subsistentia*) for the traditional concept of person (*persona*).[70] There is, however, a sharp difference between them regarding the way they are used, which Barth is unwilling to highlight. Calvin's use does not nullify the meaning of the individual personhood of the

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[63] J. Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, SCM Press, London, 1981, p. 144.

[64] W. Hill, *The Three-Personed God*, Catholic Univ. Press, Washington, 1982, p. 255.

[65] "The doctrine of the Trinity means on the other side, as the rejection of Modalism, the express declaration that the three moments are not alien to God's being as God. The position is not that we have to seek the true God beyond these three moments in a higher being in which He is not Father, Son and Spirit. The revelation of God and therefore His being as Father, Son and Spirit is not an economy which is foreign to His essence and which is bounded as it were above and within, so that we have to ask about the hidden Fourth if we are really to ask about God." CD I, 1. p. 382.

[66] CD II, 2. p. 50.

[67] Op. cit., p. 360.

[68] Ibid. p. 371.

[69] CD II, 1. 273.

[70] CD I, 1. pp. 355-360.

Trinity,[71] as Barth's use does. Calvin presents the persons of the Trinity as the ones who subsist or exist in the one essence of God. The emphasis of his doctrine of the Trinity rests on the distinctive individual persons (beings or qualities) of the Trinity in the one essence of God. Barth considers the one essence of God as the one who subsists or exists in the Trinity.[72] His doctrine of the Trinity stresses the one personal essence of God in its threefold revelation and revelation, which respectively attribute the acting Subject of God in revelation (action) to the three persons (subsistences or modes) and to the one personal being of God.

The effect is crucial for the ontology of the triune God. It leads to the negation of the distinctive and individual persons and beings (and subjects) of the Trinity in the one God. Barth's negation remains problematic by comparison with the intention of the traditional (i.e. the Cappadocians'[73] or Calvin's[74]) doctrine of the Trinity which presents the oneness of God as the constitutive unity of the three particular persons (beings or qualities) of the Trinity. C. Welch is wrong to say that "it must also be emphasised that this [Barth's] revision of terminology does not indicate a change in basic theological intention."[75] The effects are seen in the concept of revelation. Barth considers the one personal God the Father as the sole subject, the Son as the object and the Holy Spirit as the effect of revelation. For Calvin, however, each person of the Trinity is the subject, object and effect of revelation.

The common ground between Barth and Calvin is that neither gives logical priority to the one essence of God over the Trinity, or *vice versa*; both adhere

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[71] See the end of Chapter I.2.ii.2. Cf. L. Hodgson, *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, Nisbet, London, 1943, p. 167.

[72] C. Welch, op. cit., p. 191.

[73] J. N. D. Kelly points out that the intention of the Cappadocians' conceptual usage of τροπος ὑπαρξεως (mode of being) is not to negate the distinctive quality and work of each mode or person of the Trinity, but to affirm it (*Early Christian Doctrines*, Adam and Charles Black, London, 1958, pp. 265ff). D. Brown argues for the Cappadocians success in defending the three persons (beings and subjects) of the Trinity in the one essence of God (Op. cit., pp. 286ff).

[74] See Chapter I.2.ii.2.

[75] Op. cit., p. 192. The bracket is mine.

to epistemological realism. For Barth, we encounter the one personal God in faith[76] in the event of the threefold repetition and revelation and work of his being.[77] The biblical revelation presents the same personal subject of God as the Father in his self-veiling and holiness, as the Son in his self-unveiling and mercy and as the Holy Spirit in his self-impartation and love.[78] The Trinity is the self-corresponding difference of God *in se*,[79] the intra-possibility of God.[80] The distinction of the Trinity is not a matter external to us, but internal to God *in se*. For Calvin, it is both internal and external matter of God in himself and for us We encounter each person and subject of the Trinity in faith by the revelation in his distinctive work (of creation, redemption and sanctification). The unity of the Trinity, the one essence of God, is the internal reality or matter of God *in se*, and is thus transcendent and incomprehensible to our cognition. It is viewed from its revelation in the temporal fulfillment of the eternal will of God in the Trinity.

2.iii. The Trinity in the One God

iii.1. The Threefold Order of the Trinity

The unity of the triune God which Barth advocates does not denote a singularity or an isolation. It includes a threefold distinction of the one personal God.[81] Barth, like Calvin, distinguishes between the one eternal essence of God *in se* and his threefold (beginning, middle and end) temporal Trinity *ad extra*.[82] Barth argues for the distinction of the Trinity from the three different aspects of

[76] CD I, 1. p. 349.
[77] Ibid. pp. 358-9 and 374-375
[78] Ibid. p. 381.
[79] Ibid. p. 362.
[80] Ibid. p. 394-5.
[81] Ibid. p. 353.
[82] Ibid. p. 371.

revelation.[83] The distinctive threefold revelation or mode of God is genetic[84] to his one personal being; it is irremovable. The three modes of God's one being in the Trinity cannot be exchanged and confounded.[85]

Barth follows Calvin in recognising the functional and temporal distinction and order of the Trinity in its unity. They maintain the doctrine of the *principium* of God the Father,[86] and of the *filioque*,[87] and designate the Father as beginning, the Son as middle and the Holy Spirit as end of all things of God. The Son (the middle) is generated from God the Father (the beginning), and the Holy Spirit (end) proceeds from God the Father and the Son.[88] There is no Son (middle) and the Holy Spirit (end) without the will of the eternal God the Father in the beginning. The distinction of the Trinity is orientated to their reciprocal relation. Its basis in their unity is significant. It forbids any suggestion of the Trinity as a notional creation of God the Father. The unity of the Trinity denotes that the Son or the Holy Spirit is God himself with the Father.

The doctrine of the *principium* of God the Father is based in the revelation of his Word in Jesus Christ. We can perceive the fatherhood of God only in and through the revelation of his sonship in Jesus Christ. Barth links the deity of God the Father with the concept of his objective revelation, Jesus Christ. This link, W. Pannenberg declares, "constitutes one of Barth's greatest theological

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[83] "The threeness of the one God as we have met it in our analysis of the concept of revelation, the threeness of revealer, revelation and being revealed, the threeness of God's holiness, mercy and love, the threeness of the God of Good Friday, Easter and Whitesunday, the threeness of God the Creator, God the Reconciler and God the Redeemer—all this can and should, as we shall soon show, draw our attention and serve as a pointer to the problem of threeness in God." Ibid. pp. 361-2.

[84] Ibid. p. 363.

[85] Ibid. p. 360.

[86] Ibid. p. 393.

[87] Ibid. pp. 477ff.

[88] "According to Scripture God is manifest and is God in the very mode or way that He is in those relations to Himself. He brings forth Himself and in two distinctive ways He is brought forth by Himself. He possesses Himself as father, i.e., pure Giver, as Son, i.e., Receiver and Giver, and as Spirit, i.e., pure Receiver. He is the beginning without which there is no middle and no end, the middle which can be only on the basis of the beginning and which there is no end, and the end which is based wholly and utterly on the beginning." Ibid. p. 364.

contributions."[89] It enables us to see the possibility of the doctrine of Jesus's divinity and the doctrine of the Trinity in God's revelation in Jesus.[90] The christocentric interpretation of the means and the content of the revelation of God the Father leads to rejection of the possibility of his direct revelation in creation (e.g. in Calvin's theology) and its theological relevance. The rejection is the decisive reason for ignoring the possibility of the dynamic and concrete lordship of the creator-God the Father for all (saved and unsaved) creatures without suggesting the possibility of any natural theology. Faith is indispensable for the noetic and conceptual possibility of the self-revelation of the creator-God the Father in creation and its dynamic and concrete encounter with all (saved and unsaved) creatures.

Barth recognises God the Father as Creator exclusively in his self-revelation in Jesus. Christ's death on Good Friday opens up the true way of knowing God the Father as Creator. His creatorship is perceptible only and truly in his creation of a new human life of Jesus from death on Easter,[91] and of our eternal life in faith.[92] The three modes of God in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are consequently expressed as Good Friday (Creator), as Easter (Reconciler) and as Pentecost (Redeemer).[93] It is worthwhile to notice that Barth does not consider each mode (person) of the Trinity as Creator, or as Reconciler or as Redeemer. The creative, reconciling and redemptive works of God belong to his one personal being rather than to each mode of his being, namely each member of the Trinity,[94]

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[89] *Jesus—God and Man*, p. 130.

[90] Ibid.

[91] CD I, 1. p. 387.

[92] Ibid. p. 392.

[93] Ibid. p. 332.

[94] "Not the Father alone, then, is God the Creator, but also the Son and the Spirit with Him. And the Father is not only God the Creator, but with the Son and the Spirit He is also God the Reconciler and God the Redeemer. The very knowledge of the intratrinitarian particularity of the name of Father is thus a guarantee of the unity of God which would be endangered by regard for the particularity of God's revelation as the Creator and our Father if this were not guided by this apparently – but only apparently – very speculative intratrinitarian insight." Ibid. pp. 394-5.

as for Calvin. "The triunity does not mean that three parts of God operate alongside one another in three different functions."[95] "He is and remains God *unus et individuus* in His work as in His essence";[96] *opera trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa.* The one eternal God repeats himself for himself (*repetitio aeternitatis in aeternitate*) in each mode of his being in different times (beginning, middle and end).

The doctrine of the *principium* of God the Father is crucial for Barth and Calvin to defend the unity of the trinitarian being and action of God *in se* and *ad extra.* It presents the eternal and personal will and subject of God in the Father (beginning) as the source and author of the temporal (middle and end) modes and actions of the Son and the Holy Spirit.[97] The temporal and eternal unity of God the Father is decisive in opposing a two-source theory of the Godhead, one from the eternal being of God the Father and another from his temporal mode. The theory presupposes a fourth reality of God beyond the triune God the Father, entails a quaternary notion of God.

The doctrine invites serious criticism. T. F. Torrance rejects the doctrines of the *principium* and *filioque* due to their subordinationism. They are incompatible with the doctrine of *perichoresis* ($\pi\epsilon\rho\iota\chi\omega\rho\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$) in the doctrine of *homoousion* ($o\mu oo\upsilon\sigma\iota o\nu$),[98] which affirms the generation of each person or mode of the Trinity from the other two in their ontological unity, and resists any degree of subordinationism of the Trinity. R. W. Jenson complains that the doctrine of *principium* shows the orientation of Barth's theology to the past. It denies the derivation of the Father (beginning) and the Son (middle) from the Holy Spirit (end), and fails

[95] Ibid. p. 394.

[96] Ibid. p. 395.

[97] Ibid. pp. 389ff.

[98] Torrance interprets Barth's (Calvin's) subordinationism in his doctrine of the *principium* and the *filioque* as the influence of the Cappadocians, Gregory Nazianzen (*Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, T and T Clark, Edinburgh, 1990, pp. 131-2 and 208-9). Barth seems to confirm Torrance's point here (CD I, 1. pp. 477ff). L. Hodgson also rejects these doctrines due to their subordinationism (*The Doctrine of the Trinity*, pp. 171ff).

to allow the understanding of new things about God in the future, the futurity of God in the Holy Spirit.[99] R. D. Williams confirms Barth's neglect of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity. Barth (and Calvin) presents the particular mode (person) of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity as the union of the Father and the Son in love.[100] This union or their "relation in itself cannot (by definition) constitute for us a third term independent of Father and Son."[101]

Williams overlooks that Barth's (Calvin's) presentation here is to highlight the particular function and action of God in the Holy Spirit. It is not designed to express the existence of the Holy Spirit itself, as he implies. Barth's (Calvin's) assertion of the procession (existence) of the Holy Spirit (the third mode) from God the Father and the Son (the first and second modes of his being) constitute for us a third term independent of Father and Son. Torrance does not realise that the doctrine of the *principium* and the *filioque* can be justifiable on biblical and theological grounds. Their doctrine is essential to accommodate the biblical description of God the Father as the Sender of the Son (e.g. in *John* 3:16) and the Holy Spirit, and the Father and the Son as the co-Senders of the Holy Spirit (e.g. in *John* 14:16-17). Some kind of order in the Trinity appears to be vital to defend the distinction of each member of the Trinity in its unity. The real distinction of each member is hardly perceptible from the mutual equality of each other. That is why Barth (and Calvin) confines the validity of the doctrine of

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[99] "The temporality of the triune God is thoroughly worked out by Barth... Yet... the shadow of religious direction to the past, of the 'analogous' notion of eternity, is dark and well-defined. The 'Middle' and the 'End' are rightly said to come from the 'Beginning'—but nothing is said that without the Spirit the Father and the Son would not occur. In every nuance of his formulation, Barth displays the doctrine that the Father is 'the fount of the Trinity.' But that the Trinity also has a goal in the Spirit remains a mere occasional assertion. This gathering to the past, to the Beginning in which all has already been decided pervades all Barth's thinking." *God After God*, p. 173-4. C. Gunton fully endorses Jenson's argument, whilst he proposes Barth's doctrine of election as the major cause of the orientation. Jenson regards it as Barth's neglect of the role of the Holy Spirit (*Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1978, p. 182). His proposal will be assessed in a appropriate place.

[100] CD II, 1. p. 669f.

[101] "Barth on the Triune God," in *Karl Barth: Studies of his Theological Method*, pp. 181-182.

perichorhsis (*περιχωρνσις*) to the unity of the Trinity, the doctrine of ***homoousion*** (*ομοουσιον*).

Jenson does not take seriously the fact that it is chronologically impossible to talk about the derivation of the beginning (the Father) and the middle (the Son) from the end (the Holy Spirit). The beginning (the Father) and the middle (the Son) move towards the end (the Holy Spirit) of the one eternal God. The theological demand for a totally new futurity of God in the Holy Spirit, one unknown to God the Father, is unjust to his eternal omnipotence that wills and knows his future event in himself in the beginning. All past, present and future events of God should therefore be understood as the threefold fulfillment and revelation of his eternal will, as Barth and Calvin rightly do,[102] so that the threefold (beginning, middle and end) temporality of the Trinity is arguable from their eternal unity. The self-sufficient or grounded nature[103] of God's freedom is the basis for Barth (and Calvin) to defend his mysterious or hidden futurity in his threefold temporal revelation to us and for our hope.[104]

iii.2. The Formal and Relational Distinction of the Trinity

The significant divergence between Barth and Calvin emerges in their respective assertion of formal and qualitative distinctions in the Trinity. Calvin considers the inherent distinctive temporal qualities (beginning, middle and end) of the Trinity in the one eternal essence of God as the basis for their mutual distinction and relation.[105] Barth's basing of their distinction in the threefold structure of revelation makes it impossible for him to talk about it as a qualitative or material distinction in the one being of God.[106] It confines the concept

[102] Their doctrine of election is designed to demonstrate the ground of the threefold actions and modes (persons) of God's being in his free eternal will.

[103] CD I, 1. pp. 306-307.

[104] "His revelation does not mean in the slightest a loss of His mystery... Even as He gives Himself He remains free to give Himself afresh or to refuse Himself. This His new self-giving remains man's only hope." Ibid. p. 324.

[105] See Chapter I.2.ii.2 for my argument of the justification of Calvin's basis here.

[106] "If we have rejected the possibility of deriving the difference in the three modes of being from

of their distinction to the continuous event of the threefold temporal revelation (action) of the one eternal being of God, and leads to assertion of their formal relational distinction. The middle-event of Revelation (the Son) occurs only because of the beginning-event of the Revealer (the Father), and the end-event of Revealedness (the Holy Spirit) occurs only because of the other two. The three distinctive temporal modes of God and their reciprocal relations are the genetic and irremovable forms and becoming of his one eternal being.[107]

The relational structure of God's being makes his threefold temporal revelation, and the becoming of the Trinity, proper to his eternal and personal being. It offers a concrete view of God's being. None of the modes of being exists in abstraction from the other two. "Each mode of God's being *becoming* what it *is* only together *with* the two other modes of being... God's being as the being of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is thus a *being in becoming.*"[108] Barth explicitly develops a dynamic and temporal notion of the being of God, which Calvin implies by upholding the doctrine of perichoresis ($\pi\epsilon\rho\iota\chi\omega\rho\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$). The being of God is not presented as a static and unmoved and unchanged and timeless eternal being in and for itself. His eternal being is the constant temporal becoming of the Father (beginning), the Son (middle) and Spirit (end). "Thus the becoming proper to God's being is not constituted by temporality, but temporality is constituted by the becoming."[109] The temporal becoming of the eternal

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the material differences in the thought of God contained in the concept of revelation, because in the last resort there can be no question of any such differences, we can and must say now that formal distinctions in the three modes of being—that which makes them *modes* of being—can indeed be derived from the concept of revelation. These are the distinctions in their relation to one another." CD I, 1. p. 363.

[107] Ibid.

[108] E. Jüngel, op. cit., p. 62. He interprets and paraphrases Barth's relational notion of God's being as a being in becoming (Ibid. Preface, viii and p. 89) in the light of Hegel's thought that presents God's being as a concrete historical process and event (Ibid. pp. 3, 32 and 101), and differentiates it from the classical notion of God's being as a substance which neither becomes nor relates to something other (Ibid. pp. 89ff). Cf. C. Gunton repeats Jüngel's Hegelian interpretation and paraphrase without critical assessment (*Becoming and Being*, pp. 2ff, 127-137, and 215ff).

[109] Ibid. p. 100 n.

being of God is his free and sovereign lordship in revelation.[110]

Van Til is wrong to claim that Barth ascribes some kind of additional growing reality of God to his being (potentiality) in his temporal revelation and becoming (actuality),[111] as Hegel does[112] by regarding the historical process of the world and man as a necessary condition for the existence of absolute spirit (God).[113] The true being of God is exhaustively revealed in history. R. Jenson's proposal that "only put *Jesus* in place of Hegel's "world," and you have the doctrine of Barth's *Church Dogmatics*"[114] in Volume I.1 (including its doctrine of the Trinity). His proposal appears to be very naive. For Barth (and Calvin), God is absolutely self-sufficient[115] in and for himself, and is "independent of everything that is not He."[116] The temporality of God in his self-revelation and becoming in the man Jesus is the free affirmation of what is already in and for himself.[117] It can never be additional, but generic and proper to his eternal being by his free eternal will

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[110] CD I, 1. pp. 316-20.

[111] "God's potentiality is identical with His actuality means for Barth the reverse of that which it means in the Reformed Faith. In the latter it indicates the doctrine of the ontological triunity, God's complete self-sufficiency apart from the process of time-created existence. For Barth it means God's freedom to grow through identification with the process of time-existence. God is said to be exhaustively revealed in history. By that Barth would have us to see that there is no logical necessity inherent in reality that would keep it from developing. God can wholly deny Himself as a transcendent being in order that, through this denial, He may add to His being." *The New Modernism*, p. 278.

[112] "According to Hegel 'concrete' is derived from *'concrescere'* [to grow together], so that for the designation of this subject matter there could be no better word. Hegel sought in this way to think of God as concrete being." E. Jungel, op., cit., p. 32.

[113] "Spirit exists for the spirit for which it does exist, only in so far as it reveals and differentiates itself, and this is the eternal Idea, thinking Spirit, Spirit in the element of its freedom." *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. 3, p. 8. cf. Vol. 2, pp. 65ff, 291ff and 327ff.

[114] *The Triune Identity*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1982, p. 136.

[115] CD I, 1. p. 306. Cf. CD II, 2. p. 166.

[116] CD II, 1. p. 308.

[117] "The freedom in which God exists means that He does not need His own being in order to be who He is: because he already has His own being and is Himself; because nothing can accrue to Him from Himself which has not or was not already; because, therefore, His being in its self-realisation or the actuality of His being answers to no external pressure but is only the affirmation of His own plenitude and a self-realization in freedom... we do not say that God creates, produces or originates Himself. On the contrary, we say that (as manifest and eternally actual in the relationship of Father, Son and Holy Ghost) He is the One who already has and is in Himself... He cannot 'need' His own being because He affirms it in being who He is. By existing in this way He is not subject to any necessity, as though He must first exist in order to be who He is... But by His existence He simply reaffirms Himself." Ibid. p. 306. cf. I, 1. p. 358-9.

(election).[118] "God therefore does not first become in the faith," as E. Jüngel says, "in so far God, in the self-relatedness of his being in becoming, is already ours in advance."[119]

The deficiency of Jüngel's Hegelian interpretation and paraphrase of Barth's doctrine of the Trinity[120] is that lacks criticism. Jungel is aware of the weakness of his early interpretation of the doctrine; he admits that the doctrine suffers from a certain degree of formalism, which is overcome in Volume IV of *Church Dogmatics*, as it is related more to the human temporality of Jesus Christ in reconciliation.[121] He does not realise that Barth's trinitarian definition still has a serious problem in relating to the traditional (i.e. Calvin's) and biblical view of the distinctiveness of the Trinity. It fails to apply the individual human personhood (quality and subject) of Jesus to which the Bible attests to the distinctiveness of the Trinity, as Calvin does. The attribution of the personal subject of God to his one essence in the doctrine of the Trinity in Volume I.1 is not altered throughout *Church Dogmatics.*

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[118] "The true God... is the object of thinking which is conditioned in a way conformable with His self-revelation, is of course, the sovereign Lord... There is nothing which is efficacious or significant or even existent except only by His will. There is nothing which in respect both of its being and its nature is not predestinated by Him... If we are to lay hold of the concept of the true God, we shall do so only as we conceive of Him in His *dominium*, in His actuality as Lord and Ruler. We shall do so only as we conceive of Him in the determination and limitation which are peculiar to Him, which He has not taken upon Himself as something additional, in His relationship with the world or as an accommodation to it, but which are the characteristics of His presence and activity in the world because they are the determination and limitation proper to His own eternal being, so assuredly has He decided for them by the decree of the eternal will." CD II, 2. p. 50.

[119] Op. cit., p. 101 n.

[120] Rolf Ahlers claims that "Hegel's thought breathes throughout Jungel's significant work" (*The Community of Freedom*, p. 46.) including his earlier work on *Gottes Sein ist im Werden* of 1965 (p. 343).

[121] "One of the weaknesses of the marvelous trinitarian architecture which defines Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics* in both in its dogmatic structure and its individual systematic argument is that the *foundation* of the doctrine of the Trinity in the prolegomena can lead to the misunderstanding that the knowledge of the Trinity of God was deduced from the axiomatically presupposed proposition 'God reveals himself as the Lord' with the help of formal differentiation of subject, object, and predicate in the revelatory event. Such a misunderstanding is avoided when the humanity of Jesus is not only interpreted dogmatically within the context of faith in the triune God (see chiefly CD, IV.2), but faith in the triune God is first presented as dogmatically founded in the context of the humanity of Jesus." *God as The Mystery of The World*, trans. D. I. Guder, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1983, pp. 351-2. n.

Barth's suggestion of the man Jesus as a mode or form of the personal being and subject of God undoubtedly distorts the biblical witness to the self-conscious human quality (individuality subjectivity and personhood) of Jesus, and hopelessly fails to defend the individual distinctiveness of Jesus in the triune God. This appears to be the decisive reason for Barth's failure to defend the individual temporal qualities of the Son and the Father in the one eternal being of God. The revelation of God's Word in the man Jesus is the criterion of Barth's epistemology and ontology of the triune God.

C. Gunton spots the problem and asserts that Barth fails to reclaim the relational and mutual constitution of each person of the Trinity with other persons. His failure stems from "the ravages of modern individualism"[122] that leads to Barth's insistence on the one individual divine person. Gunton does not, however, mind Barth's rejection (of Calvin's claim) of inherent temporal qualities (persons) of the Trinity in the one eternal essence of God, for he follows Barth in presenting the individual distinction of the Trinity purely from their continuous relation and action (revelation and becoming) to one another.[123] He (like Jungel) does not realise that the rejection is problematic in asserting the identification of the trinitarian potentiality of God *in se* with his trinitarian actuality and revelation and becoming *ad extra.* The failure of this identification could lead to the introduction of a new element of God (e.g. the personhood of each member of the Trinity) to his being (potentiality) in his trinitarian becoming and revelation (actuality).[124] He and Barth deny this, however.

[122] *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1991, p. 164.

[123] "To be personal, as we have seen, is not to be an individual centre of consciousness or something like that – although that may be part of the matter – but to be one whose being consists in relations of mutual constitution with other persons. That is one of the glories of trinitarian thinking, for it enables unique and fruitful insight into the nature of being – all being – in relation." Ibid. pp. 164-5. "It does seem that Calvin here commits the characteristic sin of Western trinitarianism, of seeing the persons not as constituting the being of God by their mutual relations but as in some way inhering in being that is in some sense prior to them... In general, however, the best way to define the person is ostensively, by indicating where persons are to be found and the way that they are conceived to be and act. That is what has been attempted in different ways in this book." p. 170.

[124] My argument about Barth's failure to eliminate the introduction of a new element of God to his

The trinitarian distinction of God *ad extra* should be based on his trinitarian qualities (persons) *in se*, as Calvin affirms.[125] The trinitarian qualities (persons) of God *in se* should be argued from their revelation. They are transcendent and incomprehensible to our cognition. It is hard for us to defend the real distinction of each member of the Trinity without recognising their distinctive temporal qualities (personal subjects and wills) in the one eternal quality (personal subject and will) of God, as revealed to us. The distinctive temporal qualities (personal subjects and wills) of the Trinity are arguable from the distinctive human quality (personal subject and will) of the historical man Jesus to which the Bible attests.

2.iv. The dialectical unity of the triune God

iv.1. Impersonal Dialectic

The untenability of Barth's distinction of the Trinity in the light of the biblical and theological tradition leads J. Moltmann to attributes it to the influence of the Hegelian philosophical logic of reflection.[126] Barth's treatment of the Trinity as the threefold repetition and revelation of the one being of God is logically equivalent to the threefold movement and reflection of absolute spirit or idea

being in his trinitarian becoming and revelation differs from Van Til's. It is based on Barth's rejection of the trinitarian qualities (persons) of God in his inner being prior to his trinitarian action *ad extra*. Van Til's argument relies on the fact that Barth views the ontological triunity of God only from its revelation in history. I reject his argument, because Barth upholds the pre-historical existence of the triune nature of God in his trinitarian action.

[125] See Chapter I.2.ii.2.

[126] "The doctrine of the Trinity cannot be a matter of establishing the same thing three times. To view the three persons merely as a triple repetition of one and the same God would be somewhat empty and futile. Barth's Idealist heritage finally betrays itself in the use of the reflection structure to secure God's subjectivity, sovereignty, self-hood and personality... It is through self-distinction and self-reflection that God shows himself to be the absolute subject. That is the reflection structure of absolute subjectivity. A reflection of subjectivity like this has not necessarily anything whatsoever to do with the biblical testimony to the history of God. The notion of God's reflexively differentiated subjectivity and self-revelation can be conceived even without any biblical reference at all. Consequently Barth's new approach in the *Church Dogmatics* in 1932 is understandable. It was necessary. Christian belief must begin, not with the God who reveals himself, the Father, but with the concrete and specific revelation, the Son, the Godhead Jesus Christ. But this idea of revelation of the God who reveals himself was developed out of that reflection logic." *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, pp. 141-2. Cf. W. Pannenberg, *Grundfragen Systematischer Theologie*, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Gesammelt Aufsatze Band 2, Gŏttingen, 1980, pp. 101-2. T. Bradshaw, *Trinity and Ontology*, Rutherford House Books, Edinburgh, 1988, pp. 79-80.

(thesis, antithesis and synthesis). The core-purpose of this reflection structure is to secure the absolute unity of the threefold movement of God (absolute spirit or idea) in order to advocate the immutability of his (or its) one being as subject of this movement. The distinctive individual quality (being) of each member of the Trinity, apart from their common eternal being, is thereby dismissed.

Moltmann's logical and philosophical interpretation is weak. It is unjust not only to the intention of Barth's trinitarian definition, but also to its actual form (logic) and content. Moltmann fails to see that Barth rejects Hegel's trinitarian idea of absolute spirit. It is not only because it is based on its self-evidence in man's consciousness[127] and speculative[128] thought, but also because it fails to maintain the threefold differentiation of God (absolute spirit) *in se*.[129] Hegel's absolute spirit ultimately abolishes its inner threefold differentiation in its absolute oneness.[130] The dialectical process of the temporal threeness and the eternal oneness of absolute spirit *in se* in history[131] will be negated in the eternal future, after which Pannenberg criticizes,[132] Hegel's philosophy logically does not

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[127] CD I, 1. p. 330.

[128] "This Idea is the speculative or philosophical Idea, *i.e.*, the rational element, and inasmuch as it is reached by thinking, it is the act of thinking upon what is rational." *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. 3, p. 17.

[129] Op. cit., pp. 338 and 343.

[130] "If the element of difference were left remaining, there would be contradiction, and if this difference were permanent, then finitude would arise. Both are independent in reference to each other, and they are in relation to each other as well. It is not the nature of the Idea to allow the difference to remain; but, on the contrary, its nature is just to resolve or cancel the difference. God posits Himself in this element of difference, but He also abolishes it as well. When accordingly we attach predicates to God in such a way as to make them particular, our first concern is to harmonise this contradiction. This is an external act, the act of our reflection, and consequently, owing to the fact that it is external and takes place *in us*, and is not the content of the Divine Idea, it follows that the contradictions cannot be harmonised. The Idea in its very nature implies the abolition of the contradiction. Its essential content and nature consists in the very fact that it posits this difference and cancels it absolutely, and this represents the living nature of the Idea itself." *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. 3, pp. 13-4.

[131] "To enumerate the moments of the Idea as three units appears to be something quite ingenuous and natural... It is understanding alone that is always haunted by this idea of the absolute independence of the unit or One, this idea of absolute separation and rupture. If, on the contrary, we regard the matter from the point of view of logic, we see that the One has an inner *dialectic* movement, and is not truly independent." *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. 3, p. 23.

[132] *Basic Questions in Theology*, Vol. I, SCM Press, London, 1970, p. 220 and *Basic Questions in Theology*, Vol. II, SCM Press, London, 1971, pp. 22-23.

have any room for the futurity of our finite beings in the present of eternal and absolute spirit.

The beauty of the trinitarian definition of Barth and Calvin is that it maintains the dialectical distinction of the temporal threeness and the eternal oneness of God[133] without relinquishing their dialectical unity and relationship. They are faithful to the biblical revelation of the qualitative difference between the creaturely human temporality of Jesus and his divine eternity in their unity. The threefold temporality of the Trinity remains as generic and proper to the one eternal being of God.[134] One crucial weakness of their trinitarian definition, which prominent contemporary trinitarian definitions repeat and ignore,[135] is this. It fails to develop a personal and rational concept of the whole being of God, namely the temporal and eternal beings in their unity. In other words, these definitions are indifferent to the personal and rational concept of the unity and relationship between the temporal Trinity and its eternal essence (unity).

The major reason for the weakness is that they do not go beyond the framework of the traditional trinitarian definition. Like Augustine and the Cappadocians, Barth and Calvin attribute the acting subjectivity and personhood of God to his one eternal essence and to the threefold temporal Trinity, respectively. They ignore the possibility of the personal quality of the whole being of God, namely the one eternal being (essence) of God and his temporal Trinity. This possibility is arguable from the biblical revelation of the personal and rational dialogue between the temporal human person of Jesus, the Son (his conscious[136]

[133] "Our statement concerning the comprehensibility of Father, Son and Spirit in God's work obviously requires—we are now enquiring into the unity of the three modes of being *ad extra* too—a dialectical counterpart." CD I, 1. p. 374.

[134] Ibid. p. 364.

[135] L. Hodgson, *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, Nisbet, London, 1943. K. Rahner, *The Trinity*, Burns and Oates, London, 1970. J. Moltmann, *The Trinity and Kingdom of God*, SCM Press, London, 1981. R. W. Jenson, *The Triune Identity*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1982. J. P. Mackey, *The Christian Experience of God as Trinity*, SCM Press, London, 1983. D. Brown, *The Divine Trinity*, Duckworth, London, 1985. C. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1991.

[136] C. F. D. Moule asserts Jesus's human self-consciousness in the declaration of himself as Son of

subject and will[137]) and the eternal and divine person (conscious subject and will) of God the Father in their unity (*John* 10:30 and 14:10 and 24). Their personal and rational unity and relationship can be the basis for the temporal and eternal unity of God in the Father, in the Son and in the Holy Spirit. It is possible to assert personal qualities (e.g. personhood, rational will and subject) of the temporal Trinity and its eternal essence (unity).

We propose two (temporal human and eternal divine) natures and persons (conscious subjects and wills) of God in the Son, Jesus Christ, in the Father and in the Holy Spirit. There is the total presence (revelation) of the one eternal person of God in each temporal person of the Trinity. Without their recognition, it is hard to defend not only the genuine distinction of each temporal member of the Trinity and its eternal essence (unity), but also their genuine involvement in the decision and action of God in and for himself and to and for us. They can be recognised without admitting either tritheism or a quaternary notion of God. The Trinity is not three eternal and divine persons, but three temporal (or human) persons. The one eternal person of God is the constitutive unity of the three temporal persons of the Trinity (beginning, middle and end). There is no discussion of God's being apart from the ontology of the Trinity. The one eternal person of God is God in the temporal person of the Father (beginning), the Son (middle) and the Holy Spirit (end). The temporal person of the Son (middle) and the Holy Spirit (end) derives from the temporal person of the Father (beginning) in one eternal person and will.

Man and Son of God in the light of his divinity (*The Orign of Christology*, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977, pp. 2ff).

[137] Jesus's Gethsemane prayer explicitly shows his human will and the will of God the Father by indicating the subjection of the former to the latter for his future life and death (*Matthew* 26:39, *Luck* 22:42 and *Mark* 14:36-7).

Conclusion

The central divergence of Barth and Calvin is in their view of the subjectivity, and personhood and activity of God. They attribute the acting subject and person of God to the one eternal essence of God and to the temporal Trinity, and propose the existence of the one personal God in the Trinity and the three persons of the Trinity in its one essence (unity), respectively. Their attribution determines their christocentric and trinitarian conception of revelation, although both are based on the biblical revelation of the one personal God and the three persons of the Trinity to our faith. Barth asserts the one God the Father as the personal subject, the Son (Word) in Jesus Christ as the object, and the Holy Spirit as the effect of revelation. Each person of the Trinity is the subject, object and effect of revelation for Calvin. Their views of the christocentric and trinitarian character of revelation give rise to the christocentric and trinitarian orientations of their trinitarian definition. The trinitarian definition stems, for Barth, from christocentric knowledge of the triune God and, for Calvin, from trinitarian knowledge of the creator-God as the Father of the Son in the Holy Spirit.

Their concept of the unity of the Trinity is rooted in the immutable oneness of God in its trinitarian repetition and revelation. The doctrine of perichoresis ($\pi\epsilon\rho\iota\chi\omega\rho\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$) provides their dynamic notion of unity. The unity is their basis for resisting subordinationism and modalism of the Trinity. It is a numerical unity for Barth and a generic or constitutive unity for Calvin. Barth's insistence on the numerically one subject and person and being of God is the reason for the rejection of the three subjects and persons and beings of the Trinity. Calvin recognises the constitution of the three temporal persons (subjects and beings) of the Trinity in the one eternal being.

Barth's numerical unity does not seem to succeed in defending the genuine distinction of each member of the Trinity. It defines the Trinity as three modes

(ways) or forms of the one personal being of God. There is no recognition of the distinctive involvement and function of each member of the temporal Trinity in the decision and work of God. The one eternal and personal God is the one who always decides and works in each mode of his own being. Barth's numerical unity does not correspond to the traditional (e.g. Calvin's) doctrine of the economic Trinity that attributes the work of creation, redemption and sanctification to each member of the Trinity, confirming their distinctive qualities in the one being of God. Calvin succeeds in affirming the distinctive person and work of each member of the Trinity in the one being of God; he proposes a constitutive unity of three temporal (beginning, middle and end) persons of the Trinity and their distinctive works in the one eternal being (essence) of God.

Barth's and Calvin's basis in the biblical revelation of the triune God disassociates them from the logic of ontological (e.g. Hegelian) idealism. The biblical revelation demonstrates the qualitative distinction between the temporal Trinity and its eternal essence (unity), and denies their ultimate identification in ontological (e.g. Hegelian) idealism, which absorbs the former in the latter. This qualitative distinction commits Barth and Calvin to the doctrine of *analogia fidei* for the noetic and conceptual possibility of the triune God in revelation. They oppose the idealist philosopher's claim of a self-evident knowledge of the trinitarian movement of God (absolute spirit) in man. Their commitment gives them their dogmatic freedom and autonomy as well as a realistic, dynamic and objective view of the trinitarian nature and action of God in the freedom and authority of his own Word.

This basis is the ground for their maintenance of a dialectical unity and relationship between the temporal Trinity and its eternal essence (unity). This dialectical unity is active in the nature of God in and for himself and in his relation to us and for us. This fact is supported by upholding the doctrine of the *principium* of God the Father and the *filioque*. Their doctrine appears to be vital

to accommodate the biblical revelation of the functional order of the Trinity in its existence and action. The recognition of the threefold temporality of the Trinity (beginning for Father, middle for the Son, and end for the Holy Spirit) is helpful to observe both the differentiation of its each member and it from its one eternal essence (unity).

There is a sharp difference between them in that Barth advocates the threeness of God in the continuous threefold temporal revelation and repetition (action) of the one eternal being of God, and confines it to the reciprocal and formal relation of each member of the Trinity in its unity. Calvin asserts inherent threefold qualities (persons) of the Trinity in the one essence of God. Inherent threefold qualities (persons) of the Trinity appear to be crucial for the genuine reciprocal relation of each member of the Trinity. Assertion of them is necessary to defend the genuine identification of the trinitarian potentiality of God in and for himself with the trinitarian actuality of God to and for us. The dismissal of their absolute identification presupposes some new element of God (e.g. the personhood of each member of the Trinity) to his being in his trinitarian becoming and revelation, and impairs the immutability of God's being.

One significant weakness of Barth's and Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity is that it fails to justify the whole personhood and personality of God. They respectively defend the personhood and personality of the one essence of God (the unity of the Trinity) and each member of the Trinity, and ignore those of each member of the Trinity and its unity (the one essence of God). This is a serious problem for their understanding of the personal and rational decision and work of God. Barth and Calvin do not go beyond the traditional (e.g. Augustinian and Cappadocian) trinitarian framework and concept. They fail to explore the implication of the biblical revelation of a personal and rational dialogue between the human and temporal person of Jesus and the divine and eternal person of God the Father for their personal unity and relationship.

III.3. Election

Introduction

Barth's analysis of the doctrine of God *in se* continues in the doctrine of God's perfections (Volume II.1), election and command (Volume II.2 of *Church Dogmatics*). There is a clear systematic link between these doctrines. Barth explores various divine perfections in the light of God's love (grace, mercy and patience) in freedom (holiness, righteousness and wisdom) and his freedom in love,[1] and sees the meaning of God's election as his love in freedom and as his freedom in love.[2] The doctrine of election highlights the ground of our covenantal relationship with God in Christ for eternal salvation. In this covenant the electing God is the commanding God.[3] He commands us to follow his Word in a covenantal relationship for our ethical conduct.[4] Barth treats ethical issues as doctrinal problems[5] by including them in the doctrine of the commanding God,[6] and demonstrates our covenantal and redemptive relationship with God in Christ as the basis of our ethics. Our chief concerns here are Barth's doctrine of election and its relationship with Calvin's, and their basis in revelation. We deal with the systematic place and basis of the doctrine, and then the definition of election and double predestination for exposition of these concerns.

3.i. The Dogmatic Function and Basis of Election

i.1. Election as the Doctrine of God

The central issue of Barth's doctrine of election is the eternal will of God and its temporal revelation and fulfillment, and its merciful and just nature. The

[1] CD II, 1. pp. 351ff.

[2] CD II, 2. pp. 5 and 162.

[3] Ibid. p. 512.

[4] Ibid. p. 511.

[5] Ibid. p. 512.

[6] Ibid. pp. 509-782.

doctrine is the part of the doctrine of God *in se*. God's inner will is essential for understanding of his being, subject and action *in se* and *ad extra*.[7] It is the origin and cause of the existence of the trinitarian temporal nature and action of God in and for himself and to and for us.[8] The treatment of the doctrine of election at the head of all other doctrines is a methodological decision. It is designed to declare God's eternal predestination (will) as the beginning, the source, the basis of all his temporal movements.[9] The doctrine of predestination remains as the hermeneutical key to all the doctrines of God's temporal actions (e.g. creation, providence and reconciliation). Barth follows Calvin[10] opposing the medieval Thomist Catholicism that explains historical events in the light of God's providence,[11] and undermines the derivation of God's historical providence from his eternal predestination (election, will and decision).[12]

Barth's (and Calvin's) doctrine of election endorses "a biblical and Christian monism".[13] It highlights the derivation of all the diverse temporal events from the one eternal predestination or will of God, and affirms their unity in his one will and their undiminishable relationship. Barth's biblical monism sharply distances itself from Spinozan and Hegelian monism. The latter explains all finite things (nature) as the modifying process of one infinite substance[14] or spirit (God) in order to defend the unity of the former in the latter,[15] and implies their onto-

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[7] Ibid. p. 9.

[8] Ibid. pp. 50ff.

[9] Ibid. pp. 87-93.

[10] Ibid. p. 46.

[11] *Summa Theologica*, I, *qu.* 22, *art.* 2 c.

[12] Op. cit., pp. 50-1.

[13] Ibid. p. 135.

[14] Benedictus de Spinoza, *Ethics*, trans. Andrew Boyle, Heron Books, [no date] pp. 18ff.

[15] Stanley Rosen's treatment of Spinozan and Hegelian monism is helpful to understand their root and relationship. He argues that Spinoza and Hegel, like Descartes, establish human thinking as the basis for God's existence ("Hegel, Descartes, and Spinoza," in *Spinoza's Metaphysics: Essays in Critical Appreciation*, ed. James B. Wilbur, Van Gorcum, Assen, Netherlands, 1976, p. 119). Spinoza inherits from Descartes an geometrical (materialistic) notion of God as a "heavenly body" in space (p. 125), and never develops infinite substance (God) into subject as well as its dialectical unity with finite reality, as Hegel does (p. 127). His finite reality is negated in the

logical continuity and a pantheistic notion of God. Barth explicitly rejects the Spinozan concept of *Deus sive natura*[16] by declaring that *Deus non est in natura* (or *genere*).[17] Unlike the Spinozans and Hegelians, he opposes the identification of temporal events (nature) with the eternal God or God's intrinsic existence in the former, as Calvin does. The biblical revelation shows that finite things are not the results of the continuous process of one infinite being (God), but those of God's creation out of nothing.[18] There cannot be ontological continuation and identification between finite things and the infinite creator-God.

One can perceive some difference between Barth's treatment of the doctrine of election and Calvin's. Calvin does not place the doctrine at the head of other doctrines, as Barth does. Barth criticizes that "Calvin never connected the doctrine of predestination with that of God... Undoubtedly Calvin did not understand or handle the doctrine as a basic tenet."[19] It is true that Calvin does not explicitly demonstrate the constitutive and hermeneutical relevance of the doctrine to other doctrines, as Barth does. Barth's criticism is nonetheless unfair and inaccurate. Calvin treats the doctrine of election within the doctrine of God the Holy Spirit (pneumatology) while Barth deals with it within the doctrine of God the Son

process of its unity with infinite substance (God) in a Platonic fashion (pp. 126 and 128-130). He does not affirm opposite and contradictory elements of finite beings to infinite spirit (God) in the process of their unity, as Hegel does. His thinking is nevertheless a crucial stage in the development from Aristotle to Hegel. His notion of the unity of infinite substance (God) as *one* idea is the precursor of Hegel's absolute idea or spirit (p. 125). Rosen is indifferent to the serious problem of Spinoza's and Hegel's pantheistic notions of God. Their pantheistic notions produce serious doubt in their realistic and objective view of God, and in their realistic, objective and scientific method that pursues knowledge of God from his real and objective being and rationality in revelation to and for us.

[16] See Ibid. pp. 107-110. Robert N. Pasotti argues that Spinozan's assertion of *Deus sive nature* determines the unity of finite and infinite nature as precondition for understanding of finite nature of man. It enables him to go beyond the structure of social norms and values for discussing human psychology and nature. It is decisive in differentiating Spinozan from Freudian psychologists who interpret human behavior and psychology as "the determined outcome of the conflict between inherent and extraneous forces, instinct and society." (p. 107) Pasotti's differentiation of Spinoza from Freudian psychologists seems to be merely logical and thus artificial. They speak of the same reality from different perspectives and language. Society can be finite and infinite nature for Spinoza.

[17] CD II, 1. p. 310ff.

[18] CD III, 1. pp. 73ff, 133ff and 142ff.

[19] CD II, 2. p. 86.

(christology).[20] The constitutive and hermeneutical relevance of Calvin's doctrine of election for his whole theology (the doctrine of creation and providence in Book I, redemption in Book II, faith and its properties such as sanctification and justification in Book III, church in Book IV of the 1559 *Institutes*) is arguable. Calvin interprets and postulates creation and providence,[21] redemption,[22] faith and its properties and church[23] in history as the direct outcome of God's eternal predestination (will). Predestination is reflected even in the discussion of unsaving knowledge of God as Creator from his revelation in creation (in Book I.iii-v). God's eternal reprobation is the ultimate cause of unsaving knowledge of God in history.[24]

i.2. Revelation as the Doctrinal Basis

The doctrine of election is inseparable from that of revelation. It not only relies on the historical revelation of God's Word in the man Jesus to which the Bible attests, but also determines the nature of the revelation. Barth, like Calvin, defines God's historical revelation not as his necessary or inevitable movement for completion of his eternal being, as the Spinozan and Hegelian pantheistic notion of God proposes, but as his free movement by his free determinative will or predestination. H. U. von Balthasar declares the doctrine as "the heart-beat of Barth's theology."[25] His theology is the unfolding of the content of the biblical revelation of God in creation and reconciliation (and redemption). His doctrine of election gives rise to the precise nature of revelation and theology for him. He interprets and postulates the doctrine of revelation, creation, reconciliation (and redemption) in the light of that of election. God's eternal election (will) is the origin of his revelation, creation, reconciliation and redemption in history.

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[20] Ibid. p. 81.

[21] Inst. I.xviii.

[22] Inst. II.xii.1.

[23] See Chapter II.2.i.1.

[24] See Chapter I.1.i.

[25] *The Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 156.

The basis of election in revelation is decisive for its noetic, conceptual and ontic nature. Barth (and Calvin) explicitly renounces any self-evident notion of the biblical revelation of God's election in the natural consciousness of man.[26] Faith, the super-natural gift of God in the Holy Spirit, is indispensable for its noetic and conceptual possibility.[27] This avoids a rigid fidelity to biblical and traditional ideas of election, and enables a fresh approach to the doctrine of election under the authority of God's Word in faith. There is a dogmatic freedom and autonomy in faith in this. Barth, like Calvin,[28] presupposes a dynamic, realistic and objective view of election in faith from its actual and dynamic revelation in God's Word.[29]

Barth's assertion of the christocentric ontology of election stems from his christocentric interpretation of biblical revelation. It provides a proper foundation for the didactic and pedagogic value and usefulness of the doctrine of election in the certainty of salvation.[30] The biblical revelation begins and ends the explanation of God's election (will) with the self-election and revelation of God in his Word, Jesus Christ.[31] It presents Jesus Christ as the ontic and noetic foundation of election and rejection. He is the electing God and elected man, the subject and the object of election,[32] and is elected and rejected man.[33]

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[26] CD II, 2. p. 4.

[27] Ibid. p. 83.

[28] See Chapter II.2.iii.1.

[29] "Thus the doctrine of election cannot legitimately be understood... except in the form of an exposition of what God Himself has said... concerning Himself. It cannot and must not look to any thing but the Word of God, nor set before it anything but the truth and reality of that Word... It can seek to meet only the one concern, receiving its stimulus and dynamic and form only from the fact that this Word must always be heard and validated in the Christian Church because this Word has constituted itself its basis and the nourishment by which it must live." Ibid. p. 35.

[30] "If we are to understand the doctrine of election rightly... We must enquire into the foundation of the doctrine in the divine revelation quite independently of its value and usefulness, and the doctrine must then be constructed and expounded in accordance with that foundation. Only as that is done will the fact and the extent of its didactic and pedagogic value and usefulness really emerge." Ibid. p. 37.

[31] Ibid. pp. 4-5.

[32] Ibid. pp. 94-305.

[33] Ibid. pp. 306-508.

The strength of the christocentric interpretation of the doctrine of election is that it enables us to present it as the sum of gospel,[34] good news of salvation. The election of God in Jesus Christ is his free self-giving and sacrifice in love and favour for his people. It is the primal and gracious decision of God in primary history (*Urgeschichte*), and is the basis and goal of God's relationship with his people in history (*Geschichte*). God elects mankind and makes a covenant with human beings for their salvation in and through his self-election in the one man Jesus Christ.[35] There is no mixed message of joy and terror, salvation and damnation, but only joy and salvation, love and grace in the election of God in Jesus Christ. Barth argues that this joyfulness of election in Christ is not successfully brought out by Calvin and his contemporaries and predecessors, and is crucial for their proclamation of election as valuable and useful for the certainty of salvation.[36]

The intention of Barth's doctrine of election is to reproduce Calvin's doctrine, but with critical reflection. Barth does not depart from Calvin's primary intention[37] to follow the biblical witness,[38] but defends it by providing for it a christocentric basis. "When we enter upon this question" of how Barth corresponds to Calvin's doctrine of election, "we shall discover that it brings us not only to the heart of Barth's doctrine of election but also to the heart of his entire dogmatic vision."[39] The triumph of God's redemptive grace (love and mercy) in

[34] Ibid. p. 12.

[35] Ibid. pp. 7-11.

[36] Ibid. pp. 9 and 18.

[37] "To think of the contents of this volume gives me much pleasure, but even greater anxiety. The work has this peculiarity, that in it I have had to leave the framework of theological tradition to a far greater extent than in the first part on the doctrine of God. I would have preferred to follow Calvin's doctrine of predestination much more closely, instead of departing from it so radically." Ibid. Preface, x.

[38] "Calvin and the older Reformed Church did present in all seriousness the doctrine of the predestination. They did so in a specific form. We may accept their work, and always keep it in mind, as a penetrating approach to the question, as a contribution to its treatment which we must respect and value. But we shall be doing Calvin the most fitting honour if we go the way that he went and start where he started. And according to his own most earnest protestations, he did not start with himself, nor with his system, but with the Holy Scripture as interpreted in his system. It is to Scripture that we must again address ourselves, not refusing to learn from that system, but never as Calvinists without reserve." Ibid. p. 36.

[39] G. C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, trans. R. Roer, Paternos-

election dominates the whole of Barth's dogmatic thinking (e.g. in his doctrine of election, creation and reconciliation).[40] Barth designates the grace of God's election and covenant in Christ in the primary history as the basis and goal of God's creation and reconciliation in history.

Barth repudiates Calvin's doctrine of double predestination of election and rejection. It appears to be a doctrine of horror rather than joy. The message of the horror of rejection eventually becomes louder and louder than that of the joy of election.[41] The doctrine speculates[42] upon the biblical testimony of God's will within the Augustinian tradition.[43] It is not based in the ever-new revelation of God's Word in faith to which the Bible attests.[44]

Barth's interpretation here is unfair to the intention and nature of Calvin's doctrine. Calvin insists on rejection in order to stress God's loving grace and gift of election in Christ for the believer. If everyone were elected in Christ, election would not stand out either as the special grace and gift of God to and for the believer, or as Christians' particular joy, comfort and hope in Christ.[45] This is the point which Barth's doctrine of election fails to stress. Having said this, one may doubt whether Calvin's insistence really achieves what he means it to. God's

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ter Press, London, 1956, p. 99. My treatment of the relationship between the theologies of Calvin and Barth differs from Berkouwer's. Their relationship is not the major concern of Berkouwer's book. His comparison of their relationship is inconsistent. He does not spell out their trinitarian and christocentric theology from their trinitarian and christocentric understanding of revelation and their basis in this understanding, as I do. He hardly grasps Calvin's trinitarian notion of revelation and the trinitarian orientation of his 1559 *Institutes*. His chief concern is to argue for the triumph of grace over nature as the central concern and theme of Barth's theology. Barth neither postulates his theology in the light of a particular theme or principle (e.g. the triumph of grace or revelation), nor considers a particular theme or principle as the central concern of his theology, as he implies. The central concern and task of *Church Dogmatics* is the unfolding of the content of the revelation of God's Word to which the Bible attests (CD I, 2. pp. 797ff). Various theological themes are thrown out in the process of this explication. That is why I treat the *Dogmatics* in the light of the implications of its basis in revelation. This appears to correspond to its intentions, method and content.

[40] CD II, 2. pp. 52ff.

[41] Ibid. p. 18.

[42] Ibid. p. 18.

[43] Ibid. p. 35.

[44] Ibid. p. 18.

[45] Inst. III.xxi.1 and 6.

eternal rejection seems to undermine rather than enhance his loving grace. It is hard for charitable Christians to enjoy their salvation in election knowing God's eternal rejection of their fellow-human beings.

G. C. Berkouwer points out that Calvin's doctrine of election relies on the biblical revelation of God's Word in faith.[46] He (and Barth) does not, however, say in what sense this is so, namely because of the relationship between God's Word and his revelation. Calvin does not always identify the Word (Son) of God, the second person of the Trinity, with his self-revelation and communication, as he (and Barth) does. God reveals and communicates himself and his election (will) in the particular action of each person of the Trinity. The source of Calvin's doctrine is the temporal revelation and fulfillment of the eternal election (will) of God the Father not in the Word (Son), Jesus Christ, but in the Holy Spirit. Calvin considers the Word (Son) of God, Jesus Christ, as the only noetic and conceptual possibility of this temporal revelation and fulfillment. God's Word identifies revelation and fulfillment with our calling (and sanctification and justification) in faith as God's children in Christ by the free adoption of the Holy Spirit.[47] Calvin designates our calling (and sanctification and justification) in faith as the principal work of the Holy Spirit in the triune God.

His doctrine of election is fundamentally trinitarian. It recognises the principal work of each member of the Trinity for election,[48] and discusses the eternal election of God the Father in Christ from the perspective of its temporal revelation and fulfillment in the Holy Spirit. Its basis in the trinitarian revelation of election in the Holy Spirit gives rise to its trinitarian character. This is one of the major factors that differentiates Calvin's doctrine of election from Barth's. Barth insists on the exclusive revelation of the election of God the Father in his

[46] Op. cit., pp. 283-5. *Divine Election*, trans. H. B. Bekker, W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1960, pp. 106ff. Cf. See Chapter II.2.iii.3.

[47] See Chapter II.2.iii.1.

[48] This point will be spelled out in detail later.

Word (Son), Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit. This christocentric revelation is the source and the possibility of Barth's doctrine of election. The christocentric nature of the doctrine derives from its basis in the christocentric revelation of election.

2.ii. The Definition of Election

ii.1. Election as Temporal and Eternal Reality

The primary concern of Barth's and Calvin's doctrine of election rests neither with the eternal election of God in and for itself, nor with the eternal glorification of our election. Their basis in revelation determines the actual fulfillment of God's election (will) in our faith in a specific time and space as their primary concern.[49] Their doctrine views God's eternal election (will) from its temporal fulfillment and revelation in each one of us and the present (immediate) encounter and decision between God and individual person. It defines the reality of God's eternal election (will) primarily from the coincidence of God's immediate (present) adoption of individual person as his children in Christ, and his or her immediate (present) and obedient acceptance of it in faith.

> Such is God's activity in predestination in so far as He is its Subject. But it is not the whole of this activity. In it there begins the history, encounter and decision between Himself and man. For the fulfillment of the election involves the affirmation of the existence of elected man and its counterpart in man's decision, in which God's election evokes and awakens faith, and meets and answers that faith as human decision. The electing God creates for Himself as such man over against Himself. And this means that for his part man can and actually does elect God... There is, then, a simple but comprehensive autonomy of the creature which is constituted originally by the act of eternal divine election and which has in this act its ultimate reality. We can hardly go too far or say too much along these lines, more particularly when we remember

[49] H. Bouillard (*Karl Barth*, Vol. II, *Parole de Dieu et existence humaine*, Paris, Aubier, 1957, pp. 142-4) and J. D. Bettis ("Is Karl Barth A Universalist?" in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 20, 1967, p. 430) affirm that Barth's doctrine considers the fulfillment of election as its primary concern. They do not, however, explicitly demonstrate the derivation of this primary concern from its basis in revelation, as I do.

> that the theme of the divine election is primarily the relationship between God and man in the person of Jesus Christ.[50]

The remarkable fact is that Barth, like Calvin, does not confine the doctrine of election to an individualistic approach. Their doctrine does not discuss election solely in terms of the election of individual persons. They evade this individualistic approach both by illustrating the community's (church's) witness to the revelation of God's promised election as necessary for the actualisation of the election of individual persons, and by presenting their election from the standpoint of members of the community (church) in Christ.[51]

Barth follows Calvin in rejecting the autonomy and freedom of man's decision in faith for the fulfillment of election. His decision in faith is subjugated to or grounded in God's free eternal election (decision). Its subjugation, E. Brunner criticizes,[52] undermines the decisive role of man's decision in faith for the fulfillment of election. Faith here appears as a mere subjective awareness of what already ontologically or objectively exists in God's free eternal promise in Christ. Brunner's criticism cannot be met simply, as J. D. Bettis suggests, by "a strong definition of human freedom grounded in God's election".[53] Brunner's criticism arises from this very grounding of the freedom of man in God's. Barth (and Calvin) meets it through his conceptual orientation to the revelation of God's Word (which occurs in the subjectivity of our faith by the calling, justification and sanctification of the Holy Spirit). Not only does the orientation forbid the dualistic interpretation of the subjective (temporal or fulfilling) reality of election in our faith and its objective (eternal or promising) reality in God, but it also preserves the decisive role of man's decision in faith in the doctrine of election.

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[50] Ibid. p. 177. cf. pp. 343ff.

[51] Ibid. pp. 314ff and 345. See Chapter II.2.i.1.

[52] *Dogmatics*, Vol. I, *The Christian Doctrine of God*, trans. Olive Wyon, Lutterworth, London, 1949, pp. 346-53. Cf. G. C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, ed. H. R. Boer, Paternoster Press, London, 1956, pp. 287-96. H. Bouillard, *The Knowledge of God*, trans. S. D. Femiano, Burns and Oates, London, 1969, pp. 46-7.

[53] "Is Karl Barth A Universalist?" in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 20, 1967, p. 427.

The revelation simultaneously actualises its subjective and objective reality in our faith, and makes man's decision in faith indispensable for responding to it. Barth upholds these facts as the unchangeable eternal decree of God.

> There is no separation of the temporal from the eternal... Because the eternal predestination is made manifest to us in that history of salvation, we accept it as the secret of everything else that takes place in the world... In principle, then, predestination is not concealed from us. It would be so if it consisted in that latter set up in an inaccessibly distant past eternity. But it is an act of divine life in the spirit, an act which affects us, an act which occurs in the very midst of time no less than in that far distant pre-temporal eternity. It is the present secret, and in the history of salvation the revealed secret, of the whole history, encounter and decision between God and man. It takes place in time. It is revealed, and yet it still remains a secret, and is recognizable and recognised as such. It take place in the proclamation of God's Word... It takes place in the calling, justification, sanctification and glorification of man. It takes place in our awakening to faith and hope and love. There is no knowledge of predestination except in the movement from the electing God to elected man, and back again from elected man to the elected God... This movement is, in fact, God's eternal decree. God willed this movement, willed it from all eternity, and continues to will it.[54]

The basis of eternal election in its temporal revelation and fulfillment is decisive in resisting any tendency to define election (will) as the fixed *schema* and programme of the diverse temporal events (predestinations) of God. It opposes a mere rationalistic systematization of the reality of the temporal events (e.g. God's creation, reconciliation, calling, justification and sanctification) under the principle of God's eternal will (election or predestination), as the traditional Calvinistic supralapsarians (e.g. Beza) do.[55] Faith is indispensable for the noetic and systematic possibility of the temporal revelation and fulfillment of election. Diverse temporal (past, present and future) events (elections or wills[56]) of God

[54] CD II, 2. pp. 185-6.

[55] *A briefe and pithie summe of the Christian faith*, (1565), 3-4 and 21. *A Book of Christian Questions and Answers*, (1578), 7 and 34. *A Briefe Declaration of the chief points of Christian set forth in a Table*, (1613), 13-30. R. T. Kendall claims that Beza was the first one who made the doctrine of predestination central to his system in order to maintain the soteriological character of Calvin's theology. "Taking his cue from Romans 9 generally and St. Paul's discussion of the 'lump' particularly, Beza devises a system that later became known as supralapsarianism" (*Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1979, pp. 29-30).

[56] "The eternal will of God which is before time is the same as the eternal will of God which is

are claimed as one eternal election (will) itself from this basis.

Like Calvin, Barth views the one eternal election (will) always from the revelation of the absolute unity and simultaneity of diverse temporal elections (wills) to us and for us,[57] and renounces any separation of temporal and eternal reality of election (will). Eternal election (will) is not a fixed and completed event once and for all in the eternally timeless past, but a dynamic and continuous event and act and life of God in the present time. For them, it is the eternal happening in history, namely the eternal history that occurs through our encounter with God in history by the revelation of his Word in our faith by the Holy Spirit. The difference is that Barth's expression of this is much more articulate than Calvin's.

> When we speak of the electing God and election of man to which the concept refers, when we speak of the intimate connexion between theonomy and autonomy, between divine sovereignty and human faith, we are not dealing with a systematic relationship but with one which can be the object and content only of a law which is itself spirit and life, concrete history... Thus the eternal history, encounter and decision between God and man... cannot be thought of as breaking off or concluding with an effect which we then have to describe as the presupposition of all other temporal histories, encounters and decisions within the sphere of creaturely reality... Since it is itself history, encounter and decision, since it is an act of divine life in the spirit, since it is the unbroken and lasting predestination and decreeing of Him who as Lord of all things has both the authority and the power for such activity, it is the presupposition of all the movement of creaturely life. This presupposition is not merely static but moving. It has authority, and it also authorises. It is powerful, and it exercises power. It happened, and it also happens.[58]

above time, and which reveals itself as such and operates as such in time. In fact, we perceive the one in the other. God's eternity is one. God Himself is one. He may only be known either altogether or not at all... But these are secondary and derivative considerations which would have no force at all unless they were supported by the fact of the revelation of God... Revealing to us the fullness of the one God, it discloses to us not only what the will of God is, but also what it was and what it will be." Op. cit., p. 156.

[57] CD II, 1. p. 608.

[58] CD II, 2. p. 184. "When we speak of the divine predestination we speak of an eternal happening. And we do not say this merely on the basis of abstract recollection. We say it because an analysis of the reality designated by the concept predestination has shown us that it can, in fact, refer only to a happening. The reality of predestination is not merely history's *schema* and programme, but history itself as once and for all determined in God's own will and decree. Only as concrete decree, only as an act of divine life in the Spirit, is it the law which precedes all creaturely life. In virtue of its character and content this decree can never be rigid and fixed. It can never belong only to the past." Ibid. p. 185. See Inst. III.xxi.5.

The affirmation of the temporality of eternal election (will) offers the basis for the significance and newness of the present and future events (elections or wills) in addition to the past event (election or will) of God. The implication of this fact is that it enables Barth to demonstrate the sovereign freedom of God (in the present and future) from his own free election and decision in the past eternity. This contradicts C. Gunton's suggestion that Barth's doctrine of election is the major reason for the orientation of his theology to the past.[59] Barth, like Calvin, proposes the openness of the doctrine of election to the sovereign freedom of God's act (election) in the present and future for as significant and new. They disassociate themselves from any Calvinistic supralapsarianism that imprisons the freedom of God in his own free past election by defining it as a fixed and completed event once for all.[60] This helped forward the cause of Deism, that denies the direct and new intervention of God in the world by reducing his reality merely to its first cause.[61]

ii.2. The Trinitarian Nature of Election

The central difference of their definition of election (will) stems from their christocentric and trinitarian orientation. Barth presents the electing God and the elected man, the subject and object of election, and election (will) and its fulfillment and revelation exclusively from the Son (Word) of God, Jesus Christ. God's eternal election (will) begins with the self-election (revelation) of his three-fold temporality as the Father (beginning), the Son in Jesus Christ (middle) and

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[59] "The orientation of Barth's theology to the past has given many critics the impression that everything has already happened in eternity, and there is no significant future divine history. This would be a direct consequence of the neglect of the third person of the Trinity alleged by R. W. Jenson... But the consequences of the orientation are most marked in the doctrine of election which expressed for Barth the heart of the Christian gospel." *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1978, p. 182.

[60] Barth believes that the Calvinistic supralapsarianism imprisons God in his own free predestination or will in the eternal timeless past (CD II, 2. pp. 181-4). Its recognition of the present and future interventions of God's free will is only for the effects of his completed and fixed predestination or will once and for all. This is an imprisonment because it defines the reality of the predestination as the completed past event from the perspective of the hidden result of God's will at the eternal past moment.

[61] Ibid. p. 182.

the Holy Spirit (end). The perspective of the divine and eternal unity of the Son, Jesus Christ, with God the Father and the Holy Spirit enables the presentation of the Son Jesus Christ as the subject of God's election (will). It is decisive in establishing the identification of the election (will) of God the Father (and the Holy Spirit) with that of the Son, Jesus Christ.

> It is true that as the Son of God given by the Father to be one with man, and to take to Himself the form of man, He is elected. It is also true that He does not elect alone, but in company with the electing of the Father and the Holy Spirit. But He does elect... His own decision and electing, a decision and electing no less divinely free than the electing and decision of the Father and the Holy Spirit. Even the fact that He is elected corresponds as closely as possible to His own electing. In harmony of the triune God He is no less the original Subject of this electing than He is its original object... This all rests on the fact that from the very first He participates in the divine election ; that the election is also His election; that it is He Himself who posits this beginning of all things... that He too, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is the electing God.[62]

The merit of this identification is that it eliminates any suggestion of the independent hidden election (will) or the *decretum absolutum* of God the Father *in se*.[63] The election (will) of God the Father *in se* is identical with its revelation *ad extra* in his Word, Jesus Christ. Barth considers their identification as the core-concern of his doctrine of election.[64] It is a successful foundation of the didactic and pedagogic value of the doctrine for the certainty and joy of salvation. It obviates not only any possible tension between the election (will) of God the Father and the Son Jesus Christ in and for themselves and to and for us, but also any suggestion of the absolute hiddenness of God's election (will) *in se*, which undermine and threaten the certainty of our salvation in election.

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[62] Ibid. p. 105.

[63] "There is no such thing as Godhead in itself. Godhead is always the Godhead of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. But the Father is the Father of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit is the Son of the Father and the Spirit of Jesus Christ. There is no such a thing as a *decretum absolutum*. There is no such a thing as a will of God apart from the Will of Jesus Christ. Thus Jesus Christ is not only the *manifestatio* and *speculum nostrae praedestinationis*." Ibid. p. 115. cf. pp. 101-2.

[64] Ibid. p. 156.

Barth does not assert the principal work of each member of the Trinity in the election (will) of God, as Calvin does. Calvin attributes the subject (source or beginning), the object (mediation or middle) and efficacy (fulfillment or end) of God's eternal election (will), respectively, to the principal work of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,[65] and succeeds in demonstrating the trinitarian character of his doctrine of election. The Trinity is clearly perceived as the central point of the doctrine. The acting subject of God in his action (e.g. election, creation, redemption and sanctification) is ascribed to each temporal member of the Trinity. Each member of the Trinity is the subject, the object and efficacy of each aspect of election (e.g. its source or beginning for God the Father, its mediation or middle for the Son in Jesus Christ, and its fulfillment or end for the Holy Spirit). The involvement of the one God, the unity of the Trinity, in election is presupposed in the simultaneity of its threefold aspects in the distinctive works of the Trinity. Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity makes the ascription here and thus determines the trinitarian nature of his doctrine of election (and creation, redemption and sanctification).

The rejection of Calvin's attributions here remains problematic for the genuine trinitarian character of Barth's doctrine of election. The decisive and active role of each member of the Trinity is hardly perceptible in the doctrine. He ascribes the acting subject of God in election to the one God, and accentuates the decisive role of the one God, the unity of the Trinity, in election. It is the one God (the unity of the Trinity) who does all things for election in each member of the Trinity. This fact invites von Balthasar's comment that "the doctrine of the Trinity and Church do not play a central role in the shaping of their [Barth's and Aquinas'] theologies."[66] von Balthasar is wrong here.

Barth's doctrine of election is unmistakably trinitarian, as O. Weber claims.

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[65] See Chapter II.2.iii.3.

[66] *The Theology of Karl Barth*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1971. p. 211. The bracket is mine.

He discusses God's election not in terms of his oneness in and for himself, but of the unity of the Trinity to and for us. Weber, however, does not seem to understand the precise nature of Barth's theology, as he proposes that Barth's christocentricism prevents the active role of each member of the Trinity in the doctrine, and impairs the trinitarian nature of his theology. Barth, he says, replaces his trinitarian approach by a christocentric approach rather than incorporating the former into the latter.[67] The problem is fundamentally rooted in Barth's doctrine of the Trinity. The doctrine demonstrates the unity of the Trinity, the one personal being of God, as the acting subject of his actions (e.g. election, creation and reconciliation).[68] It is normative[69] for his doctrine of election (and creation and reconciliation). The christocentric approach of Barth's doctrine of election relies on his emphasis on the unity of the Trinity in the doctrine of the Trinity.

The reason for Barth's rejection of the trinitarian orientation of Calvin's doctrine of election is this. It presents God the Father as the subject of his election (will), and presupposes the doctrine of *decretum absolutum* of God the Father *in se* apart from the Son, Jesus Christ.[70] The doctrine is based in the hiddenness of the will of God the Father in and for himself. It suggests the incomprehensibility of our election, and fails to eliminate the uncertainty of our salvation in election. It lacks a christocentric comprehension of God's election (will). Calvin neither bases his doctrine in the revelation of God's election (will) in Jesus Christ, nor presents Jesus Christ as the subject of election.[71] Barth's assessment here is

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[67] "But Barth's approach is unmistakably trinitarian. Yet one gains the impression that at times the basic Christological conception, instead of being incorporated into this approach, actually replaces it. This is then related to what one could call 'the compulsion of the system,' particularly in the doctrine of God's gracious election and the doctrine of evil'." *Foundations of Dogmatics*, Vol. I, p. 62.

[68] CD I, 1. pp. 374-5.

[69] Ibid. p. 301.

[70] Ibid. p. 66.

[71] Ibid. pp. 62-5, 67, 75, 87 and 111.

wholly unfair and inaccurate, as mentioned before.[72] Calvin proposes each person of the Trinity as the subject of election, the electing God, from the perspective of their eternal and divine unity.[73] Berkouwer rightly criticizes Barth's accusation of Calvin for failing to present the revelation of God's election in Christ as the foundation for the certainty and joy of our salvation.[74] Calvin discusses the eternal election of God the Father in Christ in the light of its temporal revelation and fulfillment in our calling in faith as God's children by the adoption of the Holy Spirit.

2.iii. A Double Predestination

iii.1. The Unity of Divine Mercy and Justice

The doctrine of double predestination deals with the double (merciful and just) aspects of its Subject God and its double effects (elected and rejected) upon the object man. The originality of Barth's doctrine derives from its conceptual orientation to the redemptive revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ. On the basis of this revelation, the doctrine advocates the supremacy of the positive mercy over the permissive justice of God, and subordinates God's permissive justice to his positive mercy by determining and nullifying any independent effectiveness and autonomy of the one from the other. Their subordinate relationship, thinks Barth, decisively distances his doctrine from the traditional (e.g. Calvin's doctrine)[75] doctrine which supports both equally.

> The concept which so hampered the traditional doctrine was that of an equilibrium or balance in which blessedness was ordained and declared on the right hand and perdition on the left. This concept we must oppose with all the emphasis of which we are capable... For the only knowledge which we have of man's foreordination to evil and death is in the form in which God of His great mercy accepted it as His own portion and burden, removing it from us

[72] See Chapter II.2.iii.3.

[73] Inst. III.xxiv.7.

[74] *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, pp. 283-87.

[75] CD II, 1. p. 18.

> and refusing to let it be our foreordination in any form. That removing and refusing took place in Jesus Christ. On our behalf the Son of God took the form of a servant and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. In this fact we see the will of God. We know nothing above and beyond the will of God as it is thus realised in time. And for this reason we do not find a proportion but a disproportion between the positive will which purposes the life and blessedness of man and the permissive will of God which ordains him to seduction by Satan and guilt before God. In this disproportion the first element is always predominant, the second subordinate. The first is an authoritative Yes, the second a No which is determined only by the Yes, thus losing its authority from the very outset.[76]

The interpretation of Calvin's doctrine of double predestination in this way is misleading. Calvin upholds the doctrine of rejection from God's justice (wrath, judgement and punishment) in order to accentuate the election of God's grace (mercy and love).[77] His emphasis on the election of God's grace (mercy and love) in his justice (wrath, judgement and punishment) does not appear to maintain their balance as equal, as Barth accuses. Their obvious difference is that Barth treats the positive mercy and the permissive justice of God as the same thing.[78] Each is an aspect of the other. Calvin considers them as two different things in the one true God. Barth's emphasis on their absolute unity is rooted in the emphasis of the unity of love (grace, mercy and patience) and freedom (holiness, wisdom and righteousness and justice) in the doctrine of God's perfections (Volume II.1 of *Church Dogmatics*), and is taken as the norm for the doctrine of election. It is designed to eliminate their antithesis in God in order to insist on his one simple being.[79] Calvin suggests the transcendence of their antithesis in the omnipotent freedom of God *in se*.[80] Barth's categorizing of divine perfections under divine love and freedom does not seem to be cogent.[81] Freedom appears to be very

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[76] Ibid. p. 171-2.

[77] Inst. III.xxi.1 and 6.

[78] Op. cit., p. 12.

[79] CD II, 1. pp. 330ff and 442ff.

[80] See Chapter I.2.iii.4.ii.

[81] G. W. Bromiley argues that an arbitrary element creeps in when Barth singles out love and freedom as master-concepts of all perfections of God (*An Introduction to the Theology of Karl*

different from holiness, wisdom, righteousness and justice.

Barth's emphasis here relies on the implication of the revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ. In this revelation, we meet God's just wrath, judgement and punishment as the act of his merciful love and grace.[82] The rejection of God's just wrath, judgement and punishment is fulfilled in Christ's vicarious suffering and death in the place of our sinful mankind, so that we may receive only the election of his merciful love and grace. The significance of the emphasis is this. Not only does it nullify the suggestion of two contents for God's will, and any confrontation or conflict amongst the different perfections (e.g. mercy and justice) of God *in se*, but it also makes the rejection and damnation of man impossible for God. Any independent effectiveness and autonomy of God's justice which permits the rejection (No) is nullified by his mercy and love which affirms the election (Yes) and salvation of man.[83] Barth opposes the supralapsarian presentation of the doctrine as a dialectical message of joy and terror, salvation and damnation, and succeeds in making it as the message of the good news and pure joy. For its "first and last word is Yes and not No" to us and for us.[84]

It is worthwhile to notice that Barth does not undermine the real seriousness of God's just rejection and condemnation of our sinfulness. Rather, he stresses it in the light of Christ's vicarious rejection and condemnation on the cross, and advocates Christ instead of us as the object of God's rejection as well as election. Barth's basis in revelation is decisive both in rejecting unknown and hidden elected and rejected men in God for himself and in affirming the known elected and rejected man Jesus to and for us as the object of double predestination.[85] Our election and rejection are relativised by the election and rejection of the one man Jesus Christ. The self-rejection of God in Jesus Christ substitutes for the

Barth, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1979, p. 74).

[82] Ibid. pp. 393-4.

[83] CD II, 2. pp. 166-71.

[84] Ibid. p. 13.

[85] Ibid. pp. 146-158.

just rejection of our sinful mankind, so that the positive mercy of God's election (Yes) in Christ becomes our only portion.

> God's eternal decree in the beginning was the decree of the just and merciful God, of the God who was merciful in His justice and just in his mercy. He was just in that He willed to treat evil seriously, to judge it and to sentence it, to reject and to condemn its author, delivering him over to death. But He was merciful in that He took the author of evil to His bosom, and willed that the rejection and condemnation and death should be his own. In this decree of the just and merciful God is grounded the justification of the sinner in Christ and the forgiveness of sins. Rejection cannot again become the portion or affair of man. The exchange which took place on Golgotha... In God's eternal purpose it is God Himself who is rejected in His Son... It means that God has ordained that in the place of the one acquitted He Himself should be perishing and abandoned and rejected—the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. There is, then, no background, *decretum absolutum*, no mystery of the divine good—pleasure, in which predestination might just as well be man's rejection... It is so because it is indeed a foreordination of the necessary revelation of divine wrath—but a revelation whose reality was God's own suffering in Jesus Christ.[86]

The statement shows that Barth, like Calvin, associates with supralapsarianism closer than with infralapsarianism which acknowledges only God's foreknowledge of sin, and his double decree in the light of the fall (sin).[87] They assert the definite inclusion of the fall (sin) in God's decree, and his decree of sin as the outcome of his double decree of election and rejection.[88] The sharp difference is that Calvin regards all human beings rather than the one man Jesus Christ as the object of God's double predestination, and opposes any kind of universal salvation in Christ. The positive outcome of Barth's insistence on the universal or inclusive election of God in Christ[89] is this. It renounces the precedence of the

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[86] Ibid. p. 167.

[87] See *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1984, pp. 1059-1060. *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Sinclair B. Ferguson and David F. Wright, Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, 1988, pp. 529-530.

[88] "Man was willed and chosen by God with his limitations, as a creature which could and would do harm to God by the application, or rather the misuse, of its freedom. The danger-point of man's susceptibility to temptation, and the zero-point of his fall, were thus included in the divine decree." CD II, 2. p. 169. See Chapter I.2.iii.4.ii.

[89] CD II, 2. p. 117.

permissive justice of God's rejection (No) over the positive love of his election (Yes) and man's fall or disobedience,[90] and thereby overcomes Calvin's failure to eliminate God's cruelty and favouritism in eternal reprobation and election. The problem of the insistence is that it does not abolish a possibility of *apokatastasis* (universal restoration) for God. It opposes any limitation of the positive mercy of God's election (Yes) either by the permissive justice of his rejection (No) or by human freedom.

iii.2. The Rejection of *Apokatastasis*

E. Brunner[91] and G. C. Berkouwer[92] criticize Barth as a universalist. J. D. Bettis argues that their accusation emerges as a logical alternative to Arminianism (which views God's election from the decision of human faith) and double predestination which they respectively uphold. The ground of their accusation is unacceptable.[93] "For Barth, one can reject both Arminianism and double predestination without having to accept universalism."[94] Berkouwer fails to see as possible the subordination of the just to the merciful will of God without the necessity of posing actual universal salvation.[95] "Barth rejects the attempt to bridge the gap between the divine possibility [of universal salvation] and a theological statement of its actuality."[96] Brunner overlooks that Barth argues for the ultimate reality of election from God's will in and for himself, apart from his external relationship with the decision of human faith,[97] although his argument

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[90] Ibid. p. 422.

[91] *Dogmatics*, Vol. I, *The Christian Doctrine of God*, trans. Olive Wyon, Lutterworth, London, 1949, pp. 336-53.

[92] *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, op. cit., pp. 215-61 and 287-96. Cf. H. U. von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, op. cit., p. 163.

[93] "Is Karl Barth A Universalist?" in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 20, 1967, pp. 423-9.

[94] Ibid. p. 423. cf. pp. 423-429.

[95] Ibid. p. 429.

[96] Ibid. p. 427. The bracket is mine.

[97] "We must not allow God to be submerged in His relationship to the universe or think of Him as tied in Himself to the universe... Under the concept of predestination we confess the eternal will of the God who is free in Himself, even in the sense that originally and properly He wills and affirms and confirms Himself." CD II, 2. p. 155.

relies on its revelation to and for us.[98]

In the end, Barth seems to follow Calvin both by stressing the grace of God's election in the light of rejection,[99] and thereby renouncing the doctrine of *apokatastasis.* The doctrine presupposes God's fixed election of all; it justifies neither the grace of God's election nor his sovereign freedom both in election and rejection. Barth's basis in revelation is the decisive reason for his rejection of the doctrine. It is this which confines his discussion of double predestination to its actual occurrence in and for each man in the event of this revelation. It limits its discussion within its temporal fulfillment and revelation in the immediate encounter and decision between God and man. Barth recognises the actual existence and occurrence of rejection, and speaks of God's permissive just rejection (No) primarily in the context of man's immediate resistance against the revelation of his positive merciful election (Yes). The primary concern of his doctrine of rejection is not the eternal futurity and condemnation, but the immediate reality and condemnation of the rejection.[100] The actual existence of rejected men presents any claim of the unactualised universal salvation of God.

> If we are to respect the freedom of divine grace, we cannot venture the statement that it must and will finally be coincident with the world of man as such (as in the doctrine of the so-called *apokatastasis*). No such right or necessity can legitimately be deduced. Just as the gracious God does not need to elect or call any single man, so He does not need to elect or call all mankind. His election and calling do not give rise to any historical metaphysics, but only to the necessity of attesting them on the ground that they have taken place in Jesus Christ and His community... The actual opening up and enlargement of that circle will always take place exactly in the area which corresponds to the eternal free will of God. There will always be those who hear the proclamation of their election, always those who believe it, whom God has chosen in Jesus

[98] "We must affirm that at the beginning of all things God's eternal plan and decree was identical with what is disclosed to us in time as the revelation of God and of the truth about all things." Ibid. p. 156.

[99] "We do not fully understand the answer to the question concerning the determination of election if we refuse to consider the situation of these others, the rejected." Ibid. p. 450.

[100] See H. Bouillard, *Karl Barth.* Vol. II, pp. 142-4. D. Bettis, op. cit., p. 430. They do not, however, explicitly demonstrate the primary concern as the direct outcome of Barth's basis in revelation, as I do.

Christ and therefore determined for this faith and hearing.[101]

Like Calvin, Barth advocates the Holy Spirit's calling in faith as the criterion for differentiating elected from rejected men. The eternal elected and rejected are the ones who accept and reject the Holy Spirit's immediate calling in faith. One's temporal rejection of this calling substantiates his or her eternal perdition.

> To the distinction, peculiar to the elect, of God's relationship to them and their relationship to God, there corresponds objectively their difference from other men. This difference is their calling... This twofold possibility is the objective difference between the elect and other men... They are his witness—for they are elect in Him and called by Him and to Him in that twofold possibility, the work of the Holy Spirit... They [the rejected] lack this twofold possibility. They do not possess the Holy Spirit. They do not stand in the area of proclamation and faith. They even refuse this whole offer with hostility... The man rejected by God is the man who, because of his sin and guilt, is denied and repudiated by the righteous judgement and sentence of God, and transferred to the utterly untenable condition of Satan and his kingdom. He is the man abandoned to eternal perdition. He is the man... who has to suffer... because he has challenged and drawn upon himself the destructive hostility of God.[102]

It is noticeable that Barth never attributes our calling in faith to the principal work of the individual person of the Holy Spirit in the one God, as Calvin does, but to that of the one God (the unity of the Trinity) in the Holy Spirit. It is the one personal God who calls our faith into being for election in and through the third mode of his being, the Holy Spirit. In the event of revelation, our faith encounters not the individual person of the Holy Spirit, but the one personal God (the unity of the Trinity) in and through three modes or forms of his being, the Trinity.

> We cannot follow the classical doctrine and make the open number of those who are elected in Jesus Christ into a closed number to which all other men are opposed as if they were rejected... yet it is not legitimate to make the the limitless many of the elect in Jesus Christ the totality of all men. For

[101] Op. cit., pp. 417-8.

[102] Ibid. pp. 345-6. The bracket is mine. cf. pp. 449-58.

> in Jesus Christ we have to do with the living and personal and therefore the free will of God in relation to the world and every man... For the fact that Jesus Christ is the reality and revelation of the omnipotent loving-kindness of God towards the whole world and every man is an enduring event which is continually fulfilled in new encounters and transactions, in which God the Father lives and works through the Son, in which the Son of God Himself, and the Holy Spirit of the Father and the Son, lives and works at this or that place or time, in which He rouses and finds faith in this or that man, in which He is recognised and apprehended by this and that man in the promise and in their election—by one here and one there, and therefore by many men![103]

Barth endorses Calvin's rejection of man's temporal sin and guilt and his resistance against God's calling (election in Christ) as the ultimate cause of his eternal perdition. This is rooted in the permissive just rejection (will) of God *in se*.[104] It opposes the independent and autonomous power and action of man and Satan (who leads man into temptation and sinning) in order to defend God's sovereign lordship over all (good and evil) things.[105] Barth stresses the permissive just rejection (will) as the "shadow-side" of the real thing, the positive merciful election (will) of God, in order to deny its autonomous and independent effectiveness from the latter.[106] They are different aspects of the one will of God. The second element is always predominant, the first subordinate. The second is an authoritative Yes, the first "a No which is determined only by the Yes, thus losing its authority from the very outset."[107] Rejection is the non-willing reality of God. The possibility of the actual occurrence of God's eternal rejection of man whatever he does is impossible in God.[108] Man is always elected in Christ. "The rejection of mankind is the rejection borne eternally and therefore for all time by Jesus Christ in the power of divine self-giving."[109]

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103 Ibid. p. 422.

104 Ibid. 163-4 and 450ff.

105 Ibid. pp. 169-70. See Chapter I.2.iii.4.ii.

106 Ibid. pp. 167ff, 347 and 451-458.

107 Ibid. p. 172.

108 Ibid. p. 164.

109 Ibid. p. 450.

Bettis is right to say that the interpretation of rejection as an impossible possibility "does not mean that disobedience is only subjectively real and has no ontological reality as Brunner[110] [and Berkouwer][111] claims. By this phrase Barth shows that disobedience is ineffective; it is impossible for man to escape from the love of God."[112] God's positive merciful election of man in Jesus Christ reveals itself continuously as his eternal choice despite men's resistance against it.[113] Bettis does not, however, seem to take seriously Berkouwer's claim that there is a tention or an inconsistency between Barth's simultaneous affirmation of eternal rejection and universal election in Christ.[114] Barth's doctrine of election fails to distance itself from the doctrine of *apokatastasis.* Its major claim is God's universal election in Christ. Bettis denies Barth's universalism. Barth affirms universal salvation not as a theological possibility, but as the possibility of God in and for himself.[115]

Barth's suggestion of universal salvation in God is a serious problem. Bettis overlooks that it imprisons the freedom of God's just rejection in the freedom of his own merciful election. Barth does not succeed in maintaining the intention to emancipate God from his own freedom. He fails to present God's freedom as a real freedom which he so seriously seeks to defend. For he does not see the possible affirmation of the total freedom of God in election and rejection without making it a doctrine of wrath, condemnation and horror, as Calvin does. Calvin recognises the total freedom of God's just rejection (will) in order to stress the

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110 Op. cit., pp. 346-53.

111 Op. cit., p. 295.

112 Op. cit., p. 431. The bracket is mine.

113 "The presence of the rejected in the continual eruption of godlessness in the elect ensures that his election will continually present itself for him as the choice of God." CD II, 2. p. 456.

114 Op. cit., pp. 116-122.

115 "To draw the conclusion from such a statement [about God's final deliverance of all men] that Barth's theology leads to universalism is to miss his point completely. Barth's point is to emphasise the distinction between what may be a valid theological proposition and what may be a real possibility for God. Barth consistently rejects universalism as a doctrine, but he leaves open the possibility that within God's freedom all men may indeed be saved. But that possibility can never be the basis for theological statement of its actuality." Op. cit., p. 427.

total freedom of his merciful election (will), and presents the doctrine of double predestination as a doctrine of grace, love and mercy and joy to and for us, believers in Christ.

Conclusion

Unlike Calvin, Barth treats the doctrine of election at the head of the doctrine of God's action (e.g. creation and reconciliation) *ad extra*. Both nonetheless advocate God's eternal election (will) as the beginning and goal of all his temporal movement and action, and stress the unity of all temporal events in the eternal will of God. All temporal events and beings derive from God's eternal will (election). Their doctrine of election is the hermeneutical basis of their doctrine of all trinitarian movement and action in time. This is sharply different from Spinozaist and Hegelian monism that implies a pantheistic unity and relationship of God (absolute substance and spirit respectively) with all finite events and beings. It is based in the biblical revelation of the ontological discontinuity between temporal and eternal reality of God and man (the world).

The difference between them is that they explore the revelation and fulfillment of election in the light of the action of the Son (Word) Jesus Christ (Barth), and the Holy Spirit of God (Calvin). The revelation of God's election (will) in the Word (Son) Jesus Christ, is the source and the possibility of Barth's doctrine of election. The basis of the doctrine in the christocentric revelation gives rise to its christocentric content. Calvin's basis in the revelation and fulfillment of election in the Holy Spirit gives rise to the pneumatological orientation of his doctrine of election.

The basis of the doctrine of both in revelation forbids any dualistic definition of the promise of God's eternal election and its temporal fulfillment in us. The promise of God's eternal election is viewed from its temporal fulfillment in our calling in faith. The basis supports the inseparability of the temporal and eternal

reality of election (will). Their inseparability is decisive in defining election not as a fixed and completed event in the past eternity, but as a dynamic and continuous event of God in the present and future. It provides the ground for proposing the significant newness of God's action (e.g. election and all other things) in the present and future, and opposes any deism that denies any significant new intervention of God in the present and future.

The divergence of their definition of election stems from their different perspectives. Barth defines its reality primarily from the perspective of the unity of the Trinity, the one personal God. The perspective enables him to confine his discussion of election (will) to the election (will) of the Son (Word) of God, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is considered as the object as well as the subject of election. The problem of Barth's definition is that it does not succeed in defending the genuine trinitarian nature of election. It dismisses the active role of each member of the Trinity for election, and emphasizes the one personal God (the unity of the Trinity) in the threefold mode of his being who does all things for election. Calvin defines the reality of election primarily from the perspective of the distinctive work of each person of the Trinity; he attributes the subject (beginning), the object (mediation), and efficacy (fulfillment) of election to the principal work of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. His definition succeeds in demonstrating the trinitarian nature of election. He proposes each member of the Trinity as the subject of election, the electing God, from the perspective of their eternal and divine unity. The perspectives of Barth and Calvin are rooted in their doctrines of the Trinity. Their doctrines establish the unity and the distinctiveness of each member of the Trinity as the hermeneutical basis of all works of God (including election). Our faith encounters the one personal God (the unity of the Trinity) for Barth, or each member of the Trinity for Calvin, in the event of the biblical revelation of God's election in his Word.

The primary concern of Barth's and Calvin's doctrine of double predestination

is not the eternal election and rejection of God in and for himself. The basis of their doctrine in revelation determines the temporal fulfillment of God's eternal election and rejection in each one of us as its primary concern. They regard our calling in faith as the children of God in Christ as the temporal fulfillment of God's eternal election, and respectively attribute the calling to the distinctive work of the one personal God in the Holy Spirit, and to that of the individual person of the Holy Spirit in the triune God. The actual occurrence of God's rejection now in the event of the revelation of God's Word in faith is the decisive basis for opposing the doctrine of *apokatastasis* (universal restoration).

The sharp difference of their doctrine is that Barth and Calvin respectively assert the one man Jesus Christ, and all human beings, as the object of election and rejection. Barth's assertion is geared to negate our rejection and condemnation by including it in Christ's vicarious rejection and condemnation on the cross, so that God's election in Christ may become our only portion. The relativisation of our rejection by Christ's rejection opens up the possibility of God's universal salvation in and for himself. Barth is not aware of the serious problem of this possibility. It subjects the just rejection (will) of God to his merciful election (will) in and for himself, and imprisons the freedom of the former in the freedom of the latter. Barth does not justify the sovereign freedom of God both in election and rejection, as Calvin does. For he does not realise that this justification does not necessarily make the doctrine of double predestination a message of horror. Calvin appears to stress election much more effectively as the Christian's particular joy of salvation in the light of the rejection of the unbeliever.

Chapter IV The Doctrine of God *Ad Extra*

One of the greatest achievements of Barth's *Church Dogmatics* and Calvin's 1559 *Institutes* is the theological link between the doctrine of God *in se* and *ad extra*. They propose God's inner nature as the hermeneutical basis of his action and relationship with us and the world. God's inner nature is viewed from the revelation in his action (e.g. creation, reconciliation or redemption, and sanctification) in order to avoid any abstract speculation about the incomprehensible inner nature of God. For both, the doctrine of the Trinity determines the interpretation of all God's actions in the light of the unity of the members of the Trinity. Their doctrine of God's perfections defines them as the free expression of God's inner love. Their doctrine of God's election demonstrates the inner redemptive will of God as the basis and goal of all his actions. The doctrine of God *ad extra* in *Church Dogmatics* is found in the doctrine of creation (in Volume III) and the doctrine of reconciliation (in Volume IV). The principal purpose of this chapter is the exposition of these doctrines and their link with the doctrine of God *in se* in the light of their relationship with the theology of Calvin's 1559 *Institutes*.

IV.1. Creation

Introduction

The doctrine of creation in *Church Dogmatics* examines the nature of creation (in volume III.1), man (in Volume III.2), providence (in Volume III.3), and of Christian life and ethics under the command of the creator-God (in Volume III.4). We here consider the epistemology and the ontology of creation and Creator, and their relationship, and briefly mention the doctrine of providence and Christian life and ethics in the examination of the nature of creation and man. The treatment of their ontic and noetic link illustrates the source and the noetic

and conceptual possibility of the doctrine. The precise relationship between creation and Creator is spelled our by the exposition of the reality of creation, its link with covenant, and the problem of evil. Our chief concern here is again to unravel the relationship of Barth's doctrine of creation with Calvin's, and the implications of their basis in revelation.

1.i. The Ontic and Noetic Link

i.1. The Biblical Revelation as the Dogmatic Source

The initial concern of Barth's doctrine of creation is the noetic and conceptual possibility of creation and Creator, and their relationship.[1] Barth follows Calvin in focusing not on the absolute reality of creation and Creator in and for themselves, but on the revelation of their relative reality to and for us. They renounce the self-evidence of the revelation of their true reality in our natural consciousness,[2] and stress the mutual tie between knowledge of creation and Creator.[3] There is no true knowledge of creation without that of Creator. Creation is unique event and act of God. The creator-God alone knows and reveals the precise way and nature of himself (his being) and his creation (action).[4] Their revelation is argued from the Bible. Barth, like Calvin, endorses the interpretation of this biblical revelation in the Apostles' Creed by asserting creation as the particular work of God the Father.[5] "As concerns Holy Scripture... there is nowhere any direct or explicit juxtaposition of the concepts 'Father' and 'Creator'."[6]

Barth's interpretation of the means and content of the biblical revelation of the creator-God the Father sharply differs from Calvin's. Barth advocates the

[1] CD III, 1. pp. 28-9.

[2] Ibid. pp. 5 and 7.

[3] Ibid. pp. 13-15. Inst. I.i and ii.

[4] Ibid. pp. 13-16.

[5] Ibid. p. 3.

[6] Ibid. p. 49.

Son (Word) of God, Jesus Christ, as the only means and content of this revelation. Jesus Christ, the Word (Son) of God, is the primary and ultimate content, object and centre of all biblical witness, namely the revelation of the true reality of the creator-God the Father and creation (and all other things).

> But the fact that the Bible gives us a reliable basis for our knowledge and confession, that it tells the truth on which we can rely... is itself true in and by reason of the fact that the Bible gives us God's own witness to Himself, that it gives us the witness to Jesus Christ. Its word in all words is this Word. And it is this Word, its witness to Jesus Christ, which makes all its words the infallible Word of God. As the organ of the Spirit it helps us to this knowledge of the Father through the Son... The whole Bible speaks figuratively and prophetically of Him, of Jesus Christ, when it speaks of creation, the Creator and the creature. If, therefore, we are rightly to understand and estimate what it says about creation, we must first see that—like everything else it says—this refers and testifies first and last to Him. At this point, too, He is the primary and ultimate object of its witness. It is true enough that the statement about God the Creator has its infallible basis in the fact that it is in the Bible. But even on this basis it will be seen by us only if we halt before this centre of the Bible, directing the question of its basis to Jesus Christ and allowing Him to answer it.[7]

The revelation of God's Word (Son), Jesus Christ, is the source and possibility of Barth's doctrine of creation. The basis of the doctrine in the christocentric revelation gives rise to its christocentric orientation. The doctrine argues for the true reality of creation and Creator, and their relationship from, their biblical revelation in the Word (Son) of God, Jesus Christ.

The reason for Barth's christocentric interpretation of their biblical revelation is this. The creator-God the Father reveals the true reality of himself and creation, and their relationship only in and through his own Son (Word), Jesus Christ. God the Father decisively and first becomes Creator in the creation of the humanity of his own Son (Word), Jesus Christ.[8] Barth presents the creatorship of God the Father as the inner matter and decision of his trinitarian life. It is therefore

[7] Ibid. p. 23-4.

[8] Ibid. p. 26.

knowable to us solely by his own trinitarian movement and revelation. God the Father reveals himself as Creator to us by the Holy Spirit only in and through the creaturely humanity of his own Son (Word), Jesus Christ.[9] Barth advocates the inner human creatureliness of God in Christ as the ontic beginning, basis, norm, meaning and fulfillment of creation.[10] God the Father creates all things not only through his Son (Word), Jesus Christ, but also in accordance with and for his creatureliness. The ultimate meaning and goal of creation is the fulfillment of God's redemptive and covenantal election of his people in his Son, Jesus Christ.[11] The assertion of Jesus Christ, the biblical revelation of God's Word (Son), as the ontic basis of creation leads to revelation of him as the noetic and conceptual source and possibility of the true reality of creation and its relationship with Creator.

The ontic and noetic link of creation and Creator, and their relationship in Jesus Christ, Barth claims, is something that earlier theology had not developed.[12] It is decisive in achieving the primary task of Barth's doctrine of creation, that is, to assert the indispensability of faith for its possibility. It determines the biblical revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ as the noetic and conceptual source and possibility of the true reality of creation and its relationship with Creator. This revelation is incomprehensible secret and mystery to our natural reason. Faith, the super-natural gift of God the Holy Spirit, is indispensable for the noetic and conceptual possibility of the revelation.

> But where there is a genuine noetic connexion, we can always count on the fact that it has an ontic basis. This is the case here. Jesus Christ is the Word by which the knowledge of creation is mediated to us because He is the Word

[9] "And it is again as this Eternal Father, and not in any other way, that He reveals Himself as the Creator, i.e., in Jesus Christ His Son by the Holy Ghost, in exact correspondence to the way in which He has inwardly resolved and decided to be the Creator. As He cannot be the Creator except as the Father, He is not known at all unless He is known in this revelation of Himself." Ibid. p. 12. cf. p. 31.

[10] Ibid. pp. 25 and 28.

[11] Ibid. pp. 16 and 31.

[12] Ibid. p. 29.

> by which God has fulfilled creation and continually maintains and rules it. As is required by a number of passages in the New Testament, we shall have to discuss this thoroughly at a later stage. Our present concern is, however, is with the noetic connexion. We have established that from every angle Jesus Christ is the key to the secret of creation. It is thus clear that the knowledge of creation, of the Creator and of the creature, is a knowledge of faith, and that here too the Christian doctrine is a doctrine of faith.[13]

H. U. von Balthasar objects to Barth's postulation of the reality of creation from revelation. It forces "his data into an *a priori* framework" of revelation.[14] Revelation "presupposes creation in such a way that it equates creation with the act of revelation."[15] The ground of Balthasar's objection is inaccurate; his objection itself is untenable. Barth speaks of revelation as God's self-witness to our present faith rather than as a completed event in the past, and thus eludes Balthasar's accusation of his *a priori* speculation about its content in respect of the reality of creation. He does not equate the reality of creation with that of the revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ, as Balthasar suggests, but affirms the latter as the prototype[16] and the representative[17] of the former. Christ as representative of creation rather than in identification with it is the noetic and conceptual possibility of its true reality.

Calvin recognises the designation of God the Father as the beginning, the source and thus the Creator of all things as the inner matter and decision of God,[18] and Jesus Christ, the Son (Word) of God the Father as the central focus of the Bible,[19] but he does not confine the means and content of the self-revelation

[13] Ibid. p. 28. "But in the context of the Old and New Testament the witness to Christ takes the form of revelation and self-witness, and it is in this way, if not always with equal consistency, that it has always been basically understood by the the Christian Church. It is an appeal to faith... This also applies to statement that God is the Creator of heaven and earth... It can be understood and accepted only in faith, or not at all. In view of what it says we have no alternative but to realise that it speaks of the mystery which constitutes the Church." Ibid. p. 11. cf. p. 22

[14] *The Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 199.

[15] Ibid.

[16] CD III, 1. pp. 67 and 73.

[17] Ibid. p. 97.

[18] Inst. I. xiii.18ff.

[19] Inst. I.vi.2.

of the creator-God the Father to his Word (Son), Jesus Christ, as Barth does. God the Father reveals himself as the Creator in and through his own action of creation. His own action is the content of his self-revelation. Creation (e.g. the subjectivity of man, the world and Scripture) is the means of this revelation. The revelation of the creator-God the Father in creation and in Scripture is the source of his doctrine of creation. Faith in Jesus Christ, the Word (Son) of God the Father, by the Holy Spirit is the noetic, hermeneutical and conceptual possibility of this revelation.[20] It is the possibility of the doctrine The doctrine proposes revelation as a trinitarian movement. The revelation of God the Father as the Creator in our faith entails the involvement of the Word (Son in Jesus Christ) and the Holy Spirit.

i.2. An Assessment of Barth's Interpretation of Calvin

Barth opposes Calvin's basis in the self-revelation of the creator-God the Father in his own work of creation (e.g. the subjectivity of man, the world and Scripture). Calvin here, like other Reformers, he believes, "agreed with ancient philosophy [of Aristotle][21] in reflecting on God in relation to the world rather than with Holy Scripture in reflecting on the world in relation to God".[22] His doctrine of creation presupposes a rational proof of the existence of the creator-God and creation (man and the world). Its possibility does not rely solely on faith. For it does not make the noetic link between creation (and Creator) and Jesus Christ, the Word (Son) of God the Father, in faith.[23] He does not explicitly demonstrate faith in Jesus Christ as the key for understanding of creation as the expression of the fatherly love, goodness, grace and mercy of God.[24] This theology follows a double book-keeping system in medieval Roman Catholic fashion by discussing

[20] See Chapter I.1.ii.1.

[21] CD III, 1. p. 414. The bracket is mine.

[22] Ibid. p. 6.

[23] Ibid. p. 29.

[24] Ibid. pp. 30-31.

the creative and redemptive action of God from our natural reason and God's grace in faith.[25] "When the two books are juxtaposed as sources of our knowledge of the Creator and creation, it is quite useless to recommend the book of grace."[26] The book of nature eventually and inevitably expels the book of grace.

This interpretation of Calvin's theology is totally unacceptable. The possibility of his theology relies on faith including his doctrine of creation, as argued in the first part of this thesis. He confines the noetic and conceptual possibility of the biblical revelation of the true reality of the creator-God the Father and his creation to faith in Jesus Christ (the Word or Son of God the Father) by the Holy Spirit,[27] and opposes natural knowledge of Creator and creation as the source of Christian doctrine, and presupposes the noetic link between the creator-God the Father (and creation) and his Son (Word), Jesus Christ. The action of God's creation and providence[28] is expressed as the revelation of the fatherly goodness, love, grace and mercy.[29] The natural knowability and knowledge of God as Creator from his revelation in creation is discussed in the light of the biblical witness to it.[30] The chief purpose of their discussion from the perspective of faith is to stress that they are integral to the creatureliness of our humanity.[31]

Calvin's noetic link between the creator-God the Father (and his creation) and his Son (Word), Jesus Christ, differs from Barth's. Calvin does not view the creative action and being of God the Father from Christ's own relationship with the creator-God the Father, as Barth does, but from the creator-God the Father's own relationship with Christ in the Holy Spirit.[32] Both nonetheless uphold God's

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[25] Ibid. p. 414.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Inst. I.ii.2.

[28] Inst. I.xvi.1. cf. xvii.6, 12 and 22.

[29] Inst. I.ii.2. cf. xiv.2 and 22.

[30] See Chapter I.2.i.4.

[31] See Chapter I.1.iii.2.

[32] See Chapter I.1.iii.3.

Word in faith as the only possibility of their noetic link. The perspective of faith provides them freedom and autonomy to systematise various biblical and dogmatic ideas of creation and Creator as the creative action and being of God the Father. Their systematisation cannot be seen as a mere rationalisation of their formal ideas. It subjects to the authority of the ever-new revelation of the Word of God in faith. The perspective is their basis for proposing a realistic and dynamic and objective view of creation and Creator under the objective Word of God in revelation.

1.ii. The Nature of Creation

ii.1. Creation as the Act of God's Free Will

Barth follows Calvin in defining all things distinct from God as creation. The major concern of both is not created things themselves, but the creative action of God. The characteristics (e.g. its goodness, beauty, glory and grace) of creation (man and the world) are mentioned to attest and praise the characteristics of the creator-God the Father (e.g. goodness, wisdom, glory and grace) in his creative action. Their insistence on the qualitative distinction and discontinuity between the Creator and creation is never negotiable throughout their whole theology. They deploy the notions of eternity and temporality for this distinction, and uphold the biblical witness to the definite beginning of creation out of nothing, and renounce the existence of creation prior to the action of the creator-God.[33] The idea of an eternal world is explicitly opposed; it presupposes the eternity inherent in God in creation.[34] Creation is claimed as a completed and decisive action and event of God once and for all,[35] and thus as a historical reality.[36]

[33] CD III, 1. p. 43.

[34] Ibid. p. 7.

[35] Ibid. p. 13.

[36] Ibid. p. 65.

They reject the mediaeval Thomist[37] treatment of the Creator-creation relationship in terms of cause and effect, which undermines the definite historical reality of creation by denoting a timeless relation of creation to the eternal causation of God. Barth sharply departs from the Schleiermacherian[38] naturalisation of God's supernatural creation, and returns to Calvin's biblical notion of creation as a supernatural and miraculous act of God.[39] He also endorses Calvin's understanding of creation as the decisive action of God's free will,[40] and distances himself from Hegel's necessitarianism of this free action as the necessary process of the ontological completion of God (absolute spirit).[41] The endorsement makes any description of creation *in abstracto*, that is, from itself and for itself illegitimate. Creation has not come into being, and is not sustained, either by its own cause or by chance, but by the necessity of fulfilling the redemptive covenant of God with his people.[42]

Their covenantal relationship was made by the free redemptive will (predestination) of God in Christ in primal history (*Urgeschichte*) for the revelation of his glory.[43] The redemptive will of God's covenant in Christ remains as the internal basis of creation (providence[44] and redemption) in history (*Geschichte*). Creation thus stands as the external basis of redemptive covenant.[45] It does not precede redemptive reconciliation but follows it. Their relatedness and inseparability is asserted by exploring the implication of the biblical revelation of God's Word

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[37] *Summa Theologica*, I, *qu.* 44, *art.* 1-4 and *qu.* 45, *art.* 6-8.

[38] *The Christian Faith*, trans. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1928, pp. 365ff.

[39] CD III, 1. p. 43. Inst. I.ii.1.

[40] Ibid. p. 5.

[41] *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. 3, trans. E. B. Speirs and J. B. Sanderson, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1895. pp. 140-50.

[42] CD III, 1. pp. 229ff.

[43] CD II, 2. pp. 7ff. cf. III, 1. p. 43.

[44] CD III, 2. pp. 58-288.

[45] CD III, 1. pp. 94-329. The elaboration of the inextricable relationship between creation and covenant is based on the exegesis of Gen. 1-2:25 and its relevant biblical passages.

in Jesus Christ to us and for us.[46] It highlights the sharp distinction between Barth's and Calvin's view of creation and a philosophical (e.g. Hegelian) world-view of creation that proposes for it autonomy of being, purpose and meaning under a pantheistic view.[47]

The strength of their doctrine of creation is that their emphasis on the qualitative distinction between creation and Creator does not undermine their relationship. They propose a dynamic rather than static relationship by opposing both a static reality of creation and a deistic notion of Creator. Creation is not only a completed action of God in the past, but also his continuous action in the present and future.[48] The creator does not leave creation to itself or to something and someone else, "like a shipbuilder his ship, or a watchmaker his watch."[49] Barth and Calvin believe that creation falls into nothingness and chaos without the continuous providence of God.[50] Their assertion of the total dependence of its existence and sustenance on the continuous providence of the creator-God is the basis for their dynamic view of the reality of creation and its relationship with its Creator.

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[46] "That God's creation has the character of benefit derives everywhere, as we have seen, from the fact that its fundamental purpose lies in the covenant between God and man. This is made a compelling insight by the revelation of God in Jesus Christ as the Fulfiller of the covenant attested already by the Old Testament witness to creation." Ibid. p. 332.

[47] "Its [the Christian doctrine of creation's] theme is the work of God which is characterised by the fact that—because the covenant is its basic purpose and meaning and God in Jesus Christ is the Creator—it is divine benefit. The character of its theme, established in his way, is what distinguishes the Christian doctrine of creation from all the so-called world-views which have emerged or may conceivably emerge in the spheres of mythology, philosophy and science. It differs from all these by the fact that it is based on God's revelation." Ibid. p. 340. The bracket is mine.

[48] "The statement that God has created heaven and earth speaks of an incomparable perfect, and tells us that this perfect is the beginning of heaven and earth. It is also true that this beginning does not cease, but determines their duration; that the Creator remains Creator and is present as such to His creation—actively present, and not leaving His work behind, or abandoning it to someone else or to itself, like a shipbuilder his ship, or a watchmaker his watch. To the uniqueness of this perfect there belongs the fact that it also contains a present. But this does not alter the fact that it is a perfect, referring to something which has happened, and happened once and for all." Ibid. p. 13.

[49] Ibid. p. 13.

[50] CD III, 3. p. 74.

ii.2. Christ as the Representative of Creation

The central divergence between Barth and Calvin stems from their christocentric and trinitarian orientation. Calvin's 1559 *Institutes* is designed to demonstrate the principal work of each person of the Trinity for his distinctive being in the triune God. Calvin's doctrine of creation is designed to demonstrate creation as the distinctive work of God the Father, designed to exhibit the distinctiveness of his creative being. This trinitarian framework of the doctrine is set in the doctrine of the Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity determines the subject of inquiry of the doctrine of creation as the biblical revelation of the creative action and being of God the Father. Calvin never denies the relatedness of Creator (the Father) to Redeemer (the Son or Word in Jesus Christ), and of creation (providence) to redemption (predestination),[51] but he does not consider it the central concern of the doctrine of creation, as Barth does. Creation (providence) derives from the redemptive will (predestination) of God in Christ.

The goal of Barth's *Church Dogmatics* is to explain all things of God in the light of Jesus Christ, the biblical revelation of God's Word (Son). It gives rise to a christocentric presentation of creation and Creator, and their relationship. Barth's doctrine of creation expounds the biblical revelation of the creative action and being of God the Father in the light of its noetic and ontic link with Jesus Christ, the Word (Son). Their noetic and ontic link is rooted in the unity of the God the Father (Creator) with the Son or Word in Jesus Christ (Reconciler) in the Holy Spirit (Redeemer). Their unity forbids any separate and dualistic treatment of creation (providence) and redemptive reconciliation (predestination).[52] The doctrine of the Trinity determines the unity of the triune

[51] See Inst. I.xiii.

[52] "The decisive anchorage of the recognition that creation and covenant belong to each other is the recognition that God the Creator is the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit... The recognition of the unity of the divine being and its particularity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit will prove effective in all these directions for the recognition not only of the interconnexions but also of the variations in the relation between creation and covenant." CD III, 1. p. 48-9.

God as the hermeneutical key for all actions of God, and gives rise to the need to treat them as inseparable.

The temporal creatureliness of God in Christ plays a more significant role in Barth's doctrine of creation than in Calvin's. Barth declares Christ's temporal creatureliness as the ontic and noetic basis and beginning of creation and its true relationship with Creator. The true reality of our temporal creatureliness and our covenantal relationship with the creator-God the Father are viewed only from the election of the temporal creatureliness of God in Christ.[53] Calvin's doctrine of creation (Book I) confines its major task to the true and original nature of creation (man and the world). His doctrine of redemption (in Book II of the *Institutes*) deals with the relatedness of creation (providence) to redemption (predestination); it discusses the sinfulness of our creatureliness in the light of the redemptive will and action of God the Father in the Son (Word), Jesus Christ, and claims Christ's sinless creatureliness as the true reality of our creatureliness.

Barth apparently recognises Calvin's stimulative influence in his christocentric doctrine of creation.[54] The doctrine never rests on the identification of God's creatureliness in Christ with our creatureness. Christ is the prototype and the representative of our temporal creatureliness. The doctrine succeeds in drawing our attention to the serious, decisive and costly involvement of God in the work of creation. This work requires the decisive and costly self-giving and condescension of the creator-God the Father to creation in the temporal humanity of his Son (Word), Jesus Christ. Moreover, it enables Barth to stress both the positive aspect of creation and its positive relationship with the Creator. Creation is justified and made good by the Creator's election of it in Christ,[55] and is con-

[53] CD III, 1. pp. 67, 73 and 97.

[54] "We do not find in Calvin any more detailed explanation or exposition of this programmatical [christological] assertion [of creation] either in the *Commentary on Genesis* or in the relevant passages in the *Institutio*. Yet there can be no doubt that he has given us a stimulus to further thinking in this direction." Ibid. pp. 30-1. The brackets are mine.

[55] Ibid. pp. 331-88.

stituted as partner of the Creator on the basis of Christ's partnership with the creator-God the Father.[56]

The positive interpretation of creation and its positive relationship with the Creator is absent in Barth's early theology.[57] His early theology (e.g. in his commentary on *Romans*) discusses the Creator-creation relationship mainly in terms of their direct confrontation, without the election and justification of creation in Jesus Christ. Its emphasis rests on the negative (sinful) aspect of the creature, and on its contradictory nature to the holy Creator, in order to make their qualitative distinction obvious. The influence of Kierkegaard's emphasis on their "infinite qualitative distinction" is apparent.[58]

The doctrine of creation in *Church Dogmatics* stresses this distinction, no longer following the framework of Kierkegaard's absolute distinction, but that of the relational distinction in Jesus Christ. Barth, like Calvin, argues for the distinction from the perspective of its predestination in Jesus Christ.[59] This enables the positive interpretation of creation and of its inseparable relationship with the Creator. Calvin does not, however, presuppose a doctrine of a cosmic election or *apocatastasis*, as Barth does.[60] Calvin speaks of the redemptive election of God in Christ for his people, not for the whole cosmos, as Barth does. Barth's doctrine of the election of the whole creation in Christ gives rise to his christocentric interpretation of the whole creation. This attracts much criticism, for, as Jean Daniélou highlights,[61] it fails to hammer out the clear distinction between the

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[56] Ibid. pp. 178ff.

[57] T. F. Torrance, *Karl Barth, An Introduction to his Early Theology 1910-1931*, pp. 106ff. H. U. von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, pp. 113ff.

[58] *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans., E. C. Hoskyns, Oxford Univ. Press, London, 1933, pp. 99, 297, and 258ff.

[59] CD III, 1. pp. 15-6, 330ff and 368ff. cf. II, 2. p. 50.

[60] See E. Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of God*, trans. Olive Wyon, Lutterworth Press, London, 1949, pp. 351-2.

[61] *God and Us*, trans. W. Roberts, Mowbray, London, 1957, 74-5. Cf. H. U. von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, pp. 198ff. R. Roberts, "Karl Barth's Doctrine of Time: Its Nature and Implications" in *Karl Barth: Studies of his Theological Method*, ed. S. W. Sykes, Clarendon Press, London, 1979, p. 144.

temporal creatureliness of man in the cosmos and the cosmos itself.

ii.3. Creation as the Predicate of Covenant

The interpretation of creation from redemptive covenant (and predestination) "worked out the implication of the way in which the New Testament presents the creation as proleptically conditioned by redemption."[62] Not only does it relate creation (nature and providence) to covenantal redemption (grace and predestination), and provide a coherent and meaningful view of God's different actions, but it also establishes the concrete basis for the benefit[63] and actualisation of creation[64] and the justification of its goodness.[65] Creation is decisively and definitely actualised for fulfilling the merciful grace of God's redemptive covenant (election) with his people in the Son, Jesus Christ. Understanding of this fulfillment as the ultimate purpose of creation is beneficial for our knowledge and praise of the fatherly benevolence and mercy and grace of the creator-God. The creator-God the Father elects and justifies creation as good in his covenantal relationship with it in Christ.

The terms in which Barth relates creation (providence) to covenant (predestination) are highly significant. Their relationship is based on the subordination of the former to the latter. The meaning and purpose of creation (providence) is given only in terms of the continuous completion of the redemptive purpose of covenant (predestination).[66] The problem of this subordination is that it treats creation (providence)[67] in history (*Geschichte*) as the predicate (revelation or form) of covenant (predestination), the subject (content) in the primal history (*Urgeschichte*). This obviates creation's own decisive meaning and purpose for

[62] T. F. Torrance, *Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1990, p. 132.

[63] CD III, 1. pp. 330-343.

[64] Ibid. pp. 344-365.

[65] Ibid. pp. 366-414.

[66] Ibid. p. 60.

[67] CD III, 2. pp. 1-33.

the sake of the meaning and purpose of redemptive predestination (covenant).

> There is, too, a relationship of God to the world. There is a work of God towards it and with it. There is a history between God and the world. But this history has no independent signification. It takes place in the interests of the primal history which is played out between God and this one man [Jesus Christ], and His people... It attains its goal as this primal history attains its goal. And the same is true both of man as such and also of the human race as a whole. The partner of God which cannot now be thought away in neither "man" as an idea, nor "humanity," nor indeed a large or small total of individual men. It is the one man Jesus and the people represented in Him. It is the one man Jesus and the people represented in Him. Only secondary, and for His sake, is it "man," and "humanity" and the whole remaining cosmos. Even human nature and human history in general have no independent signification They point to the primal history played out within them between God and man the one man, and all other men as His people. The general (the world or man) exists for the sake of the particular. In the particular the general has its meaning and fulfillment.[68]

R. Prenter protests against Barth's dismissal of the independent meaning and purpose of creation.[69] The dismissal leads to the rejection of the independent meaning and purpose of the creative action of God. It is absolutely untenable. Creation (nature or generality) differs from redemption (grace or particularity); each has its own distinctive meaning and purpose. As Calvin's whole theology stresses, God's creation and providence is indispensable for our existence and sustenance, whilst his covenantal redemption and predestination is indispensable for our salvation from the bondage of sin and Satan. The insistence on their relatedness—for creation and providence derives from the redemptive will (predestination) of God—does not need to deny one's own meaning and purpose for the sake of the other's. Their relatedness seems to be based on their own distinctive purpose and meaning. Barth naturally insists on the distinctiveness of creation (providence) in its relation to redemptive or covenantal predestina-

[68] CD II, 2. pp. 7-8.

[69] "Die Einheit von Schopfung und Erlosung. Zur Schopfungslehre Karl Barth's," *Theologische Zeitschrift*, Vol. II, Verlag Friedrich Reinhardt, Basel, 1946, pp. 170-5. Cf. G. C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, pp. 254-9.

tion.[70] His denial of creation's own distinctive purpose and meaning, however, appears to nullify the genuine ground of this insistence. It is hard to claim the distinctiveness of creation by opposing its intrinsic purpose and meaning.

The problem here is fundamentally rooted in Barth's trinitarian notion of God.[71] He views the trinitarian nature and action of God from the absolute unity of the Trinity, and stresses the co-existence of the whole Trinity as Creator, as Reconciler, as Redeemer, as the covenantal Elector, and their co-lordship of creation, reconciliation and redemption in election. This emphasis leads to rejection of any type of "step-wise" treatment of creation (and the creator-God the Father) and redemptive reconciliation (the reconciler-God the Son in Jesus Christ) in their own right and purpose and meaning.[72] There is no "account of creation from a fully overarching *trinitarian* perspective".[73] Barth does not discuss creation or reconciliation or redemption (or election) as the principal work of each person of the Trinity for his distinctive being in its unity, as Calvin does. This remains as the problem and weakness of the trinitarian nature of Barth's doctrine of creation. It fails to defend the creative action and being of God as the distinctive action and being of the Father in the triune God.

Barth does not assert creation as the principal work of the Father in the triune God for his distinctive being (person) as the Creator in the triune God, as Calvin does. Rather, he defines creation as the particular work of the one personal God (the unity of the Trinity) in the fatherly mode of his being, and

[70] "Since the covenant of grace, and therefore history, is the aim of creation, creation itself belongs to history and therefore to the sequence of events which fulfills time... There is no μεταβασις εις αλλο γενος [transition to other space] between creation and what follows it. Nor does creation itself break off or cease when the history of covenant begins and continues." CD III, 1. p. 60. The bracket is mine.

[71] The normative or determinative function of the doctrine of the Trinity in the structure of *Church Dogmatic* (the doctrine of creation) is a well known fact. See T. F. Torrance, *Karl Barth: An Introduction to his Early Theology 1910-1931*, pp. 113-8 and *Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, pp. 193-4. E. Jüngel, *The Doctrine of The Trinity*, pp. xix-xxi, 1-5 and 24. R. Roberts, *A Theology On Its Way*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1991, pp. 81-93. J. Moltmann, *History and the Triune God*, trans. J. Bowden, SCM Press, London, 1991, pp. 130ff.

[72] W. A. Whitehouse, *The Authority of Grace*, ed. Ann Loades, T. and T. Clark, 1981, pp. 91-3.

[73] T. F. Torrance, *Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, p. 132.

thus the one personal God as the Creator in his fatherly mode of his being. God is one individual person in his trinitarian being and action.

> As the Father, God is in Himself the origin which has no other (not even an eternal and divine) origin, the source of the other eternal modes of existence of the divine essence; and as the Creator, in virtue of his originative activity *ad extra*, He is the absolutely sovereign Lord of all that exists and is distinct from Himself... In view of this it is meaningful and right to designate God the Father in particular (*per appropriationem*) as Creator, and God the Creator in particular (*per appropriationem*) as the Father... The affirmation that exclusively God the Father is the Creator, or God the Creator the Father, and all the corresponding departmental divisions, would make of the triune God a triad of gods. No serious theology of the Trinity can accept responsibility for this. *Opera trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa.* Hence the proposition that God the Father is the Creator and God the Creator the Father can be defended only when we mean by "Father" the "Father with the Son and the Holy Spirit."[74]

Their different view of the creative action and being of God the Father is fundamentally rooted in their attribution of the acting subject of God in creation to the one personal God in the Trinity and to the individual person of the Trinity in their one essence. Their attribution stems from their doctrine of the Trinity. Barth and Calvin respectively deny the personhood of the temporal threeness and the eternal oneness of God; they do not elaborate the importance of the biblical witness to the personal and rational dialogue between the human person (will) of the Son (Word) and the divine person (will) of God the Father for the trinitarian unity and relationship of God in creation.

1.iii. The Problem of Evil

iii.1. Evil as God's Permission

The affirmation of the election of creation as good in Christ requires an explanation of the problem of its evil (sinfulness). Unlike Calvin, Barth deploys the concept of nothingness (*Nichtige*)[75] as explanation of the nature of evil (sin)

[74] CD III, 1. p. 49.

[75] CD III, 3. pp. 289-368.

or chaos.[76] The discussion of evil (sin) in the doctrine of creation[77] is designed to stress the creator-God the Father's sovereign lordship and providence without impairing the goodness of creation and thus also of the Creator. The ultimate responsibility for the existence of evil (sin) is ascribed neither to the positive good will (Yes) of the Creator, nor to creation itself.[78] They allude to the original good nature of creation, and, in order to back up the good nature of the Creator, never consider its corrupted nature as original.[79]

Creation is indirectly responsible creation for its corruption (evil) Evil (corruption) is not something which is inherently given to the original nature of creation, and thus does not occur by necessity. The occurrence of creation's evil (corruption), from its corruptibility, derives from its own voluntary movement.[80] The argument, however, never leads to the suggestion of the self-corruptibility and voluntary movement of creation as the ultimate cause of its corruption. Barth and Calvin advocate not only God's permissive will of the rejection (No) as ultimately responsible for the self-corruptibility and voluntary corruption of creation,[81] but also his actual government and providence.[82] They oppose any co-lordship and responsibility with Satan or demons, as G. Aulén suggests,[83] and their co-creation with the Creator.

Their answer to the existence of evil and good is supralapsarian. Their existence is determined by the double predestination (will) of God the Creator, in order to reveal his glory (e.g. his righteous justice and his loving mercy) through the redemption of corrupted creation.[84] They explore the good and evil nature

[76] CD III, 1. pp. 73ff. 102ff, 133ff, 142ff and 372.

[77] See Chapter I.2.iii.4.b.

[78] CD III, 1. p. 379.

[79] CD III, 3. 74.

[80] CD III, 1. pp. 130-2. cf. II, 2. pp. 163-9. See Chapter I.2.iii.2.

[81] CD III, 3. pp. 74 and 303.

[82] Ibid. p. 289.

[83] *Christus Victor*, trans. A. G. Hebert, SPCK Press, London, 1931. pp. 4ff.

[84] CD III, 1. pp. 376-9.

of creation (man) in the light of the merciful (positive) and just (negative) will of God. The goodness and sinfulness (evil) of creation (man) respectively belong to the merciful election and to the just rejection of God. The positive and merciful will of God elects creation (man) as good in Christ, whilst his negative and just will permits its corruption (his sin) from its original goodness.

iii.2. Evil for Good

It is vital to notice Barth's insistence on the subordination of God's permissive No (evil) to his positive Yes (good) of creation in order to defend the goodness of the Creator and of creation.[85] It makes the existence of evil impossible. This leads to its treatment under the notion of nothingness (*Nichtige*) or chaos.[86] Calvin does not advocate such subordination. Rather, he stresses that good things are created by the free and gracious will of the Creator. Barth upholds this subordination; he seems to reject the precedence of God's permissive (No) to positive (Yes) will, of evil to good creation, and also any independent autonomy of the former from the latter, in order to secure the goodness of the Creator and creation. The former are the shadows (*opus Dei alienum*) of the latter (*opus Dei proprium*), and exist only for the sake of the latter.[87]

The evil of creation exists for the good purpose of God's redemption. There is a dialectical relationship between God's positive election of the good creation and his permissive rejection of its evil. The former confronts the latter[88] in such a way that the former is constantly negated and affirmed by the latter. Their dialectical relationship shows creation as a decisive act of God. Barth and Calvin[89] propose the ultimate resolution of evil as a eschatological matter for God, as the revelation of God's redemptive will (predestination) to us ceases. The obvious

[85] CD III, 1. p. 332.

[86] CD III, 3. pp. 289-368. cf. III, 1. p. 372.

[87] CD III, 1. pp. 384-8. cf. III, 3. pp. 353-63.

[88] Ibid. p. 377.

[89] See Chapter I.2.iii.4.ii.

weakness of their theodicy, as David R. Griffin also points out, is that it lacks an understanding of evil from the perspective of our present pain and suffering.[90] Their eschatological answer to the problem of evil appears to undermine both our decisive responsibility for moral,[91] socio-political and ecological evil, and our effort to impede and resolve such evil in history.[92]

The use of the notion of nothingness for evil (sin) is never meant either, as Paul S. Fiddes understands,[93] to denote merely non-existent reality or the nothingness of evil, or, as J. Hick thinks, to produce "a boldly speculative theory"[94] that refuses to give any answer to the problem of evil.[95] Rather, it attempts to interpret the concrete reality of evil in creation from the perspective of its original goodness by its justification and election in Christ. The re-occurrence of the evil of creation is consequently defined as an impossible possibility; it is contrary by its limitation to its elected or original good nature in Christ.[96] The serious problem of Barth's interpretation of evil of creation from its election in Christ is that it fails to differentiate moral from socio-political and ecological (or natural) evil. Fiddes rightly criticises that it "slips too easily from the notion of death's

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[90] *God, Power and Evil: A Process Theodicy*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1976, pp. 172-3.

[91] G. C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 233.

[92] G. Gutierrez, *The Power of the Poor in History*, SCM Press, London, 1983, p. 226.

[93] "Moreover, non-being itself is not an agent who can 'kill' or be killed. Donne's exultant cry, 'Death thou shalt die' remains a poetic image" (*The Creative Suffering of God*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1988, pp. 264-5).

[94] *Evil and the God of Love*, 2nd. ed. Macmillan Press, London, 1977, p. 136. cf. p. 143.

[95] "We are left in a strange position indeed!... Barth does not feel obliged to suppose that it [evil] thus came to 'be' either by a necessity independent of the divine will, or by the divine will itself. He not only refuses to choose between these possibilities, but by implication he repudiates both!... We have, then, as theologians, to leave the problem hanging in the air, without presuming to settle it... The consequence of Barth's teaching is to conceal the final alternative facing any theodicy. For every position that maintains the perfect goodness of God is bound either to let go the absolute divine power and freedom, or else to hold that evil exists ultimately within God's good purpose" (Ibid. pp. 143-4). Hick overlooks that Barth, like himself (Ibid. pp. 363-4), argues for the fulfillment of the good (redemptive) will of God as the ultimate purpose of the existence of evil, and for the ultimate resolution of evil as a eschatological matter of God.

[96] "The ontic context in which nothingness is real is that of God's activity as grounded in His election... It 'is' problematically because it is only on the left hand of God, under His No, the object of His jealousy, wrath and judgement. It 'is,' not as God and His creation are, but only in its own improper way, as inherent contradiction, as impossible possibility." CD III, 3. p. 353.

cancelling out a *sinner* to the cancelling out of *sin* altogether."[97]

The Heideggerian deployment of the concept of nothingness is apparent.[98] Nothingness confirms the existence of something rather than absolute nothing. M. Heidegger means by it our (*Dasein*) potentiality for our authentic being,[99] whilst Barth considers it as our potentiality for sin, our corruptibility. It is the limitation of creation,[100] and is the basis for Barth and Calvin to hammer out its qualitative distinction from the Creator, who is incorruptible. The beauty of the conceptual deployment stems from its synthesis with the biblical testimony to the existence of chaos (or nothingness) prior to creation of the world without admitting it as prior to God, and to creation out of nothing or chaos.[101] Their systematic synthesis is hardly appreciated by the attempt to make a theodicy,[102] or a doctrine of suffering[103] or sin[104] out of what they do.

Conclusion

Barth follows Calvin claiming the source of the doctrine of creation from the biblical revelation of the creative action and being of the creator-God the Father. Barth declares Jesus Christ as the only means and content of this revelation, whilst Calvin affirms God the Father's self-action of creation (including the man Jesus) as the means and content of his revelation. The creative action of God the Father to which creation and the Bible attest is the source and the subject of inquiry of Calvin's doctrine of creation. Calvin does not consider the relatedness of creation (the creator-God the Father) and redemption (the redeemer-God Son or Word in Jesus Christ) as the major concern of his doctrine, as Barth does.

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[97] *The Creative Suffering of God*, p. 264.

[98] Barth explicitly admits this (CD III, 3. pp. 334-40).

[99] *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1962, pp. 276ff.

[100] CD III, 1. p. 373.

[101] CD III, 3. pp. 73-4.

[102] See J. Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, pp. 126-44.

[103] Paul S. Fiddes, *The Creative Suffering of God*, pp. 217-21.

[104] See G. C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, pp. 219-60.

Redemption of creation and their relatedness is the primary task of Calvin's doctrine of redemption in Book II of the 1559 *Institutes.*

The task of the *Institutes* is to demonstrate the principal work of each person of the Trinity in its unity for his distinctive being in the triune God. That of *Church Dogmatics* is to present the trinitarian nature and action of God from the perspective of the unity of the Trinity, the one personal being of God. The doctrine of the Trinity clarifies and determines the trinitarian direction and norm of their doctrine of creation and redemption. The central issue of Barth's doctrine of creation is the relatedness of the creator-God the Father (creation) and the redemptive reconciler-God the Son (Word) in Jesus Christ (redemptive reconciliation). The doctrine presents Jesus Christ, the biblical revelation of God's Word (Son), as the hermeneutical key for the reality of creation and its relationship with Creator. Barth's basis in the christocentric revelation gives rise to his christocentric doctrine of creation.

The temporal creatureliness of God in Christ is regarded by Barth as the ontic and noetic norm, basis and beginning of temporal creation and its relationship with Creator. He argues for the temporal reality of creation from Christ's temporal creatureliness, and for the ultimate purpose and meaning of creation as the fulfillment of the redemptive covenant and election of God in Christ. The interpretation of creation from covenant is the ground for justifying its goodness in its redemptive election in Christ. It is beneficial for our knowledge and praise for the grace, goodness and mercy of God in creation. Calvin, however, acknowledges and praises the goodness, grace and mercy of God in creation apart from his redemptive action in Jesus Christ, and preserves the ground for the goodness and joyfulness and meaning of creation in its own right and term apart from redemption. Barth, like Calvin, asserts the existence of evil for good. The ultimate meaning and purpose of its existence is the fulfillment of the good redemptive will of God. They ascribe the ultimate resolution of the problem of evil to an

eschatological matter of God himself.

The weakness of Barth's doctrine of creation is that it does not pay sufficient attention to the meaning and purpose of the good and evil nature of creation as such. It does not stress enough either the full destructive and suffering character of evil or the full constructive and joyful nature of the goodness of creation in their own right and term. Barth recognises neither the freedom of God in rejection of the evil sinfulness of creation, nor the goodness (grace and wisdom and so on) of God in his creative action apart from his redemptive action, as Calvin does. He does not affirm creation as the principal work of God the Father for his distinctive being (person) as Creator in the triune God, as Calvin does. They respectively attribute the acting subject of God in creation to his one personal being or essence (the unity of the Trinity) and to each person of the Trinity; they respectively fail to justify the genuine involvement and distinctiveness of the personal oneness and threeness of God in creation.

The fact that they base their doctrine in revelation determines faith as the only noetic and conceptual possibility of the creative action and being of God the Father. It provides them freedom and autonomy in faith to systematise various biblical and dogmatic ideas of creation and Creator as the action and being of God in the Father. They reject abstract speculation of the reality of creation and Creator in and for themselves, and affirm their realistic and dynamic view from their revelation in the Word of God in faith. The noetic link between the creative action and being of God the Father with the Son (Word) Jesus Christ, is achieved in faith by the Holy Spirit. The context of Barth's proposal differs from Calvin's. They respectively view the creative action and being of God the Father from Christ's relationship with God the Father and from God the Father's relationship with Christ.

IV.2. Man

Introduction

Barth's anthropology is theological. It interprets the reality of man not from himself, but from his relation to God the Creator. He is God's creature. The purpose of his anthropology is to demonstrate not just the reality of man, but also the creative action and being of God the Father from his creature, man His anthropology in *Church Dogmatics* represents his doctrine of the creature. Man is the representative of all creatures as well as the goal and centre of their existence God creates all creaturely things and beings for good and for the salvation of man. Barth explores the nature of our creaturely humanity and image of God in the light of our relation to the creator-God,[1] to fellow-human beings,[2] to ourselves[3] and to time.[4] We examine this exposition with respect to his view of our original (sinless) and sinful humanity, and thereby his relation to Calvin's anthropology.

2.i. Original Humanity

2.i.1. Our relation to God the Creator

The subject of inquiry of Barth's and Calvin's[5] anthropology in the doctrine of creation is our original and good (sinless) nature in creation.[6] The first question of real man in creation is his relation to God the Creator. Barth regards this relation as the constitution of our true nature as image of God in creation, and advocates its basis in the revelation of the Word (Son) of the creator-God the

[1] CD III, 2. pp. 55-202.

[2] Ibid. pp. 203-324.

[3] Ibid. pp. 325-436.

[4] Ibid. pp. 437-640.

[5] See Chapter I.2.iii.1.

[6] "What God knows of men beyond his sin, relativising even the sin of man in the freedom of His grace, looking above it and through it, is the real creaturely nature of man which is the subject of our enquiry." CD III, 2. p. 38.

Father in Christ.[7] We are created to be called and summoned into real human being by God's Word in revelation. The relation of the man Jesus Christ to God is considered as the ontic basis and beginning of our relation to God.[8] Barth is determined to present our true creaturely being in Christ which the creator-God the Father reveals.

The basis of Barth's anthropology in this revelation determines its possibility in faith. He argues that the assertion of this possibility is something that earlier theology fails to do. Calvin's anthropology (i.e. in the beginning of the 1559 *Institutes*) neither emancipates his anthropology from biblical formalism, nor makes it a doctrine of faith.[9] Rather, it suggests the self-evidence of our real nature from our natural encounter with the creator-God in revelation, and fails to eliminate the possibility of the doctrine of man within the framework of autonomous human self-understanding. His discussion of the encounter between the creator-God and us apart from the Word of God in Christ "is not altogether dissimilar to that given by R. Otto (in his book *Das Heilige*) of what he calls the experience of man—even non-Christian man—in relation to the *fascinosum* of the Wholly Other."[10] It overlooks the absolute unity of the creator-God the Father with the Son (Word), Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, and presupposes "a division of God into a god in Christ and a god outside Christ".[11]

Barth's argument is untenable. Book I.i-ii of the 1559 *Institutes* insists on the total dependence of knowledge of ourselves (including our sinfulness) on knowledge of God in revelation, and on the noetic and conceptual possibility of God (and thus ourselves) in piety or faith.[12] Piety, like faith,[13] is the reverence joined

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[7] Ibid. pp. 132-202.

[8] See Barth's exposition of the true humanity of man from that of Christ (Ibid. pp. 132-202).

[9] CD IV, 1, p. 366.

[10] Ibid. p. 367.

[11] Ibid. p. 363.

[12] Inst. I.ii.1.

[13] Inst. III.ii.22-26.

with love of the creator-God the Father.[14] Calvin regards God the Father as the Father of the Son (Word in the man Jesus Christ) and the Holy Spirit from the perspective of faith (piety) in God's Word. Faith derives from the Word (Son) of the creator-God the Father which the Holy Spirit reveals from Scripture. Calvin does not argue for true knowledge of ourselves from our encounter with a non-trinitarian God, as Barth says he does. Book I.ii explicitly insists on the indispensability of our encounter with the creator-God the Father (of the Son and the Holy Spirit) in piety (faith) for their true knowledge.[15]

The perspective of faith is Calvin's and Barth's ground for proposing a realistic and objective view of our creaturely humanity in the light of God's Word It emancipates them from any form of biblical formalism, and provides theological freedom[16] and autonomy to interpret and postulate biblical and dogmatic ideas of our creaturely reality as the distinctive work of God the Father[17] under the authority of his Word. The existence and sustenance of faith depend entirely on the Word of God the Father which the Holy Spirit reveals from Scripture. Their subjection to the biblical revelation of God's living Word supports their biblical and dynamic theology.

The implication of Barth's christological orientation is that it leads him to define the reality of our relation to God as a covenantal and redemptive relation in Christ. The creaturely humanity of God in the man Jesus Christ exists so as

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[14] Inst. I.ii.2.

[15] See Chapter I.2.i.

[16] "It is by faith, and indeed by faith in the Word of God which is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that we have to say that God is gracious to man and that man is the creature to whom God is gracious... What is the creaturely nature of man to the extent that, looking to the revealed grace of God and concretely to the man Jesus, we can see in it a continuum unbroken by sin, an essence which even sin does not and cannot change? It is the special and characteristic task of theological anthropology to consider this question. In so doing, it does not prevent other anthropological discussion... Here lies its freedom and objectivity. Even in its investigation of human nature, its enquiries are not based on any creaturely insight into the creature. It places the contemplative and reflective reason of the creature in the service of the Creator's knowledge of the creature revealed by God's own Word." CD III, 2. pp. 43-4.

[17] See the early part of previous section for the difference between Barth's understanding of the acting subject of God the Father in creation and Calvin's, and for the implications of the difference.

to fulfill our covenant (and redemptive) relation to God in election. Like Barth, Calvin does not deny our original capacity to hear and obey God's Word and will for our covenant relation with him and our eternal life (salvation). He, however, discusses our relation to God, which is constitutive to our true being not in terms of a covenantal and redemptive relation in Christ, as Barth does, but in terms of a creature-creator relationship. It depends on the self-revelation of the creator-God the Father, not in Christ but in our creatureliness Calvin speaks of our true creaturely being which the creator-God the Father reveals in us.

The assertion of the event of the summoning Word as the constitution of our true being attracts criticism. It presupposes, argues D. Cairns, that only real men now are believers who are called and summoned by God's Word and will in redemption. Unbelievers who are not cannot be real men.[18] Jean Daniélou believes that Barth suffers from an insufficient justification of the inherent creaturely being of sinful men, and "renews the acosmism of Parmenides and Cankara".[19] He "denies the existence of created man as neutral prior to the summons into being"[20] in redemption. James Brown asks the obvious kind of question, "how anything can be *called forth* which is not in some sense already there!"[21]

The criticizers here are rooted in misunderstandings of Barth's anthropology, and are thus untenable. Barth never suggests that sin actually annuls or denies and destroys our creaturely humanity. Our creaturely humanity is elected in Christ by the grace of God before the foundation of the world as it is. The electing grace of God preserves our creaturely human being by negating the power of sin

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[18] "But there is a further, and much graver, difficulty ahead. The real man is he who is not merely elect and the object of the salvation in Christ, but the man whose whole life is service of God... But if God is known only in the revelation in Christ incarnate, then those who live outwith the reach of it in space and time cannot be real men. This difficulty becomes even more clear when Barth introduces the second notion by means of which he hopes to make clear the picture of the real man. The real man is he who hears the Word of God in Christ." *The Image of God in Man*, SCM Press, London, 1953, pp. 171-2.

[19] *God and Us*, trans. Walter Roberts, Mowbray, London, 1957, p. 73.

[20] Timothy Bradshaw, *Trinity and Ontology*, Rutherford House, Edinburgh, 1988, p. 99.

[21] *Subject and Object in Modern Theology*, SCM Press, London, 1955, p. 164.

to turn it into non-human being (or nothingness or chaos).[22] Sin simply changes its quality from sinless (good) to totally sinful (evil) and covers it with infamy.[23] Our encounter with the revelation of God's Word in redemption never makes our creaturely humanity something which it is not. Rather, it changes its quality The Word (Son) of God the Father in Christ forgives our sinful humanity and restores its original condition in creation[24] in faith by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.[25]

The interpretation of man in his relation to God's Word attempts to present his reality in the light of his whole being in his decision and action. It is a dynamic understanding of the reality of man. He is not a solitary and static being in and for himself, but a relational and dynamic being to and for God. Barth, like Calvin, demonstrates not only the genuine openness of our being to our Creator, but also a necessary and constant determination of our being by this relation,[26] and opposes the self-existence, sufficiency, containment, and completion of man in and for himself.[27] They view our being (potentiality) from its full historical and existential becoming and realisation (actuality) in action in a specific time

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[22] "And so the will of God for His creation is to preserve it from the nothingness to which it would inevitably succumb apart from the divine initiative, to save the creature from the threat which it cannot overcome of itself." CD III, 2. p. 143.

[23] "If man is the object of divine grace, his self-contradiction many be radical and total, but it is not the last word that has been spoken about him... For the fact that he covered his creaturely being with infamy cannot mean that he has annulled or destroyed it. The fact of his fall cannot mean that what he is eternally before God and from God, His Creator and Lord, has been changed... It springs solely from the fact that he is the object of divine grace. And this truth can only become clear to him by the Word of God in which it is grounded. Only by this Word does he know that while he is a sinner he is not merely a sinner, but that even as sinner he is God's creature and as such real before God." Ibid. p. 31.

[24] "If man actually decides against God... he falls into the abyss in a twofold sense. He does that for which there is no excuse and which ca be justified only by the restoration of a state of right which God alone can effect, i.e., by the divine forgiveness. We cannot now pursue this problem in detail. Our present concern is simply to say that, as the fellow-elect of Jesus, man as the creature of God is predestined to be the victor and not the vanquished in the defence of being against non-being." Ibid. p. 147

[25] CD IV, 1. pp. 568-649.

[26] CD III, 2. pp. 71-73.

[27] Ibid. pp. 109-111.

and space,[28] renounce our abstract, timeless and static relation to God,[29] and prefer the method of existential to idealist or naturalistic anthropology The weakness of idealist or naturalistic anthropology is apparent, as the question of man's existence is considered in the light of his genuine openness and relation to other being than himself. It views man as a self-contained reality[30] Barth (and Calvin) reject the Cartesian anthropology which regards man's innate awareness of himself as the primary basis for the question of his existence and others (e g God). The genuine question of our existence and its answer are possible by our relation and correspondence to other beings than ourselves.

Barth corresponds well to the method of the Heideggerian existential anthropology[31] which insists on our encounter with another being in a specific time and space for the question and answer of our existence. It succeeds in demonstrating the basic openness of our being to others and to its historical and existential becoming and realisation. But he sharply disassociates himself from its reliance on autonomous human understanding in the question and answer of their existence, since it overlooks that the creator-God the Father alone knows and reveals the true nature of his creature, man, to and for us.[32] Barth, like Calvin, asserts the self-revelation of the creator-God the Father as the only source of true knowledge of our creaturely nature, and our obedient responsibility before God as the outcome of our relational openness to this revelation.[33]

The revelation of the creator-God (in us for Calvin and in Christ for Barth) summons and commands[34] us to obey his will and word for his service and glory.

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[28] Ibid. pp. 128 and 142.

[29] Ibid. p. 124.

[30] Ibid. p. 109.

[31] See Heidegger's analysis of our being (*Dasein*) as a being with others in time (*Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1962, pp. 78ff, 153ff and 349ff)

[32] CD III, 2. pp. 121-2.

[33] "The stimulus at least to this account of man's responsibility as an act of knowledge and obedience I owe to reflection on the remarkable opening of Calvin's *Catechism* (1542)." Ibid. p. 182.

[34] Barth spells out the commanding nature of the revelation of the creator-God under the doctrine

Barth follows Calvin in regarding our responsibility before God as the ultimate and highest goal and goodness of our action and life, and affirming it along with our knowledge of Creator as the constitution of our true being in creation.[35] Their disparity is that they respectively propose this responsibility as a covenantal (redemptive) and creaturely responsibility. This derives from our covenantal (redemptive) relation to the revelation of the creator-God the Father in Christ, and from creature-creator relation in the revelation of the creator-God the Father in us.

It is vitally important to highlight their emphasis on our own creaturely freedom,[36] goodness[37] and glory[38]. This offers the basis for the true purpose and meaning and freedom of our creaturely life for its own goodness and glory, and thereby resists an egoist notion of God which regards our creaturely life and action as the only means for the glory and goodness of God the Creator. Like Calvin, Barth meanwhile does not undermine the link between the freedom, goodness and glory of man and God by upholding their correspondence. Man is created in God's own image as a free, good and glorious being in order to attest the freedom, goodness and glory of his creator-God. His freedom in creation "is never freedom to repudiate his responsibility before God,"[39] namely his obedient service for God's glory and goodness. "It is the freedom of a right choice... it corresponds to the free choice of God."[40] "Hence it is his freedom for good and for good alone;"[41] "it is never freedom to sin."[42]

The regrettable fact is that Barth does not appreciate the creaturely gift of

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of Christian ethics (in Volume III, 4. of *Church Dogmatics*).

[35] Op. cit., pp. 182-3 and 193.

[36] Ibid. 193.

[37] Ibid. p. 197.

[38] Ibid. p. 183.

[39] Ibid. p. 197.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid. p. 198.

[42] Ibid. p. 197. Barth's understanding of sin will be discussed later with its relation to Calvin's.

God for the natural capacity of sinful men (e.g. for socio-political and economical affairs, arts and knowledge of God), as much as Calvin does. His appreciation concentrates on the beauty, goodness and glory of our original and redeemed nature in God's Word in Christ. Barth does not realise that the appreciation of our creaturely nature, however sinful, is essential for understanding the good and glorious quality of God the Creator, as Calvin does. The creaturely nature of sinful men, argues Daniel W. Hardy,[43] is necessary to understand their redeemed nature. "That is what forms from *created sociality* a truly *redeemed sociality*."[44] Barth is subject to the criticism of Patrick Sherry that his christocentric orientation overlooks the role of the Holy Spirit in communicating the natural beauty and glory of creation (women and men) as it is[45] (as Calvin does).[46] He, however, fails to recognise the sharp difference between Barth's commentary on Mozart's music[47] and his *Church Dogmatics*.[48] The abundant admiration of the natural beauty and glory of creation in Mozart's music is not fully accommodated in the structure and content of the *Dogmatics*.

The chief reason for this is that Barth does not present creation in its own terms and purpose, as Calvin does, but for the sake of redemption or reconciliation. The redemptive will (election) is the inner basis of creation. Barth, like Calvin,[49] upholds man as the central object and purpose of God's whole creation.[50] All things in history are created for the fulfillment of the eternal and

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[43] "Created and Redeemed Sociality," in *On Being the Church*, ed. Colin E. Gunton and Daniel W. Hardy, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1989, pp. 21-47.

[44] Ibid. p. 47.

[45] *Spirit and Beauty*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992, p. 83.

[46] Inst. I.xiii.14.

[47] *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*, trans. C. K. Pott, W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1986.

[48] "In 1956 the theologian Karl Barth published a short book of writings about Mozart... Barth was doing more than expressing his appreciation of his favourite composer, for he spoke of the 'parables of the kingdom of heaven' glimpsed in Mozart's music... Here he was touching on some themes developed a few years earlier, in volume iii of his *Church Dogmatics*, where he asked why it is possible to hold that Mozart has a place in theology, especially in the doctrine of creation and also in eschatology" (Opt. cit. p. 1).

[49] Inst. I.xiv.22.

[50] CD III, 2. pp. 14-7.

redemptive will (election) of God. Creation is always viewed from redemption or reconciliation in election. Our true creaturely nature is argued from our redeemed nature in the eternal election of God in Christ. Barth does not justify creation's own purpose (beauty and glory) in its relation to redemption, as Calvin does. Calvin proposes that the purpose of our creaturely nature is not only for its redemption, but also for its own beauty and glory to attest and praise the glory and beauty of the creative action of God[51] the Father for his distinctive being (person) as Creator in the triune God. Barth does not recognise creation and redemption or reconciliation as the principal works of the Father and the Son for their distinctive beings (persons) as Creator and Redeemer or Reconciler in the triune God, as Calvin does.

Their different views of the relationship between creation (or Creator) and redemption (or reconciliation) or redeemer (reconciler) stems from their different understanding of the triune nature and action of God (i.e. their doctrine of the Trinity). The doctrine leads Barth to present each action of God (e.g. creation or redemption or reconciliation) as the co-work of the one personal being of God (the whole Trinity), whilst it leads Calvin to designate each as the distinctive work of the individual persons of the Trinity.[52] They encounter each person of the Trinity and the one personal God[53] in the event of revelation in the creation or redemption of man. Their basis in revelation determines the purpose and orientation of their anthropology in the doctrine of creation.

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[51] Inst. I.xiv.22.

[52] The weakness and strength of Barth's and Calvin's trinitarian notion of God in their theology were mentioned before.

[53] "In the first place, it presupposes a division of the knowledge and Word of God. In this context we can only indicate our objection to this presupposition. We have developed it at length and given our reasons for it in earlier chapters of the *Church Dogmatics*, especially in the doctrine of God and creation... According to the biblical knowledge of God, God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is concretely one both in His inner being and in His presence, action and revelation in the world and for us." CD IV, 1. p. 363.

§1.2. Our Relation to Others

The treatment of our relation to others shows our true nature in creation as fellow-humanity. We not only exist with our fellow-human beings, but also have a responsibility for their well being and ultimate salvation. Barth's interpretation of our co-existent being and responsibility in creation is christocentric. It is based in the revelation of God's Word in Christ. He argues from Christ's fellow-humanity and his responsibility for others in this revelation, which the Bible attests [54] The man Jesus Christ exists with God the Father in the Holy Spirit. His human existence is for the salvation of other human beings. The basis is decisive in affirming the reality of our responsibility in creation not only as the object of faith, but also as our covenantal partnership with God the Creator in Christ.

Barth interprets our true being in creation as God's covenant-partner in Christ, and our responsibility for others as the fulfillment of this covenantal partnership. Our covenantal partnership is grounded in Christ's covenantal partnership with God in his electing grace.[55] Barth's interpretation here does not oppose Calvin's. Calvin's anthropology in the doctrine of creation (in Book I.xv of the 1559 *Institutes*) does not, however, regard our covenantal relationship with God in Christ as its chief concern. It focuses on the creature-creator relationship between man and God the Father from his revelation in creation (including man). It is meant to show our creaturely relation to our fellow-creaturely human beings. Our covenantal relationship is the major concern of soteriology in the *Institutes*. Book II and III deal respectively with the ground of the covenantal relationship in Christ's redemptive work, and its actuality in faith by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

Like Calvin, Barth explores the precise nature of our creaturely responsibility for others and God under the topic of Christian ethics (e.g. by discussing our

[54] CD III, 2. pp. 203-222.

[55] Ibid. pp. 203-206.

freedom before God and our freedom in fellowship).[56] Unlike Calvin, he deals with the problem of Christian ethics or life in the doctrine of creation (in Volume III, 4 of *Church Dogmatics*). God creates as well as commands us to obey his Word and will for his service and glory. Calvin deals with this ethical problem in the doctrine of faith and God the Holy Spirit (i.e. in Book III.vi-x of the *Institutes*). God restores the original state of our creaturely responsibility in Christ to carry it out in faith by the power of the Holy Spirit. Calvin and Barth consider the question and answer of Christian ethics as a matter of faith, and demonstrate the creative action and being of God the Father in their treatment of our creaturely responsibility.

Calvin does not offer an articulation of our fellow-humanity in the light of our personal encounter with others, as Barth does by defining it as "I am as Thou art."[57] My humanity ("I am") implies and represents your or other humanity ("Thou art").[58] We are thus truly human and the image of God only when we (as "I") confront other human beings (as "Thou") in a specific time and space. Barth exploits the relationship between male and female as the basic structure and form of our humanity and image of God in creation, and asserts their reality as "I am as Thou art" for their differentiation and relationship.[59] Their unity (in the single humanity) in distinction is argued from the revelation of the trinitarian unity and distinction of the triune God in Christ.[60] We are created in the image of God in Christ. "The humanity of Jesus is not merely the repetition and reflection

[56] Barth explores Christian ethics under the doctrine of the creator-God the Commander in the doctrine of creation. The doctrine of the creator-God the Commander discusses the nature of the holy day, confession and prayer for our freedom or responsibility before God, and the relationship between man and woman, parents and children, and near and distant neighbours for our freedom in fellowship or our responsibility for others (CD III, 4. pp. 47-324). The implication of the assertion of the revelation of God's Word and will in Christ as his commandment is this. It enables Barth not only to offer a christological answer to ethical problems, but also to present it as a doctrine of faith.

[57] CD III, 2. p. 248.

[58] Ibid. pp. 244-2.

[59] Ibid. pp. 285-324. cf. III, 4. p. 117.

[60] Ibid. pp. 218 and 324.

of His divinity, or of God's controlling will; it is the repetition and reflection of God Himself, no more and no less."[61]

Barth succeeds in conveying the literal meaning of the biblical story of creation of man in the image of God,[62] and surpasses the traditional (i.e. Calvin's) doctrine of God's image that discusses it in terms of man's spiritual knowledge of God in relation. Calvin neither claims the relational openness of our being to others on the basis of the trinitarian relatedness and openness of God in Christ, nor develops the formal concept of God's image within the mutual unity of male and female in distinction, as Barth does by illustrating their correspondence to the trinitarian unity and distinction of God in Christ. He merely upholds the existence of the spiritual image of God in every male and female.[63]

Calvin does not regard Christ's image of God as the ontic and noetic basis of our image of God, as Barth does. We are created not in the image of the redeemer-God the Son (Word) in the man Jesus Christ, but in that of the creator-God the Father. There are also two specific reasons for rejection of a christocentric interpretation of God's image.[64] Christ is not the sole image, but the most perfect image of God, for his human image of God is like ours. There is therefore no need to view our image of God from his. The other reason is that the man Jesus Christ is also God, which means he is the image of himself. We cannot talk about the reality of Christ merely as the creation of God's image.

ii.3. Our Relation to Ourselves

The discussion of ourselves does not focus on our reality in and for itself, but on its origin in and for God the Creator. Barth advocates the Spirit of God the Creator as the basis of our whole being, soul and body.[65] The constitution

[61] Ibid. p. 219.

[62] CD III, 1. pp. 183-97.

[63] See Chapter I.2.iii.1.b.

[64] Inst. I.xv.3 and 4.

[65] CD III, 2. pp. 344-366.

of our created nature as a soul and a body leads him to deal with our allotted and created time or temporality.[66] The alienation of the soul from the body or *vice versa* brings forth the end of the living activity of man.[67] He follows Calvin in rejecting the trichotomy of body, soul, and spirit in us.[68] Human spirit is not a third thing beside soul and body. It is not like soul and body given in creation once and for all. Both interpret the biblical witness to human spirit as the spiritual condition of human life (i.e. soul),[69] and uphold the Spirit of God the Creator as the Giver and Sustainer of the spiritual life (i.e. soul) of man,[70] and demonstrate the participation of the Holy Spirit in God the Father's creation and sustenance of man.[71]

The Spirit of God the Creator is the principle and power of our whole life and our relationship and fellowship with God.[72] Barth recognises a special and direct relation of the Spirit to the soul. The Spirit quickens and constitutes it as a living spiritual and rational subject, so that the soul animates the body to act as a living organ.[73] Barth, like Calvin, not only demonstrates the soul of man as the proper seat of his spiritual and rational relation to God, but also opposes a purely materialistic understanding of his whole being (body[74] and soul). Man is a spiritual and rational being, for he is addressed by God.[75] The Spirit of God is the basis of our soul and body;[76] he enables their co-existence and function,[77] and their unity and coherence. Without the Spirit, "his soul would become a

[66] Ibid. p. 438. The assertion of man's created and allotted temporality is one of major concerns of Barth's anthropology (Ibid. pp. 437-640).

[67] Ibid. p. 425.

[68] Ibid. p. 355.

[69] Ibid. p. 425.

[70] Ibid. p. 359. Inst. III.i.2.

[71] Ibid. p. 356.

[72] Ibid. p. 356.

[73] Ibid. p. 393.

[74] Ibid. p. 383.

[75] Ibid. p. 422.

[76] Ibid. p. 419.

[77] Ibid. pp. 366-394.

shadow of itself and his body a purely material body which as such could only dissolve in the world of bodies surrounding it."[78]

The possession of our spirit is recognised in terms of our spiritual life (i.e. soul). Man himself is not the Spirit who is God the Creator. Like Calvin, Barth nevertheless proposes that our spiritual life (i.e. soul) belongs to the constitution of our original nature in creation. His assertion of the total dependence of the existence and sustenance of human spirit on divine Spirit invites criticism. "The echoes of idealism are strong here," claims Timothy Bradshaw, "yet his denial to man of a created spirit leaves him vulnerable to the charge that man, the creature, is too integrated into the triune God's own movement of relation and differentiation."[79] Barth anticipates this kind of criticism, and explicitly opposes the idealist (Hegelian) identification of human spirit with divine spirit, and, like Calvin, defends the biblical witness to their ontological distinction and discontinuity. Human spirit is created by the Spirit of God the Creator.[80]

The implication of their distinction is this. It allows the freedom and autonomy of created human spirit in responding to the Spirit of God the Creator and his Word and will, despite the basis of the former in the latter.[81] It is essential for the dynamic and existential nature of our creaturely being, and our undiminishable and dynamic relationship with God the Creator. Like Calvin, Barth does not regard our true being as a static and natural thing given to us in creation once and for all. It is a super-natural gift of God the Spirit. The existence and sustenance of our true being depends constantly on him. Our spiritual life (soul) derives from our constant and dynamic encounter with the Spirit of God in revelation in a specific time and space.

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[78] Ibid. p. 426.

[79] *Trinity and Ontology*, Rutherford House, Edinburgh, 1988, p. 95.

[80] Op. cit., p. 345.

[81] "As he dwells in this sphere, man is so with God that he derives solely and exclusively from Him. Again, this does not mean any cancellation of his independence, selfhood and freedom. But it does mean that in his independence, selfhood and freedom, he belongs only to the One who comes to him as Lord." Ibid. p. 142. cf. pp. 122, 126-128 and 194-199.

> The Spirit belongs to God even as He is given to man. He can have the Spirit only as He is continually given to him. Spirit is the event of the gift of life whose subject is God; and this event must be continuously repeated as God's act if man is to live.[82]

> He is spiritual soul. That he is also spiritual body is not apparent to him, and we cannot speak of it if we speak of his natural condition, since it will be the gift of grace of future revelation.[83]

Our spiritual life (soul) confirms the relational openness of our being to God the Creator, and our true being as constant becoming and realisation in our relation to his Spirit in a specific time and space. Barth's treatment of it maintains the insight of existential anthropology that defines our authentic being from its dynamic awareness and realisation here and now, and opposes a static and materialistic notion of our reality and its self-existence, containment and fulfillment He differentiates us from animals on the basis of our rationality as well as the dynamic and constant becoming and realisation of our true (spiritual) being.[84]

He distances himself from the traditional doctrine (including Calvin's) of our creaturely reality. This doctrine explains it in terms of "two independent and distinct substances"[85] or parts, of soul and body, and proposes a dualistic view of them by indicating their opposite and conflicting qualities (such as worthy and unworthy, material and spiritual, spatial and non-spatial, and indissoluble and dissoluble). The serious problem of this dualistic view is that it fails to justify the concrete unity, oneness and wholeness of man,[86] although it never denies it. A materialistic and spiritual monism emerges as a reaction to the view; it undermines the reality of the soul or the body in order to accentuate their oneness.[87]

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[82] Ibid. p. 359.

[83] Ibid. p. 426.

[84] Ibid. pp. 136-7.

[85] Ibid. p. 392.

[86] Ibid. p. 380.

[87] Ibid. pp. 382-394.

In order to avoid this, Barth argues that we should understand our creaturely nature not as two substances or parts, of soul and body, but "as two moments of the indivisibly one human nature, the soul as that which quickens and the body as that which is quickened and lives."[88] "We distinguish within the one man, not two substances, but two moments of his creaturely reality."[89] This enables us to justify the concrete singular view of our creaturely nature to which the Bible attests[90] through the concrete oneness and wholeness of the man Jesus Christ.[91] The emphasis on the unity of soul and body is apparent in presenting man as a spiritual and rational being in his soul as well as his body. By virtue of his soul, his body has full participation in his rationality and spirituality.[92]

Barth's doctrine of man, like his doctrine of God, accentuates the one dynamic personal being. It attributes the acting subject of man to his one personal being rather than to the two substances or parts of its body and soul, and consequently describes the body and soul as two moments rather than substances (or beings) of his one creaturely being.[93] Barth argues for the indissoluble unity and distinction of soul and body from their existential relation or function rather than their different substances. The soul animates the body by the power of the Spirit of God the Creator to act as a living organ for the service of its rational and spiritual will and subject.[94] Their animating and animated relation unmistakenly substantiates their interdependence, interconnexion and unity in distinction.[95] The

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[88] Ibid. p. 393.

[89] Ibid. p. 399.

[90] Ibid. p. 393.

[91] Ibid. pp. 325-344.

[92] Ibid. pp. 419-428.

[93] See Barth's doctrine of the Trinity (CD I, 1. pp. 350ff.) Barth attributes the acting subject of God to his one personal being rather than to the Trinity, and defines the Trinity as the three moments of God's one personal being.

[94] CD III, 2. p. 419.

[95] "The two indissolubly connected moments of human creaturely reality consist in this preceding and following of these two moments. The one never is without the other. Since they are not interchangeable with one another, the one always preceding and the other following, we must accept a differentiation between soul and body, while never speaking of two distinct substances." Ibid. p. 417.

animation of the soul is impossible without the animated body. The conceptual development of the constitution of our creaturely being as a soul of a body, or as a body of a soul, relies on the assertion of the Spirit of God as the basis of this constitution. It enables Barth to avoid viewing them as separate and dualistic.

> We are, in fact, caught in an endless spiral, so long as the idea of the two substances is not wholly abandoned, and the concrete reality of the one man set up definitively at the start, in the middle and at the end of all consideration... The abstract dualism of the Greek and traditional Christian doctrine, and the equally abstract materialist and spiritualist monism, are from this standpoint a thoroughgoing and interconnected deviation. The question how such a deviation was and is possible may be answered as follows. Our statement that man is wholly and at the same time both soul and body presupposes the first statement that man is as he has Spirit. We saw in our second sub-section that it is the Spirit, i.e., the immediate action of God Himself, which grounds, constitutes and maintains man as soul of his body. It is thus the Spirit that unifies him and holds him together as soul and body. If we abstract from the Spirit.. consider man for himself... he is seen as a puzzling duality, his mortal body on the one side and his immortal soul on the other, a totality composed of two parts inadequately glued together, of two obviously different and conflicting substances.[96]

Barth's interpretation of the traditional doctrine (i.e. Calvin's) of the constitution of our creaturely nature is unbalanced. Calvin never proposes an opposition and conflict relation between soul and body in our original nature in creation, as Barth implies. They are harmonious; the rational and spiritual soul animates and rules the physical body to follow and serve its good will. Their opposition or conflict emerges from man's sin (corruption). The sinful desire of the flesh (body) subdues the good (sinless) desire of the soul. Calvin does not suggest a dualistic view of soul and body, and their disunity, by proposing their opposite and conflicting relation, as Barth interprets. Rather, he mentions their different qualities or substances and relation in the one man before and after his fall. Their different qualities or substances are essential for their genuine discrepancy and relation or animating and animated moments, in their unity in one

[96] Ibid. p. 393.

man.

Calvin's emphasis on their unity is apparent in the insistence on our view of soul always from body or *vice versa*.[97] He would support Barth's expression of the constitution of our creaturely being as a soul of a body, or as a body of a soul, even though he does not explicitly suggest this. He, like Barth, proposes the animating and animated relation of soul and body, and their unity in distinction from this. Although he does not explicitly argue for the Spirit of God the Creator as the basis of the constitution of our nature as a soul of a body, or *vice versa*, and of their unity in distinction, he would certainly be open to Barth's argument by affirming the fact that the Spirit is the Giver and the Quicker of our life as soul and body (or a soul of a body or *vice versa*).

Barth does not realise that the recognition of the different substances (qualities) of soul and body is necessary for the argument of their particular discrepancy and relation in unity, as Calvin does. His refusal to view our creaturely nature from the two different substances does not seem to deny their actual existence. That he acknowledges their substances (qualities) is arguable from his assertion of their particular function and relation. Their particular function and relation (or as moments) is impossible without allowing their particular substances (qualities). He accepts Calvin's claim of the superiority of the spiritual and rational soul over the corporeal body, and defines the reality of man as the soul of his body rather than as the body of his soul.[98] Both attribute the proper seat of our rationality and spirituality to the soul rather than to the body,[99] and assert the original capacity of our soul to differentiate us from God the Creator and to hear and obey his Word and will. This capacity is indispensable for fulfilling our

[97] "Indeed, from Scripture we have already taught that the soul is an incorporeal substance; now we must add that, although properly it is not spatially limited, still, set in the body, it dwells there as in a house; not only that it may animate all its parts and render its organs fit and useful for their actions, but also that it may hold the first place in ruling man's life, not alone with respect to the duties of his earthly life, but at the same time to arouse him to honor God." Inst. I.xv.6.

[98] CD III, 2. p. 401.

[99] Ibid. pp. 418-428.

responsibility and service for God and fellow-men in covenant.[100]

The central disparity between Barth's doctrine of the constitution of our original nature in creation and Calvin's stems from their different basis and perspective. The former is based in the revelation of God's Word in Christ. This basis determines the christocentric orientation of Barth's doctrine. He argues for the constitution of our original nature from that of the creaturely human nature of Christ which the creator-God the Father reveals in his biblical Word.[101] Calvin views this human nature from its restoration in faith which the creator-God the Father reveals in his biblical Word. Barth is aware of the problem in the christological foundation of his anthropology. The creaturely human nature is one thing in Christ and another in us. He opposes a simple deduction of anthropology from christology.[102] Barth does not realise that the real problem in his ontic basis of our creaturely humanity in Christ's is that they are qualitatively distinct. Our autonomous and independent human being (soul) cannot be viewed from Christ's creaturely humanity. He does not have it.

The problem of Calvin's anthropology is noticeable in its dominant interest in the spiritual and rational soul of man. It discusses our original nature in creation from the perspective of the restoration of our spiritual and rational soul in faith which the creator-God the Father reveals in his biblical Word. It ignores the issue of the original condition of our body in creation, for his perspective cannot offer any information about it. This issue is vitally important. It would be possible to suggest our freedom from all physical deformity in creation and thus in the final redemption of our body according to its perfect original form, giving us (particularly those who are physically sick and deformed) hope and comfort. Although Barth's anthropology does not explicitly deal with the issue, its method allows capacity for presupposing the original condition of our body in

[100] Ibid. pp. 382ff and 399ff.

[101] Ibid. pp. 325-344.

[102] Ibid. pp. 47-51.

the light of the unfallen (sinless) humanity of Christ.

2.ii. Sinful Humanity

The major treatments of the doctrine of sin in *Church Dogmatics* and in the 1559 *Institutes* appear respectively in the doctrine of reconciliation[103] and redemption.[104] Their doctrine of sin is theological. It does not discuss human sin or guilt in and for itself, but in the light of the redemptive work of God in Christ. The reality, gravity and significance of sin are truly known through a hermeneutical connection with Christ's work. His work demonstrates the necessity of the condescension of the creator-God to the creaturely reality in the man Jesus Christ, and his suffering and death for the negation of the power and condemnation of sin. Their doctrines attest to the reconciling or redemptive being of God in Christ from his reconciliation or redemption of the sinful humanity.

2.ii.1. The Reality of Sin

Barth endorses a Calvinist supralapsarian interpretation of sin, and regards the saving will (election) of God *in se* as the ultimate responsibility for sin. This will presupposes the corruptibility and corruption of man.[105] The grace of God's election in Christ precedes human sin. It is not a reaction to sin.[106] Human sin is a corollary of God's electing grace. Barth claims the triumph of God's electing grace over the reality and condemnation of sin on behalf of all mankind.[107] Sin cannot nullify our humanity and covenantal relationship with God the Creator in his electing grace, because they are elected by the grace of God in Christ before the foundation of the world. All sinful human beings are the object of God's

[103] See CD IV, 1. pp. 358-513, 2. pp. 265-498 and 3. pp. 368-480.

[104] See Inst. II.i-vi.

[105] "As the Creator, He did not will a threatened and lost creation, but a saved and preserved... As the Creator, He knew its importance to save and maintain itself. Thus the fall of man, while it formed no part of His intention, was not outside His foresight and plan." CD III, 2. p. 144.

[106] O. Weber, *Foundations of Dogmatics*, Vol. I, p. 557.

[107] Op. cit., p. 146.

electing and covenantal grace in Christ.[108] Barth highlights their indissoluble hope for forgiveness and as God's children and covenant partners with God by his electing grace in Christ. This is designed to overcome the traditional (including Calvin's) pessimistic view of man.[109] Calvin asserts the domination of the power of sin over sinful unbelievers for their eternal condemnation, and thus eliminates their hope to be forgiven and God's children and covenant partners with God by his grace in Christ. They are rejected by the will of God.

Barth's christocentric interpretation of sin is not free from criticism. There is serious doubt about the appropriateness and tenability of the ontic and noetic basis of our sinful nature in Christ's sinful humanity. It differs from our sinful humanity. Christ is free from sin by virtue of his divinity, whilst we are obviously not.[110] The difference appears to invalidate the ontic and noetic basis of our sinful humanity in Christ. Calvin's doctrine of sin seems more realistic than Barth's. Calvin regards the actuality of our sinful humanity, which God reveals in our faith through his biblical Word, as the source and basis of his doctrine of sin.

Moreover, Barth himself does not seem to be free from a pessimistic view of man. He, like Calvin, denies the possible inclusion in God's free will of sinful man's free will not to sin. Both suggest that sinful man lost his free will to do good. Their doctrines of sin and man ignore the possibility of man's free will not to sin against fellow-human beings (and God the Creator). The elaboration of this possibility is vitally important and significant. It stimulates our hope and desire not to sin against our fellow-human beings for the preservation, peace and harmony of creaturely humanity in the will of God the Creator, which is desperately needed in our time.

Like Calvin, Barth defines sin (evil) as corruption of our sinless nature in

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108 CD IV, 1. p. 494.

109 Ibid. p. 493-494.

110 CD III, 2. pp. 236ff.

creation.[111] Sin itself is not a possibility for our original sinless nature which the grace of God elected in Christ before the foundation of the world. Its actual occurrence in history is wholly irrational and inexplicable.[112] It is an "impossible possibility". It continuously corrupts and damages and threatens our being, turning it into non-being or nothingness.[113] G. C. Berkouwer claims that this ontological impossibility is the most central and decisive category of Barth's doctrine of sin.[114] "Reformed [Calvin's] theology was much more concerned to exclude the impossibility"[115] of sin. He opposes the use of this category not because it overlooks the reality of sin, but because it is speculative rather than biblical. Sin is related to man's responsibility and death, and to God's condemnation and wrath in the Bible.[116] Barth does not justify the full historical significance of sin and God's wrath against sin in history, for he advocates their negation in the eternal electing grace of God in Christ, and their ontological impossibility in history.[117] "If sin is ontological impossibility, a transition from wrath to grace in the historical sphere is no longer thinkable."[118]

It is true that Calvin stresses the possibility of sin by regarding it as a necessary event for sinful men (i.e. unbelievers). He views sin from our sinful nature. Barth interprets sin from our original and redeemed and sanctified nature in the revelation of God's Word in Christ, and thus accentuates its ontological impossibility. The remarkable point is that this impossibility is impossibility to God *in se*, but never to us.

We cannot really look at Jesus without—in a certain sense through Him—

111 Ibid. pp. 197-8.

112 Ibid. p. 143.

113 Ibid. pp. 136-147.

114 *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, trans. Harry R. Boer, W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1956, pp. 231 and 234.

115 Ibid. p. 233. The bracket is mine.

116 Ibid.

117 Op. cit., pp. 234-255.

118 Ibid. p. 233.

> seeing ourselves also. In Him is the human nature created by God without the self-contradiction which afflicts us and without the self-deception by which we seek to escape from this our shame. In Him is human nature without human sin. For as He the Son of God becomes man, and therefore our nature becomes his, the rent is healed, the impure becomes pure and the enslaved is freed... The good-pleasure of God rests on Him. And because of this He has power to forgive sin... Thus human nature in Jesus is the reason and the just foundation for the mercy in which God has turned to our human nature... He is justified in His own eyes when He justifies us sinful men. For He does this for the sake of Jesus... Here God finds human nature blameless. This is the basis of our pardon and of the continuance of the covenant which we have broken... This does not means our sin is overlooked, or unremoved, or unexpiated. The sinlessness, purity and freedom of human nature in Jesus consists precisely in the fact that, laden with the sin which is alien to His own nature, He causes Himself to be condemned and rejected with us. Thus the sin of our human nature is not only covered by Him but rightfully removed and destroyed. But this means that it is truly buried and covered, so that before God and in truth there now remains only the pure and free humanity of Jesus as our own humanity.[119]

It is a description of the historical reality of our sin. The definition of sin as an ontological impossibility does not seem to be "sheer nonsense," as D. Cairns claims.[120] This powerfully highlights the biblical theme of forgiveness, redemption and sanctification of sinful man in the electing grace of God in Christ. Berkouwer himself admits in the end that "Barth can constantly appeal to all the triumphant grace expressions in the Bible."[121]

The decisive mistake of Berkouwer's interpretation of Barth's doctrine of sin is this. He views it from the perspective of the doctrine of eternal and universal salvation (*apokatastasis*). Berkouwer therefore unjustly argues that Barth does not recognise an actual transition from God's wrath to grace (or from God's grace to wrath) in the historical sphere. He overlooks the basis of Barth's doctrine of sin or rejection and election in the revelation of God's Word in Christ. This basis confines the possibility of this doctrine to the actuality of sin, its re-

[119] Ibid. p. 48.

[120] Op. cit., p. 172.

[121] Op. cit., p. 260.

jection, forgiveness and and sanctification in history, and forbids the doctrine of *apokatastasis*.[122]

Like Calvin, Barth does take seriously the historical significance of our sin and its consequence. The grace of God's election, forgiveness and sanctification, and our sinlessness, and the wrath of his rejection, unforgiveness, non-sanctification and our sinfulness, occur in our obedient and disobedient response to this revelation in history.[123] As we sin, the state of our nature is translated from the divine election (Yes) of creaturely human being to the divine rejection (No) of non-creaturely human being (or nothingness or chaos).[124] Berkouwer himself argues that there is a tension in Barth's theology.[125] It affirms and rejects the doctrine of *apokatastasis*, respectively, from the inner being of God and his action (revelation) to us. He fails, however, to accommodate this tension in his interpretation of Barth's doctrine of sin.

Barth follows Calvin in upholding the corruption of all men[126] and the total corruption (depravation) of their originally good nature.[127] Both take seriously the consequence of sin by stressing God's judgement and condemnation.[128] Sin brings with it the destruction of our true (original) nature and the corruption of our natural (socio-political and ecological) order and environment.[129] The disparity between Calvin and Barth is noticeable in their doctrine of original sin. Barth rejects Calvin's Augustinian doctrine of the original sin that proposes the direct biological and inherent transmission of sinful nature of the first man Adam to his offspring.[130] Our sinful nature derives directly from our own sin.

122 See Chapter III.3.iii.2.

123 CD II, 2. pp. 345-6 and 449-458.

124 CD III, 2. pp. 143 and 596.

125 Op. cit., pp. 287ff.

126 CD IV, 1. pp. 495-498 and 501-506.

127 Ibid. 1. pp. 492-4.

128 CD III, 2. p. 27.

129 CD III, 1. pp. 310-12.

130 CD IV, 1. pp. 499-501.

The rejection here is rooted in the ontic foundation and beginning of our original nature in Christ. Adam's humanity is not the origin and foundation of our humanity, but a provisional copy of Christ's humanity, just as our nature is.[131] Thus there can be no direct transmission of the sinful nature of Adam to the rest of human beings.

Barth does not consider the biblical stories about the transmission of Adam's sin to his offspring and its just condemnation as a historical and real fact, as Calvin does. This is meant to express the representativeness of our sin and its just condemnation. We all are sinful and guilty as he was.[132] "In him, therefore, we have simply to recognise ourselves and mankind and the whole history of man. Adam is not a fate which God has suspended over us."[133] The weakness of Calvin's Augustinian doctrine of original sin is that it does not take seriously our own sinful decision and action as determinative for our sin and sinful nature Barth overcomes this weakness by viewing our sin and sinful nature from our own sinful decision and action.[134] He appears to propose a gradual process of corruption (destruction) by various means (e.g. our sinful parenthood, and our sinful socio-political and ecological environment). The transmission of environmental (socio-political and ecological) sin from one generation to other can be argued from his (and Calvin's) doctrine of sin.

iii.2. The Remnants of our Creaturely Humanity

The total depravity (corruption) of our original nature (and image of God) in creation never denote the total annihilation of our creaturely humanity (and image of God). Like Calvin, Barth upholds the remnant of our creaturely humanity and image of God in our sinful nature, and never confines real men to those

131 Karl Barth, *Christ and Adam*, trans. T. A. Smail, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1956, pp. 6-43. cf. CD IV, 1. pp. 507-13.

132 CD III, 2. pp. 509-513.

133 Ibid. p. 511.

134 CD IV, 1. p. 510.

who are believers in Christ, as D. Cairns suggests.[135] All God's people (believers and unbelievers) are real human beings. Sin can destroy our original good and sinless nature, but never our creaturely humanity and image of God themselves. Sinful men and women are still real human beings, not cats. Our sinful humanity is still real creaturely humanity and the image of God.[136] Barth simultaneously accentuates our genuine humanity and image of God and the total corruption of their original good nature. There is no part of our creaturely humanity and image of God which are unaffected by sin.

> We must insist on two points. On the one hand, the realisation of the total and radical corruption of human nature must not be weakened. The shame which covers it is unbroken, and therefore there can be no question of gaining an insight into man as unaffected by sin. On the other hand, the question of human nature as constituted by God is reasonable and necessary.[137]

The indestructible image of God is stressed through the unity, distinction and fellowship between the male and female humanity.[138] There is also the trinitarian unity, distinction and fellowship in God. The explicit and positive argument of God's image in unbelievers (natural men and women) is something which Barth's earlier works (e.g. in his debate with E. Brunner[139] and in Volume I and II of *Church Dogmatics*) lacked. His earlier works concentrated on affirming the image of God in faith (the believer), and the *Nein* to the natural knowledge or image of God in order to reject any form of natural theology that postulates the concept

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135 Op. cit., pp. 171-2.

136 "We do not forget, of course, that even as the sinner that he is man is still the creature of God. If his nature is wholly controlled by the fact that he has fallen away from God and can only be at odds with himself, yet this nature is not effaced, and he cannot succeed in destroying it and making himself unreal. The distortion or corruption of his being is not the same thing as its annihilation." CD III, 2. pp. 27-8. "God is in relationship, and so too is the man created by Him. This is his divine likeness. When we view it in this way, the dispute whether it is lost by sin finds a self-evident solution. It is not lost. But more important is the fact that what man is indestructibly as he is man with the fellow-man, he is in hope of the being and action of the One who is his original in this relationship." Ibid. p. 324. cf. III, 1. 189.

137 Ibid. p. 29. "We certainly cannot speak of any relic or core of goodness which persists in man in spite of his sin, as those who oppose and weaken the Augustinian-Reformed conception have so often tried to maintain and prove." CD IV, 1. p. 493.

138 CD III, 2. pp. 322-324.

139 E. Brunner and K. Barth, *Natural Theology: Comprising "Nature and Grace"*, pp. 72ff.

of Christian God from it. E. Brunner claims that Barth here proposes not only the structural concept of God's image, which endorses his formal (or universal and Old Testament) concept of God's image in his debate with Barth, but also a theological use of analogy between God and man, previously prohibited.[140] "In adopting this view of the universality of the image of God in man," asserts D. Cairns, "Barth has been forced to give up the doctrine of the Reformers, according to which the image of was lost by the Fall."[141]

This assertion is seriously misleading. Barth, like Calvin, upholds the total disappearance of the original quality of goodness (e.g. our sinless and good will and action in relation to God and fellow-human beings). His proposal of the remnants of the original form of our humanity and image of God in male and female does not contradict the Reformer's (i.e. Calvin's) doctrine of God's image Calvin never supports the disappearance of this original form, even though he does not discuss male and female, and their unity and distinction as the basic form of God's image in the light of the revelation of his trinitarian unity and distinction in Christ, as Barth does. Brunner overlooks that Barth consistently supports the use of the analogy between God and man in Christ for doctrine, and insists on the revelation of God's Word in faith as the noetic and conceptual possibility of this use. He never supports the use of the *analogia entis*, the ontological similarity

[140] "The Bible speaks of God... so personally... He reveals man as having been created in His Image. So long as Barth wholly rejected *this* concept of the *Imago*, he could not admit that he himself used the *analogia entis*. Since then, however, Barth's thought on this point has changed. He now admits this 'structural' concept of the *Imago*, which is found only in the Old Testament; he distinguishes it from the concept of the Reformation (and, may we add, of the New Testament), as the element in the Image of God which cannot be lost, as opposed to that which can be, and has been, lost (K.D., III, 1, pp. 206ff.). And now in this connexion the previously prohibited concept of Analogy reappears. The *Imago Dei*, in the sense of Gen. I, the 'over-againstness of I and Thou' he calls 'the analogy between God and man' (p. 270). And Barth asserts that *this* element in man as 'made in the Image of God, has not been lost, as we see from the legend of the Fall' (p. 225). This is exactly what I said in my pamphlet, *Natur und Grade*, some time ago. I am happy to know that this controversy, which caused so much discussion, may now be regarded as settled. We may now expect that Karl Barth will look at the whole problem of Analogy from a new angle, without in the very least retracting his criticism of the Catholic principle of the *analogia entis* as the basis of the *theologia naturalis*." (*The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption*, Dogmatics Vol. II, trans. Olive Wyon, Lutterworth, London, 1952, pp. 44-5).

[141] Op. cit., p. 169.

between the creator-God and every created man for their doctrine, as Brunner insinuates.

Barth does not confine the universal notion of God's image to the basic and formal structure of humanity in its maleness and femaleness. Cairns is wrong in arguing that Barth denies God's confrontation with everyone (unbelievers and believers), and thus the natural or universal knowledge and image of God in a sinful world.[142] God's image is considered only in the light of those who believe in Christ and obey God's Word in Christ. Barth's definition of the humanity and image of God fails to justify the creator-creature relationship between God and sinful men which Calvin and Brunner advocate in their concept of relic and formal image of God. Cairns therefore concludes that Brunner is more faithful to Calvin's doctrine of God's image and man than Barth is.[143]

The doctrine of man in Volume III.2. of *Church Dogmatics* explicitly acknowledges God's actual encounter and confrontation with all sinful human beings (unbelievers and believers). This is apparent in the argument of the spiritual nature of all human beings (unbelievers and believers). Their spiritual nature derives from the actual speaking[144] of the Spirit of God the Creator to them in their concrete encounter and confrontation.[145] It is the essential part of their creaturely

[142] Barth's definition of human nature in its relationship to God fails to face the problem of sinful man's relationship to God." Ibid. p. 183. "The image is no longer pictured as universal in the humanity of a sinful world. That man is in the image who loves God and obeys his call in Christ gladly. Thus Barth escapes the whole difficult problem of the Old Testament image. Like Luther, he starts in fact from the New Testament image, and fails to face the problem which the existence of the image in sinful man poses to theology." (p. 184) "Barth's denial of a universal confrontation with God surely allows man too much independent of God; it seems to screen off the whole nature of man, apart from those who are believers, from the divine grace." (p. 197)

[143] Ibid. pp. 184-187.

[144] "We do not forget, of course, that even as the sinner that he is man is still the creature of God. If his nature is wholly controlled by the fact that he has fallen away from God and can only be at odds with himself, yet this nature is not effaced, and he cannot succeed in destroying it and making himself unreal. The distortion or corruption of his being is not the same thing as its annihilation... We cannot say, therefore, that he has ceased to exist as the one whom God created. That he still exists as such implied in the fact that God still speaks to him. Thus he is still before God. Even as a sinner he is still real; he is still the creature of God. And therefore the question of his creaturely being, of the nature of man, is still meaningful and necessary in spite of his degeneracy." CD III, 2. pp. 27-8.

[145] "As the elected and called and to that extent 'new' man lives in the covenant by the fact that

being which makes them real human beings. Sin does not annihilate, but does totally corrupt their spiritual nature and their natural knowledge and image of God.

Barth is closer to Calvin's theology in his doctrine of fallen humanity (in Volume III.2. of *Church Dogmatics*). He, like Calvin, suggests the undiminishable relationship between God and all men, in their spiritual knowledge and image of God. All men are regarded as rational beings, not just because they control their socio-political and economical affairs, but also because they are capable of gaining spiritual knowledge and image of God in revelation.[146] Their rational capacity for natural knowledge and image of God, however corrupt and sinful, decisively differentiates them from the beast.[147] Such positive views and implications are not found in Barth's earlier works (e.g. in his debate with E. Brunner[148] and in Volume I and II of *Church Dogmatics*).

It is arguable that Barth follows Calvin's doctrine of God's image in man much closely than Brunner does. Like Calvin, Barth does not support any form of natural theology that claims natural knowledge and image of God as the source of Christian doctrine of God, as Brunner does from believers' natural knowledge and image of God. Natural knowledge and the image of God, whether they are those of believers or unbelievers, are totally corrupted and sinful,[149] and contradict true knowledge and the image of God in faith, which are the super-natural gift of God the Holy Spirit.[150] This discussion is the essential part of their doctrine of creation. The primary purpose is to demonstrate our spiritual nature and knowledge and image of God as the creaturely gift of God, in his creatorship

God gives him His Spirit, the natural man also lives in the same way. The same Spirit, who is there the principle of his renewal, is here the principle of his creaturely reality." Ibid. p. 359.

146 Ibid. pp. 419ff.

147 Ibid. p. 359.

148 E. Brunner and K. Barth, *Natural Theology: Comprising "Nature and Grace"*, pp. 72ff.

149 CD III, 1. p. 310.

150 See Chapter I.1.iii.1.

and lordship over all men from their concrete relation and encounter. The second purpose is to declare unbelievers' inexcusability before their creator-God for their ingratituds for his goodness and grace in creation (including themselves).

Like Calvin, Barth regards man's freedom as part of our creaturely humanity and image of God, but does not consider it as a choice between right (good) and wrong (evil) before God, as Brunner does. Man's freedom is either for or against God before and after his corruption.[151] Sinful unbelievers in themselves cannot obey God's right will and Word as their creaturely responsibility. They contradict and pervert their true freedom, responsibility and nature in creation [152] Barth neither recognises our natural (rational) capacity to respond to God's Word for true knowledge of him and ourselves, nor treats it a necessary condition for true knowledge in faith, as E. Brunner does. Sinful man completely lost his own capacity for God's Word. He, like Calvin, regards our natural (rational) capacity as the addressability of God's Word to us[153] rather than as our hearing ability, Brunner does.

Gordon J. Spykman rightly points out that the initiation and leadership of God in the revelation of his Word for his knowledge is absolute for Barth and relative for Brunner,[154] even though he fails to observe Barth's proposal of the actual occurrence of natural knowledge and image of God in our encounter with the Spirit of God the Creator in revelation.[155] Our hearing of God's Word implies

[151] CD III, 2. pp. 128-132.

[152] Ibid. pp. 26 and 520. cf. CD III, 1. p. 311.

[153] Ibid. p. 149.

[154] *Reformational Theology*, W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1992, p. 34.

[155] Spykman criticises that Barth, unlike the Reformers (i.e. Calvin), denies natural knowledge of God from the ontological denial of his general or natural revelation of God in the natural world and man, creation (Op. cit., p. 172-176). It is true that Calvin asserts general or natural knowability (knowledge) of God from his revelation in creation as God's creaturely gift. He, however, never proposes God's general or natural revelation from our general or natural knowledge of him from creation, as Spykman presupposes. His notion of God's revelation is trinitarian. God's trinitarian being is inseparable from his trinitarian revelation (action). God's revelation in creation is known and interpreted in faith (piety) as the self-revelation of the creator-God the Father (of the Son in the Holy Spirit). Spykman's misinterpretation here is rooted in his failure to recognise the hermeneutical relevance of faith (piety) for this revelation.

and includes its point of contact from our side. Barth follows Calvin insisting on our complete passivity and dependence on God's grace for contact with God.[156] The grace of God in the Holy Spirit has to restore our original nature in creation to hear and obediently respond to God's Word. God's Word in Christ creates its own point of contact by the sanctification and illumination of the Holy Spirit. There is no point of contact on our side.

Conclusion

The formative influence of the doctrine of revelation, election and the Trinity is apparent in Barth's (and Calvin's) anthropology. Barth's and Calvin's anthropology in their doctrine of creation is based in the revelation of the creator-God the Father, to which the Bible attests. The basis in this revelation determines the precise nature of their epistemology. Faith is indispensable for the noetic and conceptual possibility of the revelation. Barth advocates the Word (Son) of God, Jesus Christ as the means and content of the revelation. His christocentric anthropology stems from its basis in the revelation of the creaturely humanity of God in his Word (Son), the man Jesus Christ.

A serious problem is noticeable in the christocentric anthropology. There is a qualitative disparity between the creaturely humanity of man and God in Christ. This invalidates the ontic and noetic basis of the former in the latter. There is no such problem in Calvin's anthropology, where our original humanity is viewed from its actual restoration in faith, which the creator-God the Father reveals in his biblical Word. The apparent problem of Calvin's and Barth's anthropology is that their interest is too much in the original condition of our spiritual and rational soul. They ignore the issue of our bodiliness as created, which is vitally important for Christian life and theology. A resolution of the issue could offer a hope for final redemption of our physical sickness and deformity in the light of

[156] CD III, 2. pp. 165-6 and 243ff.

the original condition of our body in creation.

Like Calvin, Barth speaks of our creaturely reality in terms of our wholeness and oneness. Our true being (potentiality) is asserted as the full realisation (and becoming in action) of our encounter with God and fellow-human beings in a specific time and space. This is a dynamic and existential and historical understanding of our creaturely nature. It highlights the relational openness of our creaturely being, and opposes our self-existence, containment and completion once and for all in creation. Barth interprets our reality in the light of our election in Christ, and our original relation to and for God and fellow-human beings as covenantal. They are grounded in Christ's covenantal relation and responsibility to and for God and all mankind in the electing grace of God. Their christological interpretation derives from their basis in the revelation of God's Word in Christ.

Calvin deals with the covenantal relation and responsibility in Christ in his soteriology (in Book II and III of the 1559 *Institutes*) rather than in the doctrine of creation (i.e. in Volume III, 2 and 4 of *Church Dogmatics*), as Barth does. His anthropology in the doctrine of creation focuses our creaturely relation and responsibility to and for God the Creator and fellow-human beings. Our creaturely responsibility derives from our creaturely relation. It relies on the self-revelation of the creator-God the Father in our creaturely subjectivity. The purpose of Calvin's anthropology in the doctrine of creation (in Book I.xv) is to attest the particular nature and characteristics of the creator-God the Father in the particular nature and characteristics of his creation, man. It is rooted in the trinitarian orientation of his theology. The 1559 *Institutes* is intended to demonstrate God's particular action (e.g. creation or redemption or sanctification) as the principal work of each being (person) of the Trinity for his distinctive being (person) in the triune God. Calvin's trinitarian notion of God (i.e. in the doctrine of the Trinity) is crucial for the nature of his trinitarian orientation. The doctrine designates and clarifies the distinctive works and persons of the Trinity and their mutual

relations.

Barth's christocentric anthropology views our creatureliness from our covenantal redemption (or reconciliation) in the electing grace of God in Christ, and the creator-God the Father from the reconciler-God the Son (Word) in Christ. This stems from Barth's trinitarian notion of God (i.e. in the doctrine of the Trinity). It gives rise to Barth's interpretation of God's particular action (e.g. creation or reconciliation or redemption) as the co-working of the whole Trinity. He does not appreciate the natural goodness, glory and beauty of our sinful creaturelness. He focuses on appreciating our sinless and redeemed nature which God elected in Christ before the foundation of the world. For he does not recognise God's particular action (e.g. creation or redemption) as the principal work of each being (person) of the Trinity for his distinctive being (person) in the triune God, as Calvin does. By contrast, Calvin positively appreciate the revelation of goodness, glory and beauty of the creator-God the Father in the natural goodness, glory and beauty of his creation, even including our sinful creatureliness.

Barth's anthropology (in Volume III, 2 of the *Dogmatics*) is closer to Calvin's theology than his earlier works. It concedes the actual occurrence of our natural knowledge (and image) of God the Spirit. This spiritual knowledge and image of God is integral to the creaturely humanity of everyone (believers and unbelievers). Our natural knowledge or image of God derives not from the action (revelation) of the Word (Son) in the man Jesus Christ, but that of the Spirit of the creator-God in us. Barth does not argue for the relatedness of these actions in the case of our natural knowledge or image of God. Apart from the revelation of God's Word in Christ, our knowledge is totally false, sinful and corrupted, and contradictory to the true knowledge and image of God in faith. The original quality of our nature (i.e. our sinless and good spirituality and rationality) in creation was totally lost.

The sharp difference between Barth's doctrine of man and the traditional view of man (including Calvin's) is noticeable. He rejects the assertion of the

inherent transmission of Adam's sin to all his offspring. Sin is rooted in one's own sinful thought and action. Yet everyone can hope to be forgiven, sanctified and redeemed in the electing grace of God in Christ. He opposes the pessimistic traditional view of man (including Calvin's) that denies the hope of sinful men (i.e. unbelievers) for forgiveness, sanctification and redemption before their birth, which upholds God's eternal rejection before the foundation of the world. Barth himself is not free from a pessimistic view of man. Like Calvin, he dismisses the freedom (and potentiality) of natural (sinful) men and women not to sin against their fellow-human beings. The assertion of this freedom (and potentiality) appears to be necessary to encourage the maintenance of preservation and peace of the creaturely humanity in the will of God the Creator.

IV.3. Reconciliation

Introduction

The chief concern of the doctrine of reconciliation in Volume IV of the *Church Dogmatics* is the reconciling work of the Son (Word) of God in the man Jesus Christ. The doctrine is centrally important in Barth's theology. It not only introduces the central Christian themes by presenting the atonement of Christ as the basis of justification, sanctification, salvation and hope in faith, but it also clarifies and complements the claims and positions of other doctrines in the previous volumes.[1] Our focus is on exploring the implications of the basis of the doctrine in revelation, and its relation to Calvin's theology. We begin by examining the Godhead of Jesus in his manhood, and then his manhood in his Godhead, and finally their unity and mutuality in their significance for reconciliation.

1.i. Christ's Divinity for reconciliation

i.1. The Trinitarian Origin of the Man Jesus

The initial concern of the doctrine is to highlight the significance of the self-revelation of God the Son in the man Jesus for the reconciliation of all men to himself. Barth, like Calvin, proposes a trinitarian interpretation of the origin of the being and the reconciling work of this man Jesus, and upholds the traditional doctrines of the *anhypostasis* and the *enhypostasis.* They persistently reject the autonomous self-existence of the man Jesus, and affirm his existence only in and through the second member of the Trinity, the eternal Logos or Son of God.[2] The whole life of God the Son (e.g. his incarnation, preaching, suffering, death and resurrection) in this man is regarded as his obedient way to God the Father by

[1] CD IV, 2. p. 81.

[2] CD IV, 2. pp. 49ff.

the power of the Holy Spirit.[3]

The conceptual use of self-revelation is vital in establishing the trinitarian origin, and the true divinity, of the man Jesus. This man is identified with God only because of the self-revelation or incarnation of the eternal Son (Word) of God in him.[4] The particular nature of this self-revelation is noticeable in the emphasis on the state of condescension, humiliation and servantship of the creator-lordship of God the Son in the creaturely sinful humanity of the man Jesus.[5] Like Calvin, Barth sees this state as the priestly office of Jesus, and presupposes a thematic unity of the Old and New Testaments from this. The New Testament witnesses to the life of the man Jesus as high-priest in Old Testament terms. He represents the sinful life of men, and offers a perfect sacrifice to mediate between God and them for God's forgiveness of their sins and their reconciliation with God.[6] Barth's (and Calvin's) christology, says O. C. Quick, "represents an irruption of Hebraism into Christian theology".[7] It coheres more with the Hebraic interpretation of the life of the man Jesus as the instrument of God's historical action for a future goal, than with the Hellenic interpretation of that as the symbol of God's unchanging nature and character. The latter inhibits Christian (i.e. medieval) theology from taking seriously the action, limitation and sacrifice of God in the historical man Jesus.

J. McIntyre does not endorse the procedure of affirming the divinity of Jesus from the unique relation of God's self-revelation with his humanity. The human form of Jesus as the object of God's revelation qualitatively differs from the subject of revelation, God. The fact that God reveals himself in the man Jesus does not itself substantiate the divine nature of this man;[8] rather, the prior declara-

[3] CD IV, 1. pp. 209-10.

[4] Ibid. pp. 51, 79, 129 and 211.

[5] Ibid. pp. 184ff.

[6] Ibid. pp. 275ff.

[7] *Doctrines of the Creed*, Nisbet, London, 1938, p. 141.

[8] *The Shape of Christology*, SCM Press, London, 1966, pp. 66-7.

tion of the divine nature of this man substantiates this man as the revelation of God.[9] This means that the foundation of the divinity of Jesus is no longer based on the dynamic event of its revelation, but on its *ipso facto* demonstration.[10] "If the medium and the subject of revelation are identical and thus known directly, there is no occasion for revelation."[11]

C. T. Waldrop criticises McIntyre's interpretation here by saying[12] that Barth advocates the divinity of Jesus not just in terms of the unique relation of revelation in his humanity, as McIntyre proposes, but also in terms of the man Jesus's essential equality and unity (*'ομοουσιον*) with God the Father in the Holy Spirit.[13] The strength of this insistence on the divinity of Jesus from God's self-revelation in his humanity is that it bases epistemology on actual rather than on abstract knowledge in faith. Waldrop points out Barth's epistemological ground for the free revelation of God in its hiddenness from our natural cognition,[14] but he fails to demonstrate its ontological ground. That is explicitly challenged by McIntyre. Barth argues that the qualitative differentiation of the divinity from the humanity of Jesus is the ontological ground of the on-going[15] yet free revelation of the former in the latter.[16] This revelation is never treated as a controlling

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[9] "If this argument is correct then we have to say that Jesus Christ is the revelation of God because he is God incarnate; and we cannot say that the affirmation of the deity of Christ rests upon the prior declaration that he is the unique revelation of God. Revelation is not a theological conjuror's hat out of which we may draw the rabbits of the several doctrines of the Christian faith. The model of revelation is in fact dependent upon these models for its content and indeed for its form." Ibid. p. 168.

[10] Ibid. p. 167.

[11] Ibid. p. 169.

[12] "Revelation, Redemption, and the Divinity of Jesus Christ," *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 31, 1978, pp. 501-15.

[13] CD IV, 2. p. 204.

[14] Op. cit., p. 514.

[15] CD IV, 2. pp. 105ff.

[16] "When we say God we say honour and glory and eternity and power, in short, a regnant freedom as it is proper to Him who is distinct from and superior to everything else that is. When we say God we say the Creator and Lord of all things. And we can say all that without reservation or diminution of Jesus Christ—but in a way in which it can be said in relation to Him, i.e., in which it corresponds to the Godhead of God active and revealed in Him... We must add at once that as this One who takes part in the divine being and event He became and is man... In this way, in this condescension, He is the eternal Son of the eternal Father. This is the will of this Father,

principle for Christian dogmatics, as McIntyre[17] and Gerald F. Downing[18] imply, but as the living reality of the triune God for the fulfillment of all his ways and works.[19]

Barth's emphasis on the intrinsic divine nature of Jesus *in se* protests against the tendency of liberal Protestanism to undermine the full Godhead of this man Jesus. It treats him as a divinely inspired man or teacher.[20] The emphasis resists any ontological subordination of the Son of God in Christ to either the Father or to the Holy Spirit, any modalist christology that regards Christ merely as a mode of appearance of God rather than as God Himself, and any adoptionist christology that proposes a gradual adoption of Christ as the eternal Son by God from his special relationship with the Father and the Holy Spirit, as well as any apathy of God the Father and the Holy Spirit to the reconciling work of his Son in the man Jesus.

The conceptual use of self-revelation is thus the ground of qualifying Jesus Christ not just as a man judged, or the vehicle or object of revelation and reconciliation, but also as its Subject, the Reconciler or the Judge God himself who freely adopts the very means of reconciliation.[21] This qualification not only obviates a rigid dualism that treats the obedient and suffering life of the Son, Jesus, and the legalistic demand for it by the Father, as two separate or different things. It also affirms Jesus as the objective (external) as well as the subjective (internal) ground of our salvation. This affirmation, which overcomes the Nestorian ten-

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of this Son, and of the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of the Father and the Son. This is how God is, this is His freedom, this is His distinctiveness from and superiority to all other reality." CD IV, 1. p. 129. cf. p. 80.

[17] Op. cit., pp. 165 and 168.

[18] *Has Christianity a Revelation?*, SCM Press, London, 1964, pp. 224-38.

[19] CD IV, 1. pp. 3-92.

[20] Oliver C. Quick suggests that this treatment is geared to stress the manhood of Jesus Christ. It is a reaction to the undermining of his manhood in the medieval christology which anomaly subordinates the humanity to the divinity of Jesus. The influence of the Hellenic emphasis on God's unchanging nature and character is responsible for this undermining (Op. cit., pp. 140-141).

[21] CD IV, 1. pp. 211-83.

dency in Anselm's presentation of Christ's atonement,[22] establishes the certainty of reconciliation for our salvation by presenting it as Christ's own work.

i.2. Predestination as the Basis of the Triune Reality of Jesus

Barth makes a systematic link between the self-revelation and the life of God the Son in the historical man Jesus and his eternal predestination (will); the former is the fulfillment of the latter.[23] This systematic link forbids an abstract interpretation of them in and for themselves, and any suggestion that they are an accidental and arbitrary movement of a *Deus ex machina*. Predestination is God's eternal election of himself as the Son in this man for the reconciliation of all sinful men to himself.[24] The link succeeds in stressing that they are the exclusive and sovereign exercise of his free will (predestination), grace, love and mercy.[25] This is decisive in affirming the close alliance of Barth's doctrine of reconciliation with the so-called Federal theology of the Reformers (i.e. Calvin).

> He [Jesus] and He alone is very God and very man in a temporal fulfillment of God's eternal will to be the true God of man and to let the man who belongs to Him become and be true man. Ultimately, therefore, Jesus Christ alone is the content of the eternal will of God, the eternal covenant between God and man... we perceive and and maintain the content and form of the eternal divine counsel exactly as it is fulfilled and revealed in time. It is now time, and it will serve as an illustration of what we have just said, to consider a development in the history of theology to which we have so far only

[22] "The weaknesses of Anselm's formulation have often been rehearsed. The two that concern us here are related to each other. The first is that he conceives salvation too narrowly in terms of the remission of penalty. But, it is asked, in what sense does such a transaction transform the moral agent? Is it not merely an external transaction? The second weakness is one which Anselm shares with much of the Western tradition as a result of what Elert calls... the judgement of Solomon in which Christ was divided in two. In Anselm, what Christ does as man and what he does as God *tend* to be two different things, despite the author's attempt to avoid such an outcome. The direction is Nestorian, with Christ suffering as man what God's justice demands. The result is again that salvation tends to be rather external to the recipient, with God conceived to operate from outside. It is not so with Karl Barth, whose stress is on salvation as something achieved by Jesus Christ as the Son of God in his total self-giving to our condition. In the words of the title of a central part of his exposition, the incarnation and cross together take the form of a history in which 'the judge is judged in our place' (*Church Dogmatics* iv/1, pp. 211-83)." C. Gunton, *Yesterday and Today*, Darton, Longman and Todd, London, 1983, p. 180.

[23] CD IV, 1. pp. 51ff and 79ff.

[24] Ibid. p. 129. cf. IV, 2. pp. 31-6.

[25] Ibid. pp. 170ff.

> alluded. In the older Reformed Church there was a theology in which the concept of the covenant played so decisive a role that it came to be known as the Federal theology... We found something of the living dynamic of this history in the famous chapters in which Calvin himself (*Instit.* II, 9-11) had tried to apprehend the relationship between the Old and the New Testament under the concept of the one covenant.[26]

It is also decisive in renouncing any subjugation of his doctrine to the Hegelian concept of the unity of the absolute spirit with its finite revelation. Their orientations are incompatible.

> The Christian dialectic of covenant, sin and reconciliation cannot therefore be subjugated at any point to the Hegelian dialectic of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. To understand it according to this formula is utterly to misunderstand it. Sin does not follow from creation and the covenant. It is already negated and excluded by the will of God active in creation. The covenant established by the free will of God is for the very purpose of safeguarding man against it Again, sin itself is far from having reconciliation as its necessary consequence The only necessary consequence of sin is that man should be damned and lost. Again, reconciliation is anything but a synthesis of creation and covenant on the one hand and sin on the other... And reconciliation is not a higher unity, but in it God contends one-sidedly for His work in creation and the covenant and therefore one-sidedly against sin. In it the antithesis of sin is, for the first time, sharp and clear-cut. It also differs from the Hegelian synthesis in the fact that as the definitive and self-contained work of God it points beyond itself, not, of course, to a new decline into thesis and antithesis, but forward to the *eschaton* of the resurrection and eternal life, in which it has its goal and every antithesis fades. Speculators of every kind are therefore warned. But it is only the knowledge of the God who speaks and acts in the whole process in free grace which makes all speculation radically impossible.[27]

Barth, like Calvin, never regards the sinful alienation of men (the world) from God (absolute spirit) as the direct cause of their reconciliation (unity), and the reality of this reconciliation (unity) as their mutual synthesis in the ongoing process of their mutual thesis and antithesis, as Hegel proposes.[28] Rather,

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[26] CD IV, 1. p. 54-5. The bracket is mine.

[27] CD IV, 1. p. 80.

[28] James Yerkes substantiates Barth's interpretation of Hegel's proposal in his statement: "Philosophy, Hegel over and over again insists, is the knowledge of 'what is'. It seeks the truth of the eternal principles of reality immanently realised and disclosed in all that is finite and contingent...

reconciliation, for them, occurs by the redemptive covenant or will of God *in se*, and its reality is thus God's one-sided synthesis of sinful men to himself in the process of his one-sided opposition of their sins, for the antithesis of their sins is negated by God's forgiveness and justification of their sin in his election of them in Christ before the foundation of the world.[29]

i.3. An Evaluation of the Trinitarian Interpretation of Jesus

The trinitarian interpretation of the reality of the man Jesus from the self-election or revelation of God the Son invites much criticism of Barth's christology. Wolfhart Pannenberg categorises it as a christology from above, for its primal interest is in the movement from God to the man Jesus, in God's living as a man, and in the characterisation of his reality as essentially divine. His being and act is expressed as the being and act of God the eternal Son. It is a distinctively Alexandrian christology.[30] Its major weakness, he says,[31] is that it reduces the actual historical life of Jesus to a relatively unimportant place.[32] The eternally elected reality of the pre-historical Son of God remains the hermeneutical criterion

But the truth of 'what is' is the truth of the incarnational principle... as given in the religious consciousness, however, is a *dialectical* truth. It is an essential truth whose premise is established *only* in connection with man's *lived* existential experience of alienation... He is the point where the positive *hope* for reconciliation and the stern negative *realities* of human existence 'fly apart.' Is the hope vain and the power of the negative in existence unconquerable? No, says Hegel. Reconciliation is *already actual*. 'The antithesis of subjective and objective,' of man and nature, of thought and being, of finite and infinite is 'implicitly overcome, and... it is our affair to participate in this redemption.' It is a redemption witnessed to in the Christian religion... We 'participate in this redemption by laying aside our immediate subjectivity (putting off the old Adam), and learning to know God as our true and essential self,' i.e., as related to him by virtue of the incarnational principle. Thus, he continues, 'Just as religion and religious worship (i.e., in *Andacht* and *Cultus*) consist in overcoming the antithesis of subjectivity and objectivity, so (empirical) science too and philosophy have no other task than to overcome this antithesis by the medium of thought'." *The Christology of Hegel*, State Univ. of New York Press, Albany, 1983, pp. 115-6.

[29] CD IV, 1. pp. 35ff. cf. IV, 2. p. 35.

[30] *Jesus—God and Man*, trans. L. L. Wilkins and D. A. Priebe, SCM Press, London, 1968, p. 33. C. T. Waldrop recently advocates the Alexandrian character of Barth's christology in a more comprehensive way by including its Antiochian in its Alexandrian character (*Karl Barth's Christology*, Mouton, Berlin, 1984, pp. 194-200) I will comment on this later.

[31] Ibid. pp. 34-5. Cf. D. M. Baillie, *God was in Christ*, Faber and Faber, London, 1948, p. 53. J. Knox, *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ*, Cambridge Univ. Press, London, 1967, pp. 88-9. J. Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, trans. Margaret Kohl, Harper and Collins, New York, 1990, pp. 230ff.

[32] This point and its leading criticisms will be disputed in due course.

of the reality of the historical man Jesus.

J. Macquarrie argues that this procedure is not only mythological, but destructive of Christ's true humanity.[33] Barth's christology eventually pushes us in a monophysite direction.[34] For it determines the divinity of Jesus as the acting subject of his existence and of his reconciling work, and consequently the exclusive attribution of his self-conscious individuality, subjectivity and personhood to his eternal divinity. This attribution brings about the absence of an explicit expression of the self-conscious individuality, subjectivity and personhood of the temporal manhood of Jesus.

> For the basis and development and explanation of the doctrine of the Trinity in its own context and in all its details, and for an understanding of its exegetical and historical implications, we must refer back to C.D. I, 1... We have here approached this first and final Christian truth from a special standpoint, and in this context we can speak of it only briefly, selectively, and in a limited way. By Father, Son and Spirit we do not mean what is commonly suggested to us by the word "persons." This designation was accepted—not without opposition—on linguistic presuppositions which no longer obtain to-day. It was never intended to imply—at any rate in the main stream of theological tradition—that there are in God three different personalities, three self-existent individuals with their own special self-consciousness, cognition, volition, activity, effects, revelation and name. The one name of the one God is the threefold name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The one "personality" of God, the one active and speaking divine Ego, is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Otherwise we should obviously have to speak of three gods. And this is what the Early Church not only would not do, but in the conception of the doctrine of the Trinity which ultimately prevailed tried expressly to exclude, just as it did any idea of a division or inequality between Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Christian faith and the Christian confession has one Subject, not three. But He is the one God in self-repetition, in the repetition of His own and equal divine being, and therefore in three different modes of being—which the term "person" was always explained to mean... He is not threefold, but trine, triune, i.e., in three different modes the one personal God, the one Lord, the one Creator, the one Reconciler, the one Perfecter and Redeemer.[35]

And, John Knox asserts, this makes him less than a man. "We are rejecting his

[33] *Jesus Christ in Modern Thought*, SCM Press, London, 1990, pp. 57 and 288.

[34] Ibid. p. 14.

[35] CD IV, 2. pp. 204-5.

humanity at the really decisive point."[36]

Barth views the reconciling being and action of Jesus from the doctrine of *opera trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa* that traces the works of the Trinity from their eternal unity and subject and person rather than their individual temporal beings (persons and subjects).[37] He does not regard reconciliation as the principal work of the temporal human person of the Son Jesus Christ for his distinctive being as Reconciler in the triune God, as Calvin does. Reconciliation is the co-work of the whole Trinity, the one eternal being and person of God. The one personal and eternal God in the Son Jesus is considered as the Reconciler. The doctrine of reconciliation in Volume IV, like the doctrine of the Trinity in Volume I, differentiates the Son Jesus from God the Father in the Holy Spirit in a formal sense. The temporal being of the Son Jesus (and the Father and the Holy Spirit) is defined as the *forma servi*[38] (or mode or predicate) of his divine personal being and subject.

ii. Christ's Humanity for Reconciliation

ii.1. The Movement from Man to Above

The categorisation of Barth's christology as a christology from above (Christ's divinity) to below (his humanity) is naive. N. L. A. Lash[39] points out that it fails to take seriously the other side of its argument in the second part of his doctrine of reconciliation. This appears in Volume IV.2 of *Church Dogmatics*, and explores the significance of the movement from below (Christ's humanity) to above (his divinity). C. Gunton protests against this categorisation, for this

[36] *The Death of Christ*, Abingdon Press, London, 1958, p. 71. P. T. Forsyth already made this point explicit in terms of a genuine growth of this self-conscious subject (*The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, Independent Press, London, 1909, pp. 121ff).

[37] CD IV, 2. pp. 43-4.

[38] CD IV, 1. pp. 184-5.

[39] "Up and Down in Christology" in *New Studies in Theology*, ed. S. Sykes and D. Holmes, Duckworth, London, 1980, pp. 31-43. Cf. J. Thompson, *Christ in Perspective: Christological Perspective in the Theology of Karl Barth*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1978, pp. 16-8.

movement "could also be illustrated from Barth's discussion of revelation in the first volume of the *Church Dogmatics.* God reveals himself to men through the *humanity* of Christ"[40] as reconciling.

The second part of Barth's doctrine of reconciliation deals with the true humanity of the man Jesus for the reconciliation of all men to God and the returning of the man Jesus, to his glorious inner triune life,[41] and presents his manhood from his Godhead. It highlights the state of exaltation of the created man Jesus as the Lord and the Creator of all things, and his kingly office, ascribed to the Old Testament Messianic figure[42] from the immutability[43] of the lordship and power of God[44] in the temporal human life of his Son, Jesus. The objective and ontological ground of the return to God as his royal man, and of our exaltation, is Christ's exaltation and the unique nature of his homecoming in reconciling us to God.[45] Here, there is an Antiochian emphasis on the true humanity of Jesus, on its qualitative differentiation from his divinity, on its concrete historicity and on its new significance.[46]

Lash does not seem to be free from the criticism that he oversimplifies Barth's christology, as he characterises it as a christology "from above", from its epistemological basis in faith by the revelation of God's Word (above).[47] This is because he fails to see Barth's insistence on the indispensability of the human corresponding or interpreting act of the biblical revelation of God's Word in Jesus Christ, namely the movement from below (us) to above (God), for the conceptu-

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[40] *Yesterday and Today*, p. 47.

[41] CD IV, 2. pp. 20-154.

[42] Ibid. pp. 154-264.

[43] Ibid. p. 85.

[44] Ibid. pp. 264-377.

[45] Ibid. pp. 19 and 29.

[46] The Antiochian element of Barth's christology will be spelled out in greater deal later.

[47] Op. cit., p. 36. The criticism can also be applied to C. Gunton (Op. cit., p. 47) and J. Thompson (Op. cit., p. 16).

alisation of the human and divine reality of this revelation.[48] Barth proposes a simultaneous movement of God (above) and man (below) as the epistemological and conceptual basis of revelation,[49] even though he stresses God's control over this simultaneous movement.[50]

ii.2. The Human and Divine Reality of Jesus as the One Dynamic Event

The ultimate verification of Christ's being and work never depends on an objective scientific historical investigation of the biblical stories about them. It is the subject-matter that is known to our faith always and only by the ever-new revelation of their reality in the biblical Word of God. Barth, like Calvin, attributes the subjective reality and possibility of this revelation in faith to the distinctive work of the Holy Spirit.[51] The significance of the basis of the reality of Christ in his self-revelation in faith is remarkable. It enables Barth to view Christ's being and work from the one dynamic event of his self-revelation,[52] and to resist any form of dualistic or separate treatment of his being and work as two different things.

J. Knox protests against Barth's claim of the being and the work of Jesus from the new event of his self-revelation of them in faith, for they are determined not by his own interpretation of them *in se*, but by the preached biblical words of them *ad extra*.[53] His criticism does not seem to carry much weight. The new

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[48] CD IV, 2. pp. 119-20.

[49] T. F. Torrance does seem to articulate this point well ("The Place of Christology in Biblical and Dogmatic Theology" in *Essays in Christology*, ed. T. H. L. Parker, Lutterworth, London, 1957, pp. 25ff).

[50] CD IV, 2. pp. 119-31.

[51] "For the history and existence of Jesus Christ, which by the witness of the Holy Spirit are made the subject-matter of human knowledge, themselves take place in the character of revelation... And so we must go on to speak directly of what is meant by the self-witness of Jesus Christ as such—the witness which finds its accomplishment in that of the Holy Spirit." Ibid. p. 131.

[52] "It is here that His resurrection and ascension came in, and still come in. For when the New Testament speaks of these events, or rather this one event, it speaks of the perfect being of Jesus Christ, and His accomplished reconciliation of the world with God, in its character as revelation." Ibid. p. 133.

[53] *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ*, pp. 89. Cf. Dennis Nineham, *The Use and Abuse of the Bible*, Macmillan Press, London, 1976, pp. 56ff.

event of their revelation is inseparable from the biblical witness to them; the latter is the hermeneutical criterion of the former. Barth, as Calvin, defends the literal truth of the biblical witness to the historical life of Jesus, and bases the Holy Spirit's internal illumination of the reality of Jesus on its concrete historicity, already attested in the Bible.

> First, we must refer back emphatically to the starting-point of our previous discussion, namely, that we are speaking of the Jesus Christ attested in Scripture. The One of whom we have said that He lives in the sense described, is not then the creation of free speculation based on direct experience... He is the One whose own history is the end of the one and beginning of the other He is the One who is visible, who makes Himself visible, in the documents of this whole historical nexus. He, this One, lives in the figure and role, in the being, speech, action, passion and death, in the work, which are all ascribed to Him in these documents, in the features which constitute the picture of His existence as delineated and represented in these documents. The fact that this One lives, and what it means that He lives, are not things invented or maintained of ourselves. If we say them responsibly, our own responsibility is only secondary. When we say that Jesus Christ lives, we repeat the basic, decisive, controlling and determinative statement of the biblical witness... It can only be repeated on the basis of the fact that in the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit it has been previously declared to us as the central statement of the biblical witness.[54]

The major weakness of Barth's (Calvin's) christology comes rather from its discouragement of a genuine historical investigation of the authenticity of the biblical writers' witness to the life of Jesus. Its assertion of the reality of Jesus from its ever present revelation in faith by the Holy Spirit does not, however, minimise the significance of the historical Jesus, attested in the Bible, as W. N. Pittenger claims.[55] H. Anderson even argues that its treatment as the eschatological event or as salvation-history (*Heilsgeschichte*) also by no means threatens its concrete historicity,[56] for "it underlies and includes, not only in principle and virtually but also actually, the most basic history of every man."[57] Rather, it

[54] CD IV, 3. p. 44.

[55] *The Word Incarnate*, James Nisbet, Digswell Place, 1959, p. 10.

[56] *Jesus and Christian Origins*, Oxford Univ. Press, New York, 1964, pp. 22-25.

[57] CD IV, 1. p. 157.

intends to absolutise the concrete historicity of the reconciling life of the Son of God, Jesus.

The extreme significance of this insistence on the reconciling life of the Son of God Jesus neither as supra-history nor as non-historical, but as the history of every man,[58] is argued also by D. L. Mueller.[59] It is intended not only to protest against R. Bultmann's mythological interpretation of this life[60] (i.e. the virgin birth, death and resurrection) under his demythologizing schema[61] that undermines its concrete historicity by stressing its eschatological significance for faith and salvation here and now,[62] but also to correct the earlier conceptual usage of the primal history (*Urgeschichte*) for the revelation of the Christ-event, which transcends or negates the reality and gravity of ordinary history by including it in this primal history.

ii.3. The Significant Newness of the Life of Jesus

Identification of the eternal predestination (will) of God with its diverse temporal (past, present and future) revelation[63] is vital to understand the true nature of his temporal human life in his Son Jesus. It enables Barth to define Jesus's life

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[58] "The atonement is history. To know it, we must know it as such. To think of it, we must think of it as such. To speak of it, we must tell it as history. To try to grasp it as supra-historical or non-historical truth is not to grasp it at all. It is indeed truth, but truth actualised in a history and revealed in this history as such—revealed, therefore, as history." Ibid.

[59] *Foundation of Karl Barth's Doctrine of Reconciliation*, Edwin Mellen Press, Wales, 1990, pp. 264-5.

[60] "In explanation we must add that we are dealing with an act which took place on earth, in time and space, and which is indissolubly linked with the name of a certain man... The Gospels do not speak of a passion which might just as well have been suffered in one place as another, at one time as another, or in a heavenly or some purely imaginary space and time. They indicate a very definite point in world history which cannot be exchanged for any other... They do not speak of a passing moment in the occurrence of a myth which is cyclic and timeless and therefore of all times." CD IV, 1. p. 245.

[61] "New Testament and Mythology" in *Kerygma and Myth*, Vol.1, ed. H. W. Bartsch, trans. R. H. Fuller, SPCK Press, London, 1953, pp. 33-43.

[62] Barth attacks (in the book *Kerygma and Myth*, Vol.2, ed. H. W. Bartsch, trans. R. H. Fuller, SPCK Press, London, 1962, pp. 83-132) R. Bultmann's tendency to undermine the concrete historicity of the life of Jesus (his incarnation, suffering, death and resurrection), and its literal truth in the Bible. One cannot miss this undermining also in the book, *The Myth of God Incarnate*, ed. J. Hick, SCM Press, London, 1977, pp. 178ff.

[63] This point is made plain in the treatment of the doctrine of election.

both as the temporal fulfillment of the eternal predestination (will) and as the event of the continuous manifestation of his eternal will itself.[64] Its remarkable achievement is that it succeeds in hammering out the significant newness and purpose of this life.[65] The pre-historical life of God in the humanity of the Son, Jesus, is sharply differentiated from his historical life in him in order to stress the true individual manhood of Jesus of Nazareth. Like Calvin, Barth resists any overshadowing of the significant newness and purpose of the latter by the former.[66] The historical life of God in his Son as an individual man, Jesus, entails a new act of the divine majesty, will and purpose that is also indispensable for knowledge of his true being.

> Our second glance—and this brings us to the decisive centre of this christological basis—is to the historical fulfillment of the concept of true man and therefore to the incarnation, to the being of Jesus Christ in time as grounded in God's eternal election of grace and actualised accordingly. How are we to understand the event in which this One became and was and is true man? At this point it is relevant to lay the greatest emphasis on the act of divine majesty which is the meaning and basis and power of this event and therefore of the humanly temporal being of Jesus Christ... It is certainly the event which is the goal ascribed and ordained for the created cosmos in the primal divine decision in which it has its origin... But within this series—and this is what brings us to the actuality of this man—it is an absolutely new event. Within this series it takes place as this event, the existence of this man, which is not a consequence of the series, which cannot be deduced from it, but which is the work of a new act of God. This means... in it the divine action and world occurrence move into a completely new dimension as compared with everything that precedes... what takes place here initiates a new series in the sequence of His whole action... This act of majesty is the *ratio essendi*, the ground of being of the true man, the man Jesus. He is the new man who owes His existence as such wholly and utterly to the mercy and power, the new secret of this act of

[64] "For as the eternal love between the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit is also the eternal love in which God is the one God outwards as well as inwards, the divine principle of creation, reconciliation and redemption, the principle of the decree in which all these works of God were and are His eternal resolve." CD IV, 2. p. 43.

[65] CD IV, 2. pp. 36-43.

[66] "What God does in this assumption of human being into unity with His own is of course, as an *opus ad extra*, as an act of grace of God to His creature, as His divine action in temporal history, an application and exercise and revelation of the divine humanity, the newness and strangeness of which as the content of this free divine decree ought not to be put into the shade or weakened by this reference to its inter-trinitarian background." CD IV, 2. p. 42.

majesty which at once confirms and transcends the secret of creation.[67]

In supporting the ancient doctrines of *anhypostasis* and *enhypostasis*, Barth does not recognise the existence of God the Son, Jesus, as an individual man like us prior to his incarnation, in order to stress the significant newness of the life of God the Son as an individual man by his historical incarnation. Like Calvin, he recognises the true human nature of the pre-historical Son Jesus in God's election. The possibility of his historical life and incarnation in the man Jesus Christ relies on the true human nature of his pre-historical life. This recognition appears to be necessary in order to avoid the suggestion of actual change of God's nature in his human life in the historical man Jesus Christ. This necessity is not taken seriously by Macquarrie's criticism of Barth's interpretation of the historical humanity of Jesus from its pre-historical existence in God's election.

Barth (like Calvin) is closer to the doctrine of the *Logos ensarkos* (λογος 'ενσαρκος)[68] that proposes the pre-existence of the humanity of God the Son or the Logos Jesus Christ, than to the doctrine of *Logos asarkos* (λογος 'ασαρκος) that insists on the Logos' human flesh only from its historical incarnation in the man Jesus Christ. The single existence of Jesus is affirmed by accentuating the direct unity of existence of the Son of God with this individual man Jesus under the concept of the *unio hypostatica*.[69] This affirmation is designed to reject the idea of the double existence of Jesus as the Son (Logos) of God and as an individual man, which leads either to Docetism or to Ebionitism, which undermine and deny, respectively, the true humanity and the true divinity of Christ.

> But from the utter uniqueness of this unity follows the statement, that God and Man are so related in Jesus Christ, that He exists as Man so far and only so far as He exists as God, i.e. in the mode of existence of the eternal Word

[67] Ibid. pp. 37-8.

[68] Ibid. pp. 52 and 181.

[69] Ibid. pp. 51ff.

> of God. What we thereby express is a doctrine unanimously sponsored by early theology in its entirety, that of the *anhypostasis* and *enhypostasis* of the human nature of Christ. *Anhypostasis* asserts the negative. Since in virtue of the ἐγένετο [the event of the incarnation of the Word], i.e., in virtue of the *assumptio*, Christ's human nature has its existence—the ancients said, its subsistence—in the existence of God, meaning in the mode of being (*hypostasis*, 'person') of the Word, it does not possess it in and for itself, *in abstracto*. Apart from the divine mode of being whose existence it acquires it has none of its own; i.e., apart from its concrete existence in God in the event of *unio*, it has no existence of its own, it is ἀνυπόστατος [unsubstantial]. *Enhypostasis* asserts the positive. In virtue of the ἐγένετο, i.e., in virtue of the *assumptio*, the human nature acquires existence (subsistence) in the existence of God, meaning in the mode of being (*hypostasis*, 'person') of the Word. This divine mode of being gives it existence in the event of the *unio*, and in this way it has a concrete existence of its own, it is ἐνυπόστατος [substantial]... The aim of this doctrine, erected into dogma at the Second Council of Constantinople in 553... was to guard against the idea of a double existence of Christ as Logos and as Man, an idea inevitably bound to lead either to Docetism or to Ebionitism. We have seen earlier that what the eternal Word made His own being, giving it thereby His own existence, was not a man, but man's nature, man's being, and so not a second existence but a second possibility of existence, to wit, that of a man.[70]

W. Pannenberg regards this statement as a reinterpretation of the formula of the *enhypostasis*, in the sense that "the *enhypostasis* becomes for Barth the designation of the miraculous invasion of divine Lordship into our world". This differs from "the Neo-Chalcedonian Christology [which] invented it as an explanation for the mode of coexistence of divinity and humanity in Christ."[71] There is, however, no evidence and intention in Barth's use of the concepts of *anhypostasis* and *enhypostasis* here and elsewhere to confine their reference merely to the beginning of the human life of God in his Son Jesus in time, as Pannenberg proposes. Pannenberg's proposal is vulnerable to Charles T. Waldrop's criticism[72] that it fails to take account of Barth's actualism that applies these concepts also to the mode of the actual relation between the Godhead and the manhood in the one

[70] CD I, 2. p. 163. The brackets are mine.

[71] Op. cit., pp. 341-2. The bracket is mine.

[72] *Karl Barth's Christology*, Mouton, Berlin, 1984, p. 63.

life.

ii.4. The True Humanity of Jesus

A remarkable attempt is made to stress the true humanity of God in his Son Jesus by stating his participation in every human capacity and every human weakness (including sinfulness, curse and mortality).[73] This is the point which Macquarrie's earlier criticism of a monophysite direction of Barth's christology, fails to consider. Barth advocates the true human and divine natures of the Son of God, Jesus, in all their distinctiveness.[74] His emphasis on the sovereign grace and power of the divine subject as the source of the existence of the man Jesus does not detract from his true human nature, both his individual human body and rationality. He asserts the human self-knowledge, will, and feeling of the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

> The grace of God alone is His origin and determination... In all this we are again describing the *enhypostasis* or *anhypostasis* of the human nature of Jesus Christ. We may well say that this is the sum and root of all grace addressed to Him. Whatever else has still to be said may be traced back to the fact, and depends upon it, that the One who in Jesus Christ is present in human nature is the Son of God, that the Son is present as this man is present, and that this man is none other than the Son... To recognise Him is to see and know Him—without any penetration or interpretation—as the One who He, Jesus of Nazareth... beside which He has no other. And it is a matter of interpreting it in the light of the origin from which He comes, without which He would not be, without which there would not be any appearance. It is a matter of interpreting Him as the One He is. It is to recognise Him as the Son of God, as identical with this Son—"Thou art...," in the traditional words of Peter in v. 16. This grace of His origin does not involve or effect any alteration in His human essence as such. It does not result in any change, diminution or increase. His essence is that of a man like ourselves, the individual soul of an individual body [*die individuelle Seele eines individuellen Leibes*], knowing

[73] CD IV, 2. p. 74.

[74] "The grace of God manifested and effective in Him is the grace of this impartation. As He is, it takes place that the divine essence in all its distinctiveness is gifted to the human, and the human in all its distinctiveness receives the divine. As He is, there takes place the humiliation of the divine for the exaltation of the human essence, and the exaltation of the humanity by the humiliation of the divine. As He is, nothing is kept back. In the height of God and in the depths of man, nothing is excluded from this movement from the height of God to our depths, and back again from our depths to the height of God." Ibid. p 75. cf. pp. 113-6.

> [*erkennend*] and willing [*wollend*] and feeling [*fuhlend*] as a man, active and passive in the time allotted, responsible to God and tied to its fellows.[75]

An Antiochian[76] and Calvinistic element of Barth's christology is arguable on the basis of his emphasis on the qualitative distinction between the divine and human natures of Jesus, on the distinctive movements of going out and homecoming, on the distinctive states of humiliation and exaltation and on their distinctive operations. The distinctive operation of the divine power and will of Jesus creates and sustains the distinctive operation of his sinless and obedient human will, action, and life. The divine power and grace of Jesus sanctifies[77] and enables his manhood not only to experience the direct or naked presence of his divine eternal glory and life, which no other human being can experience,[78] but also to submit his will to his divine will and in order to live out a sinless and obedient life unto death for our reconciliation.

The sanctifying and enabling aid from the free grace of the divine subject of Jesus neither destroys nor alters his true manhood. Barth, like Calvin, attributes the sinless and obedient life of the sinful and disobedient manhood of Jesus to the distinctive work of his human free will and action.

> We may indeed say that the grace of the origin of Jesus Christ means the basic exaltation of His human freedom to its truth, i.e., to the obedience in whose exercise is not superhuman but true human freedom. From this point it can be understood as the grace of the sinlessness of His human essence... This is not sinless in itself... If His human essence were sinless as such, how could it be our essence?... "Without sin" means that in our human and sinful

[75] Ibid. p. 91. The brackets are mine.

[76] C. T. Waldrop argues that "the Antiochian elements are found within a perspective that is basically Alexandrian." in Barth's christology (*Karl Barth's Christology*, p. 200). His Alexandrian definition of the character of Barth's christology suffers badly from its inconsistency. He claims the affirmation of the human personhood (and subject) of the Son of God, Jesus, in the Antiochian christology as the part of the Alexandrian christology (p. 199), even though he regards the negation of the human personhood of the Son of God, Jesus, as the character of an Alexandrian christology (Ibid. pp. 87, 101-20 and 199). This is because Waldrop strives to categorise Barth's christology as Alexandrian without sufficient consideration of Barth's intention to surpass such a categorisation (CD IV, 2. pp. 63-4).

[77] CD IV, 2. p. 88.

[78] Ibid. p. 77.

> existence as a man He did not sin... He made our human essence His own even in its corruption, but He did not repeat or affirm its inward contradiction. He opposed to it a superior contradiction. He overcame it in His own person when He became man... All the purity of His human action depends upon the purity of this life-act of His. However we may interpret it, the sinlessness of Jesus was not a condition of His being as man, but the human act of His life working itself out in this way from its origin. And on this aspect, too, the determination of His human essence by the grace of God does not consist in the fact that there is added to Him the remarkable quality that He could not sin as a man, but in His effective determination from His origin for this act in which, participating in our sinful essence, He did not will to sin and did not sin. As a determination for this act, it is, of course, His absolutely effective determination. He accomplished it, He did not sin, because from this origin He lived as a man in this true human freedom—the freedom for obedience—not knowing or having any other freedom. The One who lived as a man in this harmony with the divine will, this service of the divine act, this correspondence with the divine grace, this thankfulness, had no place for sinful action... In virtue of this origin of His being, He was unable to choose it. Therefore He did not choose it. And He did not do it. This, then, is the exaltation of our human nature in Jesus Christ as seen from this standpoint.[79]

J. A. T. Robinson protests that this statement actually precludes rather than presupposes the human freedom of Jesus to sin, and thus blurs the concept of his true human freedom.[80] His protest appears to be quite naive, for it does not take into account Barth's distinction between the human freedom and will of Jesus *in se* and its relationship with his divine freedom and will. From the former, Barth, like Calvin, affirms the corruptibility of Jesus (the possibility of his sinful action), but from the latter rejects his actual sinfulness and corruption. Robinson's presupposition of the sinful action of Jesus, for Barth, is highly speculative; it presupposes what did not actually happen according to the biblical testimony of his life. The speculative element of his presupposition stems from his failure

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[79] Ibid. pp. 91-3.

[80] "There is a decisive difference between these two [the possibility of sin and temptation], which is constantly blurred - even by so great a theologian as Barth when he insists (rightly) that the real freedom is not to sin. Yet what Augustine called the great freedom not to sin *presupposes* rather than *precludes* the lesser freedom to sin. But to say, as I believe we must, that Jesus could have sinned like any other human being does not mean reducing his freedom to indeterminacy, as if it were merely a matter of contingency which way he acted." *The Human Face of God*, SCM Press, London, 1972, p. 94. The above bracket is mine.

to relate the human freedom and will of Jesus to his divine freedom and will.

The significance of Barth's attribution of the sinless and obedient life of Jesus to his human free will and action is this. It demonstrates not only the harmonious co-opration of the manhood and the Godhead of Jesus, but also the active role of his manhood (his human body and rationality) in the event of reconciliation. This invalidates H. Bouillard's unfair criticism that Barth fails to integrate the human active role of Jesus with his divine role in their unity by stressing only the former in the event of his reconciling and salvific life.

> *Malgré le soin que Barth a mis récemment à exalter en Jésus de Nazareth "l'homme royal", il nous semble que la réalité et l'activité propres de cette humanité (avec ses privilèges singuliers) ne sont pas encore assez intégrées à l'union hypostatique... La véritable déficit de la pensée barthienne serait plutôt de ne guère voir que l'opération divine, quand il s'agit du Christ et du salut* [81]

The interpretation of the life of the Son of God, Jesus, from the perspective of the active free will of his temporal manhood (in Volume IV.2) is something new. It is lacking in previous Volumes of *Church Dogmatics.* They present the being and the work of the triune God not from the acting role of the distinctive temporal subjects (and persons) of the Trinity, but from that of their one eternal divine subject (and person). Their distinctive temporal beings are consequently recognised in a formal sense by treating them as the three different revealing modes of the one eternal and personal being and subject of God. God's particular work (e.g. creation or reconciliation) is regarded as the co-working of the whole Trinity, the one eternal and personal being of God.

The perspective of Barth's christology in Volume IV.2 clarifies and complements the trinitarian notion of God in the previous Volumes of the *Dogmatics.*[82]

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[81] "Although Barth has recently taken particular care in exalting the 'Royal man' in Jesus of Nazareth, it seems as if the reality and the active role associated with his humanity remains 'under-integrated' into the hypostatic union... The true defect of the Barthian thought would be that he only sees the action of the divine, when it is about Christ and salvation." *Karl Barth: Parole de Dieu et Existence Humaine*, Vol. 2, Montaigne, Aubier, 1957, p. 122.

[82] CD IV, 2. p. 81.

It highlights that the Trinity, threefold modes or forms of the one eternal and personal being of God, does have distinctive beings and subjects. It overcomes a formalistic interpretation of the distinctiveness of each member of the Trinity in the previous Volumes; it enables Barth to assert the distinctiveness of the temporal and human being and subject of the Son Jesus in the triune God from their active role in reconciliation. He advocates reconciliation as the distinctive work of the temporal and human being and subject of the triune God in the Son Jesus, and thus the distinctiveness of his temporal and human being and subject as the Reconciler or Mediator in the virtue of its unity and fellowship with his eternal Godhead.

> In and with His humiliation (as the Son of God) there took place also His exaltation (as the Son of Man)... In His fellowship with God, and therefore in our fellowship with Him, this One, there is achieved our fellowship with God, the movement of man from below to above, from himself to God. It is primarily and properly this human Subject, who, as the object of the free and liberating grace of God, cannot be only an object in the event of atonement, but also becomes an active Subject.[83]

> In virtue of the fact that He is the Son of God, and therefore of divine and human essence, He is completely unlike us as the true man. Completely like us as a man, He is completely unlike us as the true man... This is His exaltation. This is why He is raised up above us and therefore for us... In this being as the Son of Man, the true man, He is the Reconciler of the world with God. For the reconciliation of the world with God as it has taken place in Him, the restitution and fulfillment of the covenant between God and man, consists in the fact that there took place in Him the existence of a new and true, and that human essence, as God lent it His own existence and made it His own, was exalted, and is once for all exalted, to Him, to His side, to fellowship with His Son in His divine essence.[84]

The assertion of reconciliation and Reconciler as the distinctive work and being of the human Son of God, Jesus Christ, in Volume IV.2 is not found in the previous Volumes of the *Dogmatics.* They are presented as the co-working

[83] CD IV, 2. p. 19.

[84] Ibid. 69-70.

and being of the whole Trinity, of the one eternal and personal being of God. C. Welch overlooks this fact in his statement:

> The use of the trinitarian concept in later portions of the *Dogmatik*, while important as pointing to Barth's notion of the centrality of the doctrine and as providing an illustration of an attempt to make the Trinity truly an informing first principle of the doctrine of God and dogmatics generally, does not, however, add anything essentially new to the understanding of either the content or the place of the doctrine as Barth has elaborated these in the basic statement in the *Doctrine of the Word*.[85]

His statement is nonetheless not totally inaccurate. Barth's christology (in Volume IV.2), like his doctrine of the Trinity (in Volume I.1), does not explicitly acknowledge the individual human personhood (and consciousness) of the Son of God, Jesus, in the triune God, as Calvin does. His argument of the human self-knowledge, will, and feeling of the Son Jesus does nevertheless seem to lead support for this. It is hard for a modern person to recognise the genuine existence of the former without the latter.

The direct reason for Barth's exclusive use of the terms conscious subject and person only for the divinity of Jesus and not for his humanity, is to allude to the only possible source of the existence and reconciling life of the man Jesus in unity with his Godhead. This emphasizes their total dependency on the free grace and power of his divine subject and person.

> But if we are to understand this third statement [about the divine and human unity in God the Son], and make the necessary deduction in the fourth [statement about their mutual participation], it is vital that its content, the union of divine and human essence in Jesus Christ, should be seen together with its presupposition in the first and the second statements [that God the Son became and also is man, and about His existence becoming and also being the existence of a man]—the fact that the Subject of atonement and therefore of incarnation, Jesus Christ, is the Son of God. This is the reason and compelling power of this history. This is the meaning and force in which what happened in this history has and is eternal and temporal being. As we have seen already, there can be no question of the human essence assumed and adopted by Him

[85] *The Trinity in Contemporary Theology*, SCM Press, London, 1953, p. 163.

> being the subject here. There was and is only one individual possibility which has its existence and becomes and is actuality in and for itself... Yet even the divine nature as such cannot be considered as the subject of atonement and incarnation—and, strangely enough, for the same reason. For Godhead, divine nature, divine essence does not exist and is not actual in and for itself. Even Godhead exists only in and with the existence of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in its modes of existence. Only the One who is God has Godhead... He, the divine Subject, carries and determines the divine essence, and not conversely. It is not really an accident, then, that we are not told that the Godhead, the divine nature, the divine essence became flesh (Jn. I.14)... This is done by the divine Subject in and with His divine essence, by the One who exists and is and is actual, God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and therefore *in specie* God the Son... It is only as this happens, in the act of this Subject, that there takes place this union of divine and human essence... The doctrine of the two natures cannot try to stand on its own feet or to be true of itself.[86]

The assertion of this dependency by defending the conceptual utility of the *enhypostasis* and *anhypostasis*[87] eliminates any suggestion of the autonomous and independent existence, action and conscious will of the manhood of Jesus, but not of his distinctive human consciousness, individuality, subjectivity and personhood in and through the free grace and power of his divine subject and person.

Barth appears to concede the human personality of the Son of God, Jesus, in the assertion of the utility of the ancient doctrine of the *enhypostasis* and the *anhypostasis* for defending his true humanity.

> The recognition of the human personality of the man Jesus Christ is quite clear in the defence of the ancient doctrine of the *anhypostasis* and the *enhypostasis* of Christ's human nature. In recent times the doctrine of the *anhypostasis* and the *enhypostasis* of Christ's human nature has occasionally been combated by the primitive argument, that if the human nature of Christ is without personality of its own, it is all up with the true humanity of Christ and the Docetism of early Christology holds the field. In other words we moderns should be aware that personality really does belong to true human being. This argument is primitive because it rests simply upon a misunderstanding

[86] Ibid. pp. 65-6. "The mystery of this passion, of the torture, crucifixion and death of this one Jew which took place at that place and time at the hands of the Romans, is to be found in the person and mission of the One who suffered there and was crucified and died. His person: it is the eternal God Himself who has given Himself in His Son to be man, and as man to take upon Himself this human passion." CD IV, 1. p. 246. The brackets are mine.

[87] CD IV, 2. p. 49.

> of the Latin term *impersonalitas* used occasionally for *anhypostasis*. But what Christ's human nature lacks according to the early doctrine is not what we call personality. This early writers called *individualitas*, and they never taught that Christ's human nature lacks this, but rather that this qualification actually belonged to true human nature. Their negative position asserted that Christ's flesh in itself has no existence, and this was asserted in the interests of their positive position that Christ's flesh has its existence through the Word and in the Word, who is God Himself acting as Revealer and Reconciler.[88]

The human personhood of the Son Jesus in the triune God is never argued from his human personality in the *Church Dogmatics*. Barth does not realise that it is hard for a modern man to accept personality without personhood. His christology is nonetheless open to the human personhood of the Son of God, Jesus. This openness does seem to receive reinforcement from Barth's insistence on the indestructible[89] and mutual[90] confrontation and fellowship[91] of the distinctive wills of the Godhead and the manhood of Jesus. The validity of their indestructible and mutual confrontation and fellowship appears to be hardly tenable without the conscious will and subject of the human person of Jesus. This insistence is incompatible with McIntyre's proposal of their mutuality merely in terms of the occasional revelational presence of the divinity of Jesus in his humanity.[92]

ii.5. Christ's Death as the Climax of his Life

Like Calvin, Barth establishes the whole obedient and sinless life of the man-

[88] CD I, 2. pp. 164-5. cf. IV, 2. p. 49.

[89] CD IV, 2. p. 91. cf. pp. 74-5.

[90] Ibid. pp. 87-8.

[91] Ibid. p. 72.

[92] "What are we to make of this revision of the revelation model? Barth does seem to be saying quite definitely that the revelation which takes place in Jesus Christ takes place through the human nature... God is revealed through what is not God. The charge of Nestorianism cannot quite be made to stick. It would if Barth were saying that in Jesus Christ there are two complete persons present in exactly the same way and at the same time. He is saying something rather different, and much more subtle, namely, that the human nature is there in the ordinary empirical and inspective way, but that the divine nature is 'there', we might say, revelationally, or if words meant what they say, apocalyptically. On this reading the relation between the two natures is to be understood not in terms of compresence or logical *enhypostasia*, or yet *communicatio idiomatum*, but in terms of this quite peculiar and unique relation of revelation." Op. cit., pp. 160-1.

hood of Jesus as the ultimate objective ground for reconciliation and salvation of all men in all times. Considerable attention is paid to the central importance of the death of Jesus for asserting the true reality of his reconciling work, of his human and divine natures, and of their states. Barth, as Calvin, interprets the nature of Jesus' obedient life and death in penal substitutionary terms, although J. I. Parker is reluctant to admit this.[93] Jesus's human life (birth, suffering and death) in history as our representative was the judgement and penalty in our place for the expiation of our sins.[94] This penal substitutionary death is regarded not only as the ultimate purpose of his birth and suffering,[95] for it is the perfect and satisfactory offering for the ultimate accomplishment of reconciliation and salvation,[96] but also as the decisive event from which we can demonstrate the finality of Christ's manhood and the infinity of his Godhead. Both the final depth of humiliation of his Godhead as servant and priest, and the supreme exaltation of his manhood as king and Lord from his triumphant resurrection, become clear.

The resurrection and ascension of Jesus are defined as the revelation of the verdict of God the Father on the satisfactory completion of his reconciling work.[97] A transposition of apocalyptic language into the language of the finitude of time is apparent in the claim of Christ's divine glory from the resurrection and ascension as the commencement of this final coming, the *parousia* (*παρουσια*). The insistence on the ultimate realisation of the *parousia* (*παρουσια*) in the fi-

[93] His essay "What Did the Cross Achieve?" in *Tyndale Bulletin*, Vol. 25, 1974, p. 19.

[94] This point is explicit in the treatment of the reality of the man Jesus as the Judge God who judged himself in our place (CD IV, 1. pp. 211-283).

[95] CD IV, 2. pp. 140ff.

[96] "On this far side however, in correspondence to the revealed fullness of His being and work, He can be fully known, because He is fully revealed. For as His being and work, His history and existence, are completed in His death on the cross, and as there is made in it once for all a satisfactory offering before God for the men of all times and places - an offering which need not and cannot therefore be continued, augmented or superseded - the revelation of this event which follows His death on the cross is also perfect... His completed being and work, and its completed revelation, were sufficient then, they are sufficient to-day, and they will be sufficient for all times, and even when time shall be no more... This is the objective basis which alone, by the witness of the Holy Spirit, all subjective knowledge of Jesus Christ can derive—the knowledge of the disciples, the first community and the later Church." CD IV, 2. p. 142.

[97] CD IV, 1. pp.283-357.

nal revelation or act of the triune God in the Son Jesus[98] rescues Barth from J. Moltmann's criticism that this transposition reduces "the end-time reality of 'the raising of the death' to the eternal present of the wholly-other God."[99]

Barth's (and Calvin's) treatment of Christ's death achieves its systematic link with his ontology and his whole life (e.g. from incarnation to resurrection and ascension). The divine and human ontology determines the action of his whole obedient and sinless life unto death, but never *vice versa*. The link here is what, according to T. F. Torrance,[100] even the great evangelical theologian James Denney fails to do.[101] McIntyre's comment that "Barth's revelation model fails to sustain an adequate analysis of the death of Jesus Christ", in particular the involvement of God's love, suffering, and forgiveness in this death for reconciliation and salvation,[102] is inaccurate. His comment stems from an inadequate understanding of Barth's conceptual use of revelation merely as "a supreme illustration of God's love".[103] This is far from its direct intention to refer to the reality of diverse actions of God in the obedient and sinless life of his Son Jesus (e.g. his birth, suffering, death, resurrection and ascension),[104] as well as to their diverse effects (e.g. the revelation of God's love, grace and mercy, the remission of sin, the establishment of an objective basis for reconciliation and salvation).

The interpretation of the whole obedient and sinless life of Jesus as fulfillment of his eternal divine election demonstrates this life as the direct outcome of the sovereign freedom, love, grace and mercy of the divine subject;[105] it evades a rigid legalistic presentation of Christ's atonement merely as a satisfactory sacrifice for

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98 CD IV, 2. p. 353. cf. IV, 3. pp. 291ff.

99 *The Way of Jesus Christ*, trans. Margaret Kohl, Harper Collins, New York, 1990, p. 230.

100 *God and Rationality*, Oxford Univ. Press, London, 1971, pp. 64 and 65.

101 *The Death of Christ*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1902.

102 Op. cit., pp. 65-6.

103 Ibid. p. 66.

104 "The whole being and history and existence of Jesus Christ have the character of revelation." CD IV, 2. p. 134.

105 CD IV, 1. pp. 3-92. Cf. IV, 2. pp. 31-6. IV, 3. p. 355.

the penalty of our sins. Barth suggests the possibility of universal salvation (*apokatastasis*) of the triune God *in se* from the atonement and reconciliation of the Son Jesus.[106] This suggestion decisively differentiates him from Calvin. Calvin does not support universal salvation in the inner will of God, although he asserts that Christ suffered and died for redemption of all sinners. God calls and adopts only some as his children in faith by the Holy Spirit on the basis of Christ's redemptive work. He rejects some in his eternal will.

Barth forbids any attempt to treat this as a thematic antithesis between grace and sinful nature, as G. C. Berkouwer does by arguing the triumph of grace over sin or nature as the dominant theme of Barth's theology.[107] For it "might at any rate give rise to the impression that what is meant to be indicated is the victory of one principle, that of grace, over another which is to be described as evil, sin, the devil or death",[108] and it consequently fails to highlight Barth's intention to stress the personal victory of the living Jesus over sins or the evil of the world by taking their just judgment in himself on the cross, as the Judging God himself.[109] There is another reason which Barth does not highlight, that justifies his rejection of Berkouwer's merely thematic interpretation of his theology. Berkouwer interprets Barth's doctrine of sin in the light of universalism, the one-way movement from the wrath of God's rejection to the grace of his election in *in se*,[110] and overlooks Barth's recognition of the actual transition from the grace of God's election to the wrath of his rejection in revelation (*ad extra*).

The observation that the reconciliation and salvation of God are based on their actual fulfillment or revelation to us and for us is vital. Their conceptual basis in their actual revelation *ad extra* is decisive in distancing Barth from a

106 CD IV, 3. pp. 303 and 354ff.

107 *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, pp. 19, 22 and 89.

108 CD IV, 3. p. 173.

109 Ibid. pp. 173-80.

110 This point is made in the previous section.

universalist who claims universal salvation (*apokatastasis*),[111] as well as in enabling him to present their reality not just as the objective and external matter of the triune God in Christ, but also as the subjective and internal disposition of individual men. Macquarrie is wrong in saying that Barth "really destroys the humanity of those whom he is so anxious to save, because he makes salvation a purely objective and external matter, quite independent of their will or choice."[112] He overlooks that Barth, like Calvin, views God's election and rejection from the calling and adoption of the Holy Spirit. Here they stress the subjectivity, internality and individuality of reconciliation and salvation in the claim of their actual possibility and impossibility, respectively, from individual men's free acceptance and rejection of the revealing reality of God in Christ by the Holy Spirit.[113] Their subjective and internal individuality receives reinforcement from the declaration of eternal condemnation of those who reject this revelation.[114]

iii. Christ's Divine and Human Unity for Reconciliation

iii.1. The Middle Point of Above and Below

The methodological basis of Barth's christology (and his doctrine of recon-

[111] Ibid. pp. 477-8.

[112] Op. cit., p. 61.

[113] "We speak of non-Christians, of men for whom Jesus is who He is and is also present and active as for non-Christian, but who do not know Him as such, who exist as if He were not there, who do not accept the relationship in which He has set them because they do not realise that He has long since does so... who miss the freedom given them by it, who do not know how to make any use of it. It is not as though Jesus Christ did not die and rise again for them, or as though they were not reconciled, justified and sanctified to God and before Him and for Him. It is simply that they have turned away from this benefit so fully and unreservedly proffered to them, so that it is of no avail, but hovers as an unknown quantity in the clouds, remaining non-actual among and with and in them, being in a sense wasted on them. It is simply that in them the Holy Spirit comes up against closed doors and windows, not giving His twofold promise, not qualifying them as recipients, bearers and possessors, not being able to determine and characterise their existence from within as the Ruler of their spirits, wills, hearts and minds." CD IV, 3. p. 354.

[114] "They [the rejected] do not possess the Holy Spirit. They do not stand in the area of proclamation and faith. They even refuse this whole offer with hostility... The man rejected by God is the man who, because of his sin and guilt, is denied and repudiated by the righteous judgment and sentence of God, and transferred to the utterly untenable condition of Satan and his kingdom. He is the man abandoned to eternal perdition. He is the man... who has to suffer... because he has challenged and drawn upon himself the destructive hostility of God." CD II, 2. pp. 345-6. The bracket is mine.

ciliation) rests on "the middle point" of the divinity and the humanity of Jesus, namely their spontaneous and dynamic unity and mutuality.

> To get a complete view of the event of the reconciliation of man with God as the fulfillment of the covenant we have so far looked in two directions: first upwards, to God who loves the world, and then downwards, to the world which is loved by God; first to the divine and sovereign act of reconciling grace, then to the being of man reconciled with God in this act. We now look at a third aspect between the reconciling God above and reconciled man below. Even when we looked in those two first direction we had continually to bear in mind that there is a middle point between them... It is rather the middle point, the one thing from which neither the God can be abstracted, in which and by which both are what they are, in which and to which they stand in that mutual relationship. It is only from this middle point that we have been able to look upwards and downwards, and as we tried always to find and name something concrete we had all the more necessarily to come back to it again and again. But that one thing in the middle point is one person, Jesus Christ. In Him that turning of God to man and conversion of man to God is actuality in the appointed order of the mutual interrelationship, and therefore in such a way that the former aims at the latter and the latter is grounded in the former. In Him both are in this order the one whole of event of reconciliation. Our third task – in our present order of thinking – is obviously to understand Him as this one whole.[115]

He, like Calvin, takes seriously the actuality of the oneness of Jesus. His methodological basis surpasses W. Pannenberg's static and dualistic oversimplified categorisation of all Christological methods either as from above (divinity) to below (humanity)" or as *vice versa*.[116] The conceptual use of self-revelation is crucial for this. The exposition of reconciliation from Jesus's one wholeness is made possible by treating his human and divine being and his work as the one dynamic event of the self-revelation of God the Son.[117] Calvin does not explicitly make this point as Barth does.

There is no suggestion of any shift in Barth's methodological emphasis from revelation to reconciliation in Volume IV of *Church Dogmatics*, as McIntyre

[115] CD IV, 1. p. 122.

[116] Op. cit., pp. 33ff.

[117] CD IV, 2. pp. 125-31.

claims.[118] Barth follows Calvin in advocating the interpretation of the reconciling event of God in Christ as revelation.[119] The doctrine of reconciliation in Volume IV concentrates on expounding the significance of the divine and human revelation and life of God the Son in the man Jesus, and of their relationship in his reconciling work. The new event of the self-revelation of God the Son in the man Jesus Christ remains as the ontological, epistemological and conceptual basis of the doctrine of reconciliation, as of all other doctrines in the previous Volumes.

The treatment of the different natures and works of Jesus in the context of the one revealing event of his wholeness is found in Volume IV. 3 of *Church Dogmatics.* There is a deliberate effort to accentuate the identification of the reality of revelation with reconciliation, namely the being and work of God the Son in the man Jesus.[120] Barth, as Calvin, categorises Christ's self-revelation, and his interpretation and verification of his being and work as his prophetic office,[121] and attributes its transition into the subjectivity of our faith to the role

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[118] "We have observed how Downing wishes to substitute the soteriological for the revelation model, and how Barth shifts the emphasis from revelation to reconciliation. Both of these moves are, I am convinced, due primarily to the facts that the revelation mode fails to sustain an adequate analysis of the death of Jesus Christ." Op. cit., p. 165.

[119] "We have briefly recalled all these [christological] various trends in order to show that dogmatics is challenged, not merely by the underlying reality and Scripture, but by the progress of Church history, to pay particular attention to the character of reconciliation as revelation. If this was once neglected, it cannot be so to-day... Questions naturally arise concerning the astonishing outreach of the community to the world in the different forms mentioned, but it is a fact. And its only final explanation is the fact that the reconciliation of the world accomplished in Jesus Christ does actually have the character of revelation, of the Word of God demanding expression. The occurrence itself is also speech. It is a pure and definite summons to men. Christianity seems to have noted this in quite a new way in the modern epoch. Why only now, and in a period which is so troubled in other respects? This cannot be explained. We are simply confronted by the fact that it does seem to have noted it to-day, that it must obviously be orientated by it, and that however well or badly, and perhaps more badly than well, it has begun to orientate itself by it. This being the case, it is surely no accident that on the very threshold of this new period of Christianity Calvin should rediscover the doctrine of the *munus Christi propheticum.*" CD IV, 3. p. 38.

[120] CD IV, 3. pp. 165-6.

[121] "Calvin was the one who, imitating the early Church, developed the doctrine of the office and work of Jesus Christ in the way which comes closest to our own reconstruction." Ibid. p. 5. "It is against this background that we may see how even in the early Church the classical doctrine of the *Munus duplex* of Jesus Christ, of the twofold form of reconciliation, came to be developed, and there was asserted a third orientation of the event of reconciliation in Christ and therefore

of the Holy Spirit. Christ, as the Old Testament prophet, preaches and reveals the divine and human history and covenant.[122] Their discrepancy is this; Christ is their ultimate and final truth and light and reality, whilst the prophet bore witness to this.[123] Christ's prophetic office is considered as indispensable for the accomplishment of reconciliation and salvation.[124]

iii.2. The Priority of the Unity over the Mutuality

The major treatment of the unity of the divine and human in Jesus and of their mutual relationship can be found, respectively, in Volume IV, 1 and 2 of *Church Dogmatics.* It is geared to obviate any suggestion of admixture and separation of his divine and human natures for reconciliation.[125] Barth strives to demonstrate the uniqueness of their unity and mutuality, and renounces any analogy for the explanation of their unity and mutuality.[126] He criticises Calvin's claim of their unity in the light of the unity of soul and body of man. The soul does not assume the body into unity as the divine subject of Jesus assumes his manhood into unity.[127] There is a clear objection to Donald M. Baillie's[128] use of our unity and mutuality with God for their explanation under the concept of *unio mystica.* We do not have a direct relation to God as Jesus does. The Son of God is ontologically localised only in the one man Jesus rather than in all men as is Hegel's absolute spirit.

Closer alliance with the Calvinistic than with the Lutheran christology is

in its totality... The threefold schema did not by any means secure general adoption in the early and mediaeval Church... there is no development in Thomas or elsewhere... Proper weight was given to this third element in the Christ occurrence and the occurrence of reconciliation only in the theology of the Reformation, or more precisely in the later editions of Calvin's *Institutio* (II, 15) and his *Catechism* (39 and 44, cf. *Heidelberg Catechism, Qu.* 31-4)." Ibid. p. 12-3. ch. pp. 46-7.

122 Ibid. pp. 62ff.

123 Ibid. pp. 157ff.

124 Ibid. pp. 3-274.

125 CD IV, 2. p. 80.

126 Ibid. pp. 55-9.

127 Ibid. p. 54.

128 Opt. cit. pp. 12ff.

seen, in particular, in two ways.[129] One is Barth's treatment of the mutuality of the divine and human natures of Jesus, which deals with their communicative properties (*communicatio idiomatum*), their mutual participation (*communicatio naturarum*), and their co-operation (*communicatio operationum*), on their concrete union (*unio hypostatica*) in the incarnation. The other is the emphasis on the determinative role of the sovereign freedom, grace and power (monoenergism) of God in their unity and mutuality in history. The former explores their mutual relationship at the level of the person of Jesus *in concreto.*[130] The latter is intended to consolidate the immutability of all the distinctive attributes of God in the temporal human life of his Son Jesus, and is maintained by endorsing the ancient doctrines of the *communicatio gratiae* (communication or impartation of grace),[131] and of the *enhypostasis* and the *anhypostasis.*[132]

H. Bouillard appears to dispute that Barth follows Luther more closely than Calvin in his emphasis on the "monoenergism" of God for the existence and the reconciling life of the Son in the man Jesus. This monoenergism leads into a sort of "monoactualism" of God which negates the actual active role of the manhood of Jesus in his reconciling life.

> *Barth nous offre assurément une christologie plus complète et plus nuancée que celle de Luther. Suivant la ligne calviniste, il insiste plus que lui sur la distinction des natures, et sa pente habituelle le conduirait moins vers le monophysisme que vers le nestorianisme. Comme lui néanmoins, il pose une sorte de monoénergisme, que nous appellerions volontiers monoactualisme... La véritable déficit de la pensée barthienne serait plutôt de ne guère voir que l'opération divine, quand il s'agit du Christ et du salut.*[133]

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[129] CD IV, 2. pp. 66-9.

[130] Richard A. Muller regards this exposition as typical of the Antiochian and the Calvinistic Reformed rather than the Alexandrian and the Lutheran christology; the latter talks about their mutual relationship at the level of the two natures *in abstracto* as distinct from their union in the person (*Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1985, pp. 72ff).

[131] CD IV, 2. pp. 83ff.

[132] Ibid. p. 91ff.

[133] "Barth's christology is definitely more complex and qualified than Luther's. It is a follower of the Calvinistic thought, he insists more than Luther on the distinction of natures, and his usual

His view is untenable; Barth, as Calvin, regards the "monoenergism" or "mono-grace" of the divine subject of Jesus as the basis of the actual mutuality of divine and human natures in unity,[134] and stresses their qualitative distinctiveness and their distinctive operations or roles (e.g. their distinctive movements of going out and homecoming, their distinctive states of humiliation and exaltation).[135]

The actual outcome of the emphasis on "monoenergism" of God is this; it defines the temporal will and action of the manhood of the Jesus as the self-revelation and fulfillment of the eternal will of his divine subject and being, and eliminates any suggestion of a Nestorian tendency that proposes two self-autonomous powers or wills of the Godhead and the manhood of Jesus, and thus their separate movement and division. It never undermines and nullifies the distinctiveness of his manhood and its active role, rather it alludes to these in and through the sovereign grace and power of his divine subject. Barth opposes the utility of the Lutheran concept of the *genus idiomaticum* that accounts for the ubiquity or omnipresence of Christ's humanity, for it is likely to threaten its distinctiveness by opening the door for its divinisation.[136] He endorses the so-called *extra calvinisticum*, which renounces the total containment of God in the human flesh of his Son Jesus, to declare his immutable transcendence for the distinction of both his true divinity and humanity.[137]

The impartation or participation and penetration[138] of distinctive properties is

tendency would lead him towards Nestorianism rather than towards monophysism. Nevertheless, like Luther, he believes in a sort of monoenergism, which we would readily call monoactualism... The true defect of the Barthian thought would be that he only sees the action of the divine, when it is about Christ and salvation." Op. cit. p. 122.

134 CD IV, 2. pp. 65-6.

135 "The grace of God manifested and effective in Him is the grace of this impartation. As He is, it takes place that the divine essence in all its distinctiveness is gifted to the human, and the human in all its distinctiveness receives the divine. As He is, there takes place the humiliation of the divine for the exaltation of the human essence, and the exaltation of the humanity by the humiliation of the divine. As He is, nothing is kept back. In the height of God and in the depths of man, nothing is excluded from this movement from the height of God to our depths, and back again from our depths to the height of God." Ibid. p 75. cf. pp. 113-6.

136 Ibid. pp. 82ff.

137 CD IV, 1. pp. 179ff.

138 Barth considers the humiliation as the penetration or participation of the divinity of Jesus in his

never claimed in terms of actual exchange or impartation or participation,[139] but only in terms of mutual communication. Their interchangeableness is mentioned purely in terms of *antidosis onomaton* (*'αντιδοσις 'ονοματων*), namely a mutual interchange or reciprocation of the names of the Son of God and Man by virtue of their unity.[140] The effect of their mutual communication and participation and penetration is this. The sovereign grace and power (monoenergism) of the divine subject enables the distinctiveness and the active role of Jesus's manhood, namely his sinless and obedient life for the accomplishment of his reconciling work.[141]

It is vital to highlight the conceptual differentiation of the divine nature or essence or Godhead of Jesus from his divine subject or personhood. Barth sees the latter rather than the former as the determinative source of the divine and human unity and mutuality of Jesus. This is to interpret the divinity of Christ in a personal way. He opposes any traditional (Antiochian or Calvinistic and Alexandrian or Lutheran) christology that fails to make their conceptual differentiation, and that consequently fails to illustrate the personal quality of the divinity of Jesus by treating it as if it were a neutral substance.

iii.3. A Dialectical Unity

Barth rejects a static or neat correlation of the divine and human unity and mutuality of Jesus once and for all, and proposes the on-going process and actualisation of their unity and mutuality.[142] This sharply distances him from Calvin.

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humanity (e.g. its servantship, its mortal sinfulness and its judgement), and the exaltation as the participation or penetration of his humanity in his divinity (e.g. its holy and eternal glory and lordship). CD IV, 2. pp. 73ff.

139 "The participation of His divine in His human essence is not the same as that of His human in His divine. As His divine essence is that which is originally proper to Him, and His human is only adopted by Him and assumed to it, it is clear that we must see their mutual determination in the distinction in which we have described it... This means that the word mutual cannot be understood in the sense of interchangeable. The relationship between the two is not reversible." Ibid. pp. 70-1.

140 Ibid. p. 74.

141 Ibid. pp. 91-3.

142 "In a basic attachment to the Reformed tradition, but without following it in detail, and tran-

Calvin advocates the completion of their unity and mutuality, and opposes this Augustinian suggestion as speculative. Barth's proposal is the articulation of the emphasis of the Reformers (i.e. Calvin) on the qualitative distinction between the sinful humanity and the holy divinity of Jesus, and their on-going dialectical tension. It attempts to conceptualise the eternal being of God the Creator from the perspective of its free and constant revelation or localisation of himself in the creaturely humanity of Jesus.[143] "The ontological localization of God's being in becoming is an attempt to *think out* theologically how far God is *the living God.* Without the courage to *formulate* the livingness of God, theology will finally become a mausoleum of God's livingness."[144]

Barth's notion of the divine and human unity of the Son Jesus should be differentiated from the Hegelian notion of the on-going dialectical unity and mutuality of absolute and eternal spirit (subject) with its diverse temporal objects (e.g. the whole world and all men including the man Jesus Christ). He, like Calvin, states the ontological localization of God the Son only in the one man Jesus, but not in all men, as Hegel proposes. The pantheistic nature of absolute spirit eliminates the involvement of its genuine freedom, love and grace in its unity and mutuality with its diverse temporal objects, and consequently lacks the emphasis of Barth and Calvin on the concept of *Deus pro nobis* (God for us) in unity and mutuality with his temporal manhood of Jesus. Rather, it determines this choice as necessary and inevitable, for absolute spirit's on-going unity and mutuality is indispensable for its ontological completion.

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scending it at some points, we have 'actualised' doctrine of the incarnation, i.e., we have used the main traditional concepts, *unio, communio and communicatio*, as concentrically related terms to describe one and the same ongoing process. We have stated it all (including the Chalcedonian definition, which is so important in dogmatic history, and rightly became normative) in the form of a denotation and description of a single event. We take it that the reality of Jesus Christ, which is the theme of Christology, is identical with this event, and this event with the reality of Jesus Christ. We must now consider what this involves." Ibid. p. 105.

143 CD IV, 1. pp. 184ff.

144 E. Jüngel, *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, trans. Horton Harris, Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1976, p. vii.

> Again, the hypostatic union cannot be understood according to the *schema* of form and material, or idea and phenomenon... spirit and nature... All these antithesis concepts betray themselves by the fact that their members are mutually necessary, that they are complementary, that they can be thought of only in their mutual antithesis, and that they therefore denote and comprehend secondary antithesis within the world. But the union in question is not at all like this. In the union between the Logos and flesh in Jesus Christ we have a union of the primary antithesis between God the Creator and man as he is determined for his existence within these secondary antithesis... The Son of God does not need any completion, any concretion, any form which perhaps He lacks. He is not an abstraction which follows something real and is attained by the interpretation of it. Nor is He an empty *prius* which waits to be filled out by something actual. He does not need the action of another to be who He is in reaction to it, nor the reaction of another to be who He is in His own action. He is not like Hegel's absolute spirit who can develop to a synthesis only in thesis and antithesis. He is actual in Himself—the One who is originally and properly actual... In Him is the fulness of all forms and contents, the unity of form and matter, reason and being, spirit and nature, transcendence and existence, or however else we may describe it. He is the Creator and Lord of heaven and earth.[145]

Barth, as Calvin, insists on the indissoluble distinction between the eternal God, Subject, and its only object, the humanity of his Son Jesus in our world and history. Their indissoluble distinction not only offers the basis for the sovereign freedom, love and grace of God in the unity and mutuality with his manhood of the Son Jesus, but it also entails the indispensability of the Holy Spirit's translation of the new revelation of their unity and mutuality into the subjectivity of our faith for true knowledge and conceptualisation, and thus obviates any link with the Hegelian notion of the self-evident unity of absolute spirit (God) with finite men on the basis of absolute spirit's universal incarnational principle in religious consciousness.[146] The remarkable fact is that the concept of the sovereign freedom, love and grace of God is based on its revelation in the reconciling life of the man Jesus.[147] This enables Barth to evade an abstract concept of the freedom of God *in se*.

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145 CD IV, 2. pp. 53-4.

146 James Yerkes, *Christology of Hegel*, State Univ. of New York Press, Albany, 1983, pp. 114-28.

147 Ibid. p. 119.

The dialectical tension in the divine and human unity and mutuality of Jesus, for Barth and Calvin, is indestructible,[148] and is yet resolved in God by the redemptive purpose of his eternal will.[149] It is unsustainable between absolute or infinite spirit and its temporal objects in their ultimate unity in Hegel's thought. Barth along with the Calvinistic Reformers renounces any suggestion of contradiction of God *in se* by alluding to his transcendence of any contradiction. The basis of this is the sovereign freedom and Lordship of God who not only subjects himself to a sinful creaturely humanity, but also overcomes and transcends its contradiction to his holy divine being without destroying their distinctive attributes.

> According to the whole movement of the older Reformed thinking as it emerges in the documents, it was a zeal for the sovereignty of the Subject acting in free grace in the incarnation, of the living God in the person and existence of His Son, who ought to be kept in view even in His taking flesh, and not allowed to be merged and dissolved in the humanity which He assumed, or the nature which He blessed. It is He, this One, in the flesh, and therefore participating in human essence even in His divine essence. But He, this One, is Jesus Christ, and not a neutral thing, a human essence illuminated and impregnated by divinity. The result was that the Chalcedonian distinction of the natures acquired a new urgency. The Reformed looked with suspicion on what seemed to them to be the threat in Lutheranism, of a divinisation of the humanity of Jesus Christ and a parallel de-divinisation of His divinity. They took precautions against this. From the point of view of Chalcedon, they made their own the purified concern of the school of Antioch... They had no desire to seek or see or grasp the overcoming of the opposition between God and man, and therefore the reconciliation of the world with God, elsewhere but in the humanity assumed by God, and therefore in the man Jesus of Nazareth. But to see and grasp it in Him, they tried to direct their true attention to the One who overcomes in this overcoming, and to the act of His overcoming to Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, the eternal Son of God, and to the act of God which took place and is a fact in Him. We, too, have accepted a similar orientation, and therefore attached ourselves to the Reformed tradition.[150]

The deficit of Barth's and Calvin's christology is that it, like their doctrine

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[148] Ibid. p. 91.

[149] CD IV, 1. pp. 31ff and 79ff. Cf. II, 2. p. 50.

[150] CD IV, 2. p. 68. cf. IV, 1. pp. 184ff.

of the Trinity, does not develop the appropriate basis for the mutual fellowship between the manhood and the Godhead of Jesus in their unity. They do not recognise the human and divine personhood and subject of Jesus in their unity, respectively. It is hard for a modern man to accept their genuine fellowship without assuming their self-conscious personhood and subject. Their self-conscious personhood and subject appears to be essential to argue for their particular involvement in reconciliation and for their distinctive beings from this involvement. Barth's and Calvin's christology nevertheless does not forbid us to propose their self-conscious personhood and subject. They uphold the divine and human wills of Jesus. His divine and human will is unthinkable for us without recognising conscious personhood and subject for both. Barth appears to presuppose their personal fellowship in terms of "I and Thou" relationship.[151]

Conclusion

The doctrine of reconciliation in Volume IV of the *Church Dogmatics* is christocentric. It views the reconciling action from the reconciling being of the Son of God in the man Jesus Christ, and the latter from the former. Barth, like Calvin, asserts the indispensability of the true divinity and humanity of the Son Jesus for the reconciliation of sinful humanity to the holy God the Father in the Holy Spirit. Their sharp divergence emerges from Barth's designation of the divine subject rather than the nature or essence of Jesus as the source of his human existence and action for reconciliation. Calvin does not make a conceptual distinction between the divine subject and nature or essence, as Barth does. Barth here highlights the personal quality of the Godhead of Jesus, and opposes the traditional (including Calvin's) impersonal expression of it as a divine essence or nature, as if it were a neutral substance.

[151] "That the Creator became a creature, the Lord a servant (and as a servant, and the Brother of all other servants, genuinely the Lord), the divine I a human Thou, God's existence the existence of an essentially different man—in other words, the becoming and being of Jesus Christ—cannot be understood and apprehended, either in advance or afterwards, by means of any reflexion which looks beyond Him or from any neutral place apart from Him." CD IV, 2. p. 58.

Barth, like Calvin, rejects a dualistic treatment of the reconciling being and action of the Son Jesus. The reason for Calvin's rejection is the ontological fact that his reconciling being and action belongs to his one life. Barth adds the epistemological reason to its ontological reason. We perceive the reconciling being and action of the Son Jesus as the one event of revelation. The basis of Calvin's christology in revelation therefore provides support for its epistemological reason. Barth follows Calvin, illustrating the reality of Christ's reconciling work in terms of his *munus triplex*. Calvin, however, does not integrate Christ's threefold office with the twofold states of his divine humiliation and human exaltation, as Barth does.[152] Christ's threefold office is hardly mentioned in Calvin's discussion of the two natures of Jesus for reconciliation (in Book II.xii-xiv of the 1559 *Institutes*). Both uphold the necessity of the whole sinless and obedient life of Jesus for reconciliation, yet stress the crucial importance of his death for it. Our sins are forgiven by his death for our reconciliation with God and our freedom from God's condemnation. Calvin does not suggest universal salvation in the inner will of God from Christ's atonement, as Barth does.

The basis of their christology in revelation makes the reconciling being and action of the Son Jesus an object of faith. Their christology is free from biblical formalism. Its perspective of faith provides them with theological freedom and autonomy to present the reconciling being and action of the historical man Jesus in the Bible as that of the pre-historical Son of God in election. Barth, like Calvin, argues for their identification, and the divinity of the man Jesus, from the biblical witness to the self-revelation of the Son (Word) of God in the man Jesus. The basis in the biblical revelation leads to their affirmation of the eternal election of God as the direct cause of our reconciliation with God. This is decisive in rejecting the Hegelian proposal of the historical alienation of man from God as the direct cause of their reconciliation.

[152] See CD IV, 1. p. 133. Barth regards his systematic integration of them as the originality of his christology. It is not found in the traditional christology (including Calvin's).

The doctrine of reconciliation in Volume IV.2 of the *Church Dogmatics* is complementary to his trinitarian notion of God in previous Volumes. It overcomes a formalistic definition of the human and temporal Son Jesus as a mode (or form) of his eternal and divine being (or content) and subject in the previous Volumes (i.e. in the doctrine of the Trinity). Like Calvin, Barth here declares the temporal and human subject of the Son (Word) of God in the man Jesus Christ. The attribution of the acting subject of God the Son in reconciliation to his temporal and human subject is not found in the previous Volumes which ascribe that to his eternal and divine subject. It appears to be decisive in claiming the distinctive temporal and human being of the Son Jesus in the triune God.

Barth is allied more with the Calvinist than the Lutheran christology. He, like Calvin, stresses the distinctiveness of the manhood of Jesus in its unity and mutuality with his Godhead, and bases the exposition of their mutual relationship on their concrete unity in the person of Jesus in history, not *vice versa* as Luther does. They do not respectively assert the personal and conscious subject of the manhood and the Godhead of Jesus, in their unity. They do not realise that their insistence on the genuine fellowship between his manhood and Godhead in their unity is untenable without recognising their personal and conscious subjects. The personal and conscious subjects of the manhood and Godhead of Jesus are essential to defend their decisive involvement in God's action and their distinctive beings from this involvement. Barth's and Calvin's christology is nevertheless open to recognition of the human and divine subjectivity and personhood of Jesus. Both propose the encounter and dialogue between the divine and human wills of Jesus by asserting the subjection of the former to the latter in their unity and fellowship. Their dialogue in unity and fellowship is unthinkable for a modern man without proposing their personal and conscious subjects.

Conclusion

The subject of inquiry of Calvin's 1559 *Institutes* and Barth's *Church Dogmatics* is the trinitarian being and action of God. Their theologies are fundamentally trinitarian. They affirm the unity of the being and action of the triune God, and reject dualistic views. The action of the triune God *ad extra* derives from his nature and will *in se*. Barth views the inner nature and will of the triune God from their revelation in his action (e.g. election, creation and reconciliation and redemption), and then the revelation of his action from his inner nature and will. Calvin discusses the trinitarian action of God from its revelation in election, creation, redemption and sanctification in order to demonstrate his true nature and will *in se*.

Their theologies are based on the revelation of the trinitarian action and being of God to which the Bible attests. The determinative source of their theologies is not *a priori* (biblical, dogmatic, philosophical, psychological and socio-political) presuppositions, but the presuppositionless living reality of the triune God in revelation. He is the only one who reveals his reality in and through the human words of the Bible and the church to us and for us. Both Calvin and Barth renounce a self-evident notion of God, or the notion of absolute spirit such as that found in the Hegelian pantheist thought. There is a qualitatively unbridgeable gap and distinction between the creator-God and creaturely man. Faith is the only noetic and conceptual possibility of the biblical revelation of their true reality.

The significance of the perspective of faith is that it removes the ultimate key for Christian truth from the hands of the Church or man, and returns it to God himself, the only true source and Lord of all truth. It provides Barth and Calvin with theological freedom and autonomy to systematise the biblical and dogmatic ideas of the being and action of God as the trinitarian action and being

of God. Their systematisation is not a mere rationalisation. It is subject to the ever-new revelation of God's Word in faith. The objectivity of God's living Word in faith controls their investigation of biblical and dogmatic ideas of God and his creation (e.g. man and cosmos), and their rational expression. Their theological dynamism and objectivism are argued on the ground of their dependence on this objectivity.

The central divergence of their theologies stems from their different understanding of the means and content of the revelation of the triune God. Barth advocates the Word of God in the man Jesus Christ as the only means and content of revelation. The christocentric orientation and centre of his *Church Dogmatics* derive from his christocentric interpretation of revelation The *Dogmatics* presents the trinitarian action and being of God from their revelation in Christ. Christology is the heart-beat of the *Church Dogmatics.* Calvin proposes creation, redemption and sanctification as the self-revelation of God in the Father, in the Son (Word Jesus Christ) and in the Holy Spirit, and our creatureliness, redemption and sanctification as the distinctive means of their revelation. The trinitarian orientation and centre of his 1559 *Institutes* stem from his trinitarian understanding of revelation. The *Institutes* deals with the trinitarian action and being of God from their revelation in creation, redemption and sanctification. The doctrine of the Trinity is the heart-beat of the *Institutes.*

Barth's failure to understand the basis of the *Institutes* in the trinitarian revelation of God leads to his failure to understand its trinitarian orientation and centre. His failures are rooted in his christocentric interpretation of revelation. He rejects the actual occurrence of the self-revelation of the creator-God the Father in creation, for us and in, and interprets Calvin's proposal of this occurrence as biblical formalism, as based on formal biblical principles. He does not realise that Calvin insists on the indispensability of faith for the noetic and conceptual possibility of God's revelation in creation. The perspective of faith enables him

to interpret it as the self-revelation of the triune God the Father.

One of the distinctive achievements of Barth's theology is this. It gives a hope of the forgiveness, redemption and sanctification of God in Christ to all sinful human beings. Their relation to God is viewed exclusively from their covenantal and redemptive relation to the electing grace of God in Christ. Barth overcomes a pessimistic understanding of man in the traditional theology (including Calvin's) that eliminates the hope of some people for forgiveness, redemption and sanctification by excluding them from God's redemptive purposes in Christ. Calvin's doctrine of creation (in Book I of the 1559 *Institutes*) explores God's primal and inclusive relationship with all men (believers and unbelievers) in the light of the revelation of the creator-God the Father in creation. His soteriology (in Books II-IV) considers God's exclusive covenantal relationship with the believer in the context of the revelation of the redeemer-God the Son (Word) in the man Jesus, and the sanctifier-God the Holy Spirit in sanctification.

The hermeneutical relevance of the doctrine of election for the doctrine of God and man and their relationship is apparent in the theologies of Calvin and Barth. Both uphold the eternal will of God *in se* as the direct cause of our reconciliation and unity with God. This sharply differs from the Hegelian conception of unity between finite being and infinite being, where the historical alienation of finite being from infinite being is proposed as the direct cause of their unity. One of the serious problems of Barth's christocentricism is this. It claims the creaturely humanity of God in the man Jesus Christ as the ontic and noetic basis of our creaturely humanity, although the former is qualitatively different from the latter. Christ, unlike us, has a divine nature that prevents him from falling into sin. Calvin's theology overcomes this problem; it views our creaturely humanity from its actuality in us, which the creator-God the Father reveals in his biblical Word.

The emphasis of Barth's trinitarian theology differs from Calvin's. They respectively stress the unity of the Trinity in distinction and the distinction of

the Trinity in unity; they demonstrate God's actions (creation, reconciliation or redemption and sanctification) as the work of the one personal God in the Trinity, and of the individual persons of the Trinity in the one God. Their differing emphases derive from their understandings of the trinitarian action and being of God (i.e. in the doctrine of the Trinity). The doctrine of the Trinity attributes the acting subject of God to the one divine person of God in the Trinity for Barth, and to the individual persons of the Trinity in the one God for Calvin. This attribution relies not on a logical priority of the "threeness" over the "oneness" of God or *vice versa*, but on the epistemological actuality We encounter and know the one divine person of God (the whole Trinity), and the individual persons of the Trinity in the event of revelation in election, creation, reconciliation or redemption, and sanctification. Their doctrine of revelation determines the trinitarian nature of their theology.

Barth's *Dogmatics* in Volumes I-VI.1 is vulnerable to the criticism of a formal trinitarianism. The Trinity here is treated as three different modes (forms) of the one personal being (content) of God. He overcome this criticism in Volume VI.2 by asserting the active role of the human subject and being of the Son Jesus in reconciliation, but he does not articulate the implications of this assertion for the human personhood of the Son Jesus in the triune God, as Calvin does. He does not realise that the active role of the human subject and being of the Son Jesus is unacceptable for a modern man without assuming his conscious human personhood. Like Calvin, he does not demonstrate the personal quality (e.g. conscious will and subject) of the triune God.

They respectively follow the trinitarian traditions of the Cappadocians and Augustine, attributing the active subject of God to the individual persons of the Trinity and to the whole Trinity (the one person of God), and fail to defend the personal quality (e.g. conscious will and subject) of the individual members of the Trinity and their unity. Both ignore the implications of the rational di-

alogue between the man Jesus (the Son) and God the Father in the Bible for the temporal (human) and eternal (divine) personhood and subject. There is no elaboration of this dialogue as the basis for proposing the individual temporal persons of the Trinity and their one eternal personhood of God. Their personal quality appears to be nonetheless essential to defend their genuine involvement in creation, reconciliation or redemption, and sanctification, and their genuine distinctiveness from this involvement.

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